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2017-2018 Parent Handbook

Introduction

Since 1970 The Children's School has been operating as a Parent Cooperative Preschool offering the Greater Burlington community a high quality developmental program designed to recognize and meet the individual needs of children ages 3-5. Over the past three decades the school has been housed in several locations in the Burlington area including the Unitarian Church, Flynn Avenue where for a time we were a registered Montessori School, and All Saints Episcopal Church. After several years of searching for a permanent home, our current building on Patchen Rd. in South Burlington was purchased and renovated in 1993. In 2000 we received NAEYC accreditation. In 2004 we were able, through Act 62, to enter into partnerships with four school districts in Chittenden County (Burlington, So. Burlington, Winooski and Chittenden South). Since the enactment of Act 166 in 2015, we have the opportunity to enter into partnerships with school districts throughout the state of Vermont. These partnerships enable families to receive tuition funding through the Vermont Agency of Education so their children can attend a qualified prekindergarten education program. Throughout these changes, The Children's School has remained a parent cooperative in every sense of the word: it is an educational program that is defined, managed and supported by the parents. It offers parents a unique opportunity to play an active role in determining the nature and quality of the schooling their children receive.

Philosophy- Learning Through Play

The Children's School strives to create a preschool based on play, nurturing care and respect for all people. In this atmosphere children are supported in their endeavors to pose questions, seek solutions, develop friendships and explore their creative and intellectual abilities. The classroom provides a myriad of opportunities for children to expand on their current knowledge through painting, drawing, playing, writing, moving to music, working with sand, building with blocks, reading and listening to stories, recreating life experience through dramatic play and experiencing math and science. Materials are chosen which promote open-ended exploration and continue to challenge children over time. Our classroom is designed to encourage participation through self-directed small group activities at learning centers, complemented by teacher-directed large group activities such as meeting time, music and circle games.

The *emergent curriculum* at TCS grows out of the belief that children are capable of making appropriate choices and decisions based on their own interests. Teachers respond to students' interests and plan activities that facilitate learning through self-directed exploration. The freedom to make competent choices each day empowers children to believe in their abilities to learn and thrive in the classroom. We believe that nurturing a child's curiosity is of primary importance in the early years and provides the foundation for a life-long enthusiasm for learning.

Licensing and Accreditation

The State of Vermont Child Care Services Division licenses The Children's School.
Licensure ensures that our program complies with regulation requirements related to the health, safety and welfare of the children enrolled in the program. State of Vermont Early Childhood Program Licensure Regulations can be viewed on the web at: http://www.state.vt.us/srs/childcare/license.htm.

The Children's School has received a Five Star Rating through the Vermont STARS program (Step Ahead Recognition System). Stars recognizes the accomplishments of registered and licensed programs for achievements above and beyond what is required by state regulations for licensed and registered child care programs.

In 2000 the Children's School received NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) Accreditation. NAEYC-accredited programs have demonstrated a commitment to providing a high quality program for young children and their families. Our program engaged in an extensive self-study based on the Academy's *Criteria for High Quality Early Childhood Program*. This self-study was verified during a site visit to the program by a team of trained volunteer validators. The validated self-study, including the program's responses to the validation visit, was *reviewed* by a 3-member national commission composed of recognized

experts in child care and early childhood education, *judged* to be in substantial compliance with the Academy's Criteria, and *granted accreditation* for a three-year period. The Children's School was reaccredited in 2003, 2008, and 2013. For more information about NAEYC visit their website at: http://www.naeyc.org.

YOUR CHILD AND THE SCHOOL

Typical Daily Schedule…

8:00–8:30	Drop off/Early Morning Activities (outside drop off, weather permitting)
9:15	Morning Meeting
9:30	Snack
9:50	Story
10:15	Mid-Morning Activities
11:15	Outdoor Play
12:00	Pick Up from Morning Program
12:05	Story & Lunch
1:00	Transition to Rest/Quiet Reading
1:30	Rest
3:30	Snack/Afternoon Activities
4:00	Outdoor Play
5:30	Pick-up from Full Day Program

What to Bring...

Please send an extra set of clothing (including underwear) to school with your child for the first day. We will provide a box for the clothes to be kept in while they are here. These clothes should be replaced to reflect the changing seasons, including an extra hat and mittens during winter months. Please check periodically to be sure that the extra clothes still fit your child. Be sure to label all items with your child's name.

A special blanket, stuffed animal, or other transitional object is welcome provided it does not disrupt or dominate your child's interactions and compromise the school experience. Toys unrelated to a current curriculum themes (i.e. war toys, action figures, Barbies...) should be left at home. Also, please do not have your child bring candy, gum or money to school.

Sharing...

Homemade projects, books, nature treasures and special items of interest are welcome. We will place them on our sharing shelf. During free choice time children will have the opportunity to share their items. Explain to your child that what is brought to school can be lost or damaged.

What to Wear...

Please dress children in washable play clothes suited to the weather. The children will use a variety of art materials and cooking ingredients. We play outside during all seasons and children will need boots, raincoats or mud suits, snow gear and hats. Label all outerwear and shoes with your child's name.

Each child must wear sneakers, shoes or hard soled slippers in the classroom. During the winter months when boots are worn outdoors, please bring slippers or sneakers to wear indoors. This footwear should be labeled and stored in the child's cubby.

Drop Off and Pick Up....

We have an open drop off period between 8am and 8:30am. Please park in the parking lot or along the curb abutting the property. *DO NOT park in the entrance gate area*- it blocks the visibility of walkers. Do not leave vehicles running or young children unattended in your vehicle while picking up or dropping off your child. Please do not turn around in the condominium driveways. When you first arrive, bring your child(ren) into the school; sign in on the attendance sheet and check in with a teacher. Likewise, sign out and tell the teacher before you leave with your child. When entering or exiting, always latch the gate to our play yard.

School begins at 8:30 AM. Please arrive no later than 8:30. Being late can be very emotional for your child and disruptive to the program. At the end of the day, we ask that you pick your child up on time. Please plan on arriving at least 10 minutes prior to your pickup time to allow transition time to collect belongings, check in with teachers, etc. If you are late for a scheduled pick up (12:00 or 5:30), you will be charged $5.00 for each 5 minutes that you are late.

If you are delayed unexpectedly, please call the school.

Children will be released only to those persons specified on the registration form. Any other person coming to pick up your child must have prior written permission from the parent. This written authorization must be given to the teachers/school by the parent. People picking up children other than parents may be required to show identification.

Phone the school in advance if your child will be absent.

Tuition and Fees...

The current tuition and fees schedule is available in The Children's School information packet. A non-refundable tuition payment is due with your signed Enrollment Contract. Monthly payments are due on the first day of the month. A $10 fee is assessed if tuition is not paid by the fifth day of the month and a $25.00 fee will be assessed after the 10th day overdue. A $25.00 fee is charged for a bounced check. Please remit all payments via the Administrator's mailbox located above the parents' mailboxes. Whenever a tuition installment has not been paid by the end of the month, the child will not be permitted to attend school until the tuition has been brought current or unless a specific payment plan has been worked out with the Administrator, or, if necessary, The Children's School Board of Directors ("TCSBOD"). In the event of withdrawal during the school year, the full tuition will remain due and owing. If said withdrawal is due to extenuating circumstances, a family may petition TCSBOD to be released from their contract. If said petition is approved by TCSBOD, a $300 withdrawal fee will apply. In the event that the family wishes to make any changes in this contract, a written petition must be presented to The Children's School Board of Directors for review.

Scholarships/Financial Aid...

The Children's School recognizes that tuition costs can present a financial strain. A limited number of partial scholarships are available to assist families in need. The Children's School offers two types of scholarships: a general needs scholarship and an emergency scholarship. Scholarship funds are not strictly for tuition, funds may be requested for activity fees or extra services throughout the year. Scholarships are based on need and The Children's School uses state income guidelines in determining eligibility.

Further along in this handbook, you will find the guidelines for applying for a scholarship. If you are interested, please contact the administrator. All financial aid information is kept confidential.

Child Care Services Division of the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services Mission Statement:

The mission of the Child Care Services Division is to assure a statewide system that promotes and supports safe, accessible, quality child care for Vermont families.

For application information please see the Administrator or Chittenden County residents should contact:

VT SRS Child Care Services, Burlington District
Child Care Resource
181 Commerce St
Williston VT 05495
Phone: 802-863-3367 or 1-800-339-3367 (in Vermont only)
Fax: 802-863-4202
E-Mail: chldcare@together.net
Website: http://www.vtchildcare.org

School Schedule/Snow Days....

TCS generally follows the South Burlington School District calendar with respect to vacations, holiday closings, teacher workdays, and the closing of school due to inclement weather. Tune in to local radio and television stations for weather related announcements. If the South Burlington Schools announce closure then we will be closed as well. In the event TCS decides to close and the rest of the South Burlington schools are not closed the teachers will call families to notify them of the closure.

Field Trips

Field trips will be announced via the bulletin board or memos. Signed parent permission is required to be on file for children to attend field trips.

We are in the process of introducing field trips that will require transportation to and from the location via a rented bus and/or CCTA buses. Among issues to be considered are safety, convenience, cost and liability.

Discipline…

Children acquire social and problem solving skills through practice just as they acquire other skills. To create a safe and harmonious learning environment, we rely on the following techniques:

- Prevention: TCS's purposeful layout and well equipped classroom is tailored to the developmental level of the children, thereby minimizing any frustration and safety hazards. Children who are engaged in creating and exploring are more likely to demonstrate desirable behavior, and to regroup quickly when challenges occur.
- Positive Redirection: Adults emphasize and help children to see what children can do in difficult situations- use a resource cooperatively or alternatively, take turns, choose another venue, etc.
- Modeling: Teachers and parents use respectful, polite and appropriate communication and behavior.
- Limit Setting: Children are told in a positive tone what they can/should do. Rules are discussed and explained and are applied consistently.
- Problem Solving: At TCS we strive for respectful expression and open-minded listening to each other's feelings and ideas. We encourage children to resolve conflicts among themselves. Teachers are present to support their efforts as needed.
- If children are having difficulty working out a problem or misunderstanding while you are helping in the classroom please ask a teacher to assist in resolving the issue.
- Physical punishment is ***NEVER*** used at The Children's School.

Independence in Toileting...

It is the policy of The Children's School that all children be working on toileting independence as we do not have the facilities to change diapers.

Birthdays....

The birthday child is given special recognition during snack time. It has become a tradition at The Children's School for parents to donate a book to the library inscribed with the child's name. This book is read on the child's birthday. If you would like title suggestions, the teachers have a wish list. If you plan a private birthday party for your child, please distribute invitations away from the school (i.e. via the mail) unless all of the children are invited. If you are unable to parent help on your child's birthday but would still like to provide a special snack please contact whoever is scheduled to parent help on that day.

Our building is available to host birthday parties for TCS children only. If you are interested in having your child's birthday party at the school, it must be done during non-school hours and coordinated with the cleaners. We also request a donation of $100 for use of the space. Please talk to the School Administrator if you would like more information about this.

Visits...

Parents/Guardians are welcome to come and observe their children at any time. Any accompanying younger siblings require constant parental supervision. Visitors such as prospective Children's School parents and community members are also welcome to spend time at TCS; these visits must be arranged in advance with the teachers and are subject to teacher's approval. We do limit the number of visitors on any given day so that the program remains child-centered.

Cultural/Religious Diversity...

TCS is a non-sectarian school. In the spirit of encouraging children to value their own cultural traditions and respect those of others, families are encouraged to share their culture through stories, projects, music and discussions.

Animal Policy…

You must check with the teachers before bringing any animal to school. TCS follows strict guidelines regarding animals on school grounds: all dogs must be leashed, all animals requiring rabies shots must have proof of shots, and all other animals must be in a container. The health and safety of the children comes first.

Accidents and Emergencies...

Parents are required to sign an authorization form which allows teachers or Parent Helpers to accompany their child to an appropriate hospital in the case of an emergency, and authorizes attending hospital staff to admit and administer treatment to the child in the absence of a parent.

PARENTS AND THE SCHOOL

The role of parents at TCS is a vital one. Parents are involved in all aspects of the school including administration, maintenance and finance. TCS is a growing place; its progress evolves from year to year and benefits greatly from parent input. There is much work to be done, calling for a wide range of talents. Parents participate in these ways:

- Maintaining the school's safe and attractive physical environment by contributing 4 hours of labor each fall and again in the spring for a total of 8 environment hours.
- Serving on one of the school committees.

- Attending two Corporation Meetings; held in the fall and in the spring to elect Board members, approve the next year's budget, receive updates from teachers and committees, etc.
- Participate in fundraising events such as the silent auction. Tuition fees include the cost of 4 Spring Fling tickets.
- Optional: Serving on the Board of Directors which oversees the operation of the school.
- Optional: Parent Volunteering and Enrichment. Families are encouraged to volunteer in the classroom where they have the opportunity to share skills, special talents, and enrichment activities that extend/support current curriculum. Examples/ideas include, but are not limited to: cooking/baking, playing musical instruments, yoga practice, science experiments, wood working, etc. Parents are asked to coordinate these planned visits with teachers ahead of time.

Missed Parent Responsibilities...

If a family chooses not participate in Fall and Spring Environment Days (four hours each) or is unable to arrange to another project (each family is expected to contribute a total of 8 environment hours throughout the year), the family can opt out for $30 per hour unfulfilled.

Parent-Teacher Communication…

Communication is the key to partnership between parents and teachers at The Children's School. Teachers want to know about the Children's thoughts; interests and activities outside of school and parents want to know about their child's life during school hours. To facilitate this exchange of information we use the following strategies:

- Each family has a **mailbox** in the cubby area. Whenever you come into school, check your mailbox for notes, announcements, artwork and newsletters.
- Updates concerning curriculum themes, teacher's wish list and filed trips are posted on the large **bulletin board** next to the clock. Board meeting minutes and information about local opportunities for children's activities and parent education are posted on the **parent information board** next to the door. Highlights of each day's program are posted on the **white board.** Teachers also write a **daily log,** which is stored near the sign in/attendance sheets and is available for everyone to read.
- Teachers send home a **classroom update** via email to keep you in touch with what's going on in the classroom.
- **The Children's School Newsletter** gives teacher and board updates, descriptions of events and articles of interest.
- Teachers are usually available for **brief discussions** and feedback at drop off and pick up, and are happy to schedule a longer meeting if needed. In addition, formal **Parent-Teacher Conferences** are held in the fall and spring. At these conferences the teachers will share their observations and insights regarding each child's growth and development, and welcome parent in-put. Parent's reasonable requests for additional conference(s) shall be honored within seven days.
- Recent projects and activities are shared through **art displays** and **photographic panels** in the classrooms.

The Children's School Administration...

TCS was incorporated in June 1970 as a non-profit corporation in the State of Vermont. Copies of the Articles of Incorporation and the By-Laws are kept in the school files. The school has a Board of Directors consisting of a President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary and Chairpersons of 7 committees. Board Members are elected annually for a one-year term. Board Meetings are held once a month. All parents are invited to attend and submit items for discussion.

The Board of Directors is responsible for the sound and smooth operation of the school including but not limited to the following areas:

- Hiring all teachers and staff
- Defining duties of teachers and staff
- Evaluating the program and staff annually
- Defining parent participation requirements
- Electing new Board members annually with advice of members
- Setting tuition and fees
- Overseeing member families' commitment to the school

(The executive positions, along with chairpersons of each committee, make up the Board of Directors.)

EXECUTIVE POSITIONS:

PRESIDENT	The President presides at all meetings of the Corporation and the Board of Directors. He or she is actively involved in the management of the business of the Corporation and sees that all orders and resolutions of the Board of Directors are carried out. The President serves as an ex-officio member of all standing committees and will collect a report from each committee Chairperson and Board member to be passed on to the next person holding these positions. The President stays informed of the preschool's legal responsibilities and liabilities.
VICE-PRESIDENT	The Vice-President generally supports the President by serving as his/her substitute when needed, as well as providing leadership and directional support to the committees and school. During the incapacity of the President, the Vice-President shall perform the duties of the President. A good candidate for this position is someone dependable, analytical, and able to work cooperatively with others.
TREASURER	The Treasurer of the Board oversees all of the finances for the Corporation, working closely with the school administrator. He or she makes monthly reports to the Board about the finances of the Corporation. In the spring, he or she will present a proposed budget for approval to the Corporation for the coming school year. The Treasurer serves as a liaison between the preschool and state and federal financial regulating agencies regarding issues such as unemployment compensation, taxes, and tax-exempt status. The Treasurer will also make recommendations regarding salary adjustments and staff bonuses, and/or other financial contractual changes (such as health care benefits).
SECRETARY	The duties of the Board Secretary include keeping minutes of all Corporation and Board of Directors meetings and distributing the minutes to all Board members, parents, and staff. The Secretary will post the meeting minutes on the parent bulletin board no later than two weeks after the meeting. The Secretary is also responsible for correspondence of the Board including advance notice of all Board and Corporation meetings. The Secretary will find a substitute to record minutes should he/she be absent for a Board/Corporation meeting.

COMMITTEE POSITIONS:

Environment (1-2 families) Chair: Committee members: 1.	The entire school community is responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the building and grounds. This job requires close coordination with the school administrator regarding the needs of the school. This committee is responsible for coordinating contractor services, responding to building emergencies, organizing routine tasks (lawn mowing, cleaning, and furnace filter changing) and running the scheduled community-wide environment days. The committee also carries responsibility for our green initiative including waste reduction, composting, gardening, etc.
Human Resources (2 families) Chair: Committee members: 1. (Scholastic Book Orders/Teacher Appreciation Week/Teacher Gifts)	The HR Chair acts as a liaison between the Board of Directors and the teachers. His or her primary duty is to keep open communication between the Board and the staff. To facilitate this communication and ensure that the teachers' needs are heard, the Chair should hold regular meetings with the staff. The Chair conducts program evaluations through parent surveys, coordinates teacher evaluations (of each other), communicates changes in benefits and salary, coordinates contracts, and follows up on required continuing education. The Chair has primary responsibility to advertise for, interview, and hire new staff as needed, identify substitute teachers, and maintain personnel policies, job descriptions, etc. The Chair also oversees one committee member: o One committee member will be responsible for coordinating Teacher Appreciation Week (in May), by establishing the theme, and managing the events/gifts, as well as coordinating school-wide teacher gifts at the end of the year. This person is also responsible for coordinating the Scholastic book orders.
Public Relations/Marketing (3 families) Chair: Committee members: 1. (Website Maintenance) 2. (Newsletter/Blog and Alumni management)	The primary objective for this committee is to promote and enhance the perception of the school and its offerings within the greater community and in turn to impact and influence overall enrollment. The Chair is responsible for maintaining an annual advertising budget (paid placements) and other grassroots efforts (e.g. flyers), proactively seeking favorable editorial coverage in local media outlets, maintaining and encouraging consistent use of the school's branding, and interfacing and providing counsel with other school committee Chairs where appropriate. The committee members are responsible for: o Webmaster: maintains content, maintenance and online promotional activities and outlets, e.g. Facebook. o Newsletter: collects content contributions and designs a school newsletter/blog as well as a biannual paper newsletter for distribution to families and alumni. Maintains alumni

	mailing list for fundraising efforts and drafts and distributes annual alumni donation letter.
Enrollment/Registrar (2 families) Chair: Committee members: 1. (Open House/Tours/Kid's Day)	The Enrollment Chair is responsible for ensuring that enrollment is full. This committee is responsible for coordinating the Open House, contacting prospective parents, arranging visits and follow-ups. Availability to return phone calls and give tours is essential, along with strong communication skills. All committee members are responsible for conducting tours at times acceptable to the teachers. The Chairperson is responsible for tracking enrollment, meeting current enrollment/tuition goals, and working with the Treasurer/budget committee to set enrollment targets for the following year. The Chair coordinates advertisement with the PR/Marketing Chair, and works closely with the office administrator to enroll families. This committee also manages the Kids Day booth and parade coordination (in May each year). This includes the booth set-up and break-down, signing up families to run the booth, identifying our school's approach to the parade theme, and coordinating family participation in the parade.
Social/Special Event (1-2 families) Chair: Committee members: 1.	The Social/Special Event committee coordinates food, setup and cleanup for events. The school social events are essential to developing our sense of community each year, offering the chance to meet, socialize, and relax with fellow parents and children. The committee Chair is responsible for overseeing the organization and promotion of these social events, especially the out-of-school community events, i.e. Halloween Party, ice skating, swimming, potlucks.
Spring Fling (5-8 families) Chair: Co-Chair: Committee members: 1. 2. 3. *4.* *5.* *6.* .	This committee organizes our traditional major fundraiser and social event, the Spring Fling Silent Auction, held each spring. This event supports the school's scholarship fund. This committee will meet regularly, but will have the most active work in late winter/early spring. The Chairperson for this committee should be detail-oriented and comfortable with delegation. The Co-Chair is ideally a person with at least one future year at the school who can provide consistency from year to year in the event-planning. Committee responsibilities include: o Event location, Food & Beverage contracts o Donation solicitation o Donation pickup o Event marketing/ticket sales o Depending on the number of families, this committee will also be responsible for running our fall bulb sale and additional small fundraisers as determined during the year.

There are typically three preschool teachers who work together on curriculum development and plan classroom activities.

A part time Administrator maintains fiscal and enrollment records, keeps abreast of compliance regarding licensing requirements, and provides administrative support to parents and teachers. Please keep the Administrator informed of changes in address, home/work/cell phone numbers, email addresses, emergency contacts, or your child's allergies.

Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect Policy...

As professional child care provider, we are mandated by the State of Vermont to report any suspicions of child abuse or neglect. Staff is directed to report all suspicions immediately to the President of the Board. Once the President has been notified, the staff person must contact the Department of Social and Rehabilitative Services (SRS) at the number posted by the school's phone and make the report of abuse or neglect. Parents will be notified of any such calls made by The Children's School staff unless we have reason to believe that the parent is responsible for the abuse or neglect. All phone reports must be followed by a written report using TCS Abuse and/or Neglect Reporting Form. The staff member who made the report, the President, and the parent of the child should keep copies of the form.

If a teacher suspects that the welfare of the child is in immediate danger i.e. riding with an intoxicated adult driver, the teacher must act accordingly to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the child. This might result in calling the emergency contact person or law enforcement officials. If you have concern about the complaint procedures regarding the welfare of children, please contact the Social Services Division in Burlington at 863-7370.

Nondiscrimination Statement/ Anti-Harassment Policy...

The Children's School is open to all children and does not discriminate in its administration or hiring policies. TCS is committed to providing all students and staff with a safe, supportive school environment. It is the policy of TCS to oppose and prohibit unlawful harassment based on race, color, creed, religion, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, or disability. The Children's School Board shall act to investigate all complaints of harassment and to take appropriate action against any member of the school community who is found to have violated this policy. Complaints shall be brought to the attention of any Board Member. The President, upon notification, shall notify the Vermont Human Rights Commission and the Federal Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights.

Confidentiality of Records...

Information contained in a child's record shall be confidential. The Children's School shall not distribute or release information in a child's record to anyone not directly related to implementing the program plan for the child without written consent of the parent(s)/guardian(s). The child's parent(s)/guardian(s) shall, upon request, have access to the child's record at reasonable times. In no event shall such access be denied or delayed more than two business days after the initial request has been made.

Freedom of Access...

Parents shall have access to the facility, their child and the staff during the time that their child is present.

Health Policy...

The Children's School attempts to assure a healthy environment for all. This is best accomplished through prevention of the spread of germs. We practice extensive hand washing and sanitary toileting procedures. Parents are encouraged to continue these habits at home. The school is disinfected and cleaned on a daily basis.

Children in group settings invariably become ill. Maintaining a healthy environment may mean excluding a sick child from school. Attached as **Appendix A** is the current health policy promulgated by the Vermont Agency of Human Services, Department for Children and Families Child Care Licensing Regulations for Center Based Child Care and Preschool Programs. These new licensing regulations go into effect September 1, 2016. Although the

new regulations fall just short of stating this, The Children's School Health Policy states that children can return to school only after they have been fever free for 24 hours (see Appendix A for fever specifications).

If a child becomes ill while at school, s/he will be isolated where the teacher or an assistant can be in contact. The parents or the emergency contact listed on the admissions forms will be called. When called to pick up a sick child, parents are expected to do so immediately. When an ill child's condition requires authorization of a medical professional to return to school (as defined in Appendix A), a medical professional's note is required.

TCS will not administer medication (prescription or OTC) without a written order from the child's physician. All medication to be administered must be brought in by a parent or legal guardian in the original labeled container in which it was purchased, and be accompanied by written instructions and signed physician authorization. Ask your pharmacist for two bottles with prescription labels, one for home and one for school. Please bring a dropper or medication spoon if needed. Hand the medication directly to the teachers and complete applicable forms—DO NOT store it in your child's lunch box or cubby. The first dose of any medication must be given by a parent or legal guardian, leaving sufficient time for said doser to observe for any adverse reactions. The first dose of a medication given daily must be given at home. TCS will assume no responsibility for complications which might arise due to the administration of such medication. When the medication course is complete, the parent or guardian must take the medication home. TCS will not dispose of any medications. OTC sunscreen and insect repellent (containing DEET), brought from home, can be applied if permission form is signed by parent.

If your child has been exposed to a contagious condition such as head lice, conjunctivitis, chicken pox or strep throat, please notify the staff as soon as possible. We'll send a note to other families letting them know that this condition may exist so that they can watch for symptoms (confidentiality is always maintained).

The purpose of this health policy is to provide guidance when confronted by illness. All parents in a program must work as partners with each other and the staff to assure the healthiest possible environment for all. Remember, it serves no purpose to knowingly expose children and staff to such illness when such exposure is avoidable.

The State of Vermont requires TCS to maintain written, up to date immunization records on all children. The State allows us to waive this immunization requirement, for medical and/or religious reasons. Please see the administrator for the appropriate state exemption form. All medical and immunization records must be completed by a physician and submitted by the parents **before** the child enters school. Make sure to provide the administrator with a copy of your child's immunizations if they receive new immunizations throughout the year. If a child is under-immunized, s/he may be excluded from school if a vaccine-preventable disease occurs to which the child is susceptible. Parents must identify special needs, allergies, medications, etc. on the admissions forms.

Parents are expected to keep sick children home based on the attached information. Staff may ask that you consult with a medical professional before making a decision about including or excluding a child from school. In addition to the physical symptoms, we must consider the needs of the child. No matter what the diagnosis, if a child feels miserable, clingy or demands extensive one-on-one attention, s/he will probably be better off at home or alone with another care giver. Parents are expected to respect the staff member's opinion regarding whether the child's condition warrants exclusion from the program.

Allergies:

It is imperative to notify The Children's School of any allergies your child may have. The children's allergies are posted on the wall in the snack room to ensure your children's health and safety.

Smoking:

The Children's School has a NO SMOKING policy. There shall be no smoking in the school building, on the school grounds, or within view of the children at any time.

Snack Guidelines....

Several times a year, families are asked to provide a week's supply of snack for the children in the program. This occurs on a rotating basis and dates will be assigned to families at the beginning of the year. Families will receive a snack list from the teachers the week before their scheduled snack week.

Healthy snacks consist of at least 2 food groups and should be as low in fat and sugar as possible.

Below is an example of snack items we will be asking families to provide 2 times per year.

Peanut-Safe Snack Ideas:

Packaged Snack Food & Cheese	**Fruits and Vegetables**
General Mills Cereal: Rice, Corn or Wheat Chex, Cheerios (plain or multigrain) Nabisco Triscuits – plain only Nabisco Honey-Maid Graham Crackers Nabisco Wheat Thins (original only) Cascadian Farms Organic, Bionaturae, or Polaner's 100% fruit spread Cascadian Farms Purely O's Back to Nature Classic Round Crackers Back to Nature Gluten Free White Cheddar Crackers Rudi's Organic Spelt Tortillas Stonyfield Yogurt – YoBaby or regular (no YoToddler due to flaxseed) Ella's Kitchen Organic smoothie fruits Peter Rabbit Organics fruit snacks and veggie blends Vermont Village Organic Applesauce Cubed Mild Cheese (no dill havarti) String Cheese Cabot Cottage Cheese	Apples, Bananas, Clementines Sun Maid Raisins or Newman's Own Organic Raisins Mangos Oranges Cantaloupe Celery sticks and plain cream cheese Red Peppers Cucumbers Watermelon, Honey Dew Melon **Beverage** TCS provides water

Important: **We are a peanut safe school**--Due to continued changes in manufactured packing & processing, please read the ingredient list to ensure that it does not contain any of the following: peanuts/nuts, peanut/nut oil, peanut/nut flour, or any of the following statements, "may contain traces of peanuts/nuts" or "manufactured in a facility that also processes peanuts and or other nuts."

Whether served here at TCS or brought from home, please implement the following rule:

> Staff do not offer children the following: hot dogs, whole or sliced into rounds; whole grapes; nuts; popcorn; raw peas and hard pretzels; spoonfuls of peanut butter (not allowed here at all); or chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole.

Many parents have raised concerns about providing low fat, low sugar, non trans-fat healthy snacks for our children. This list contains both organic and conventional items and we appreciate your support in keeping our school safe from peanuts.

THE CHILDREN'S SCHOOL
SCHOLARSHIP POLICY
Approved March 11, 2010

I) Scholarship Committee: Composition and Membership

A committee composed of up to two current parents, usually members of the enrollment committee, and either the Administrator or a board member, will make scholarship decisions. This committee shall be called the "Scholarship Committee". A Chairperson is to be unanimously agreed upon by the members of the committee. Families applying for scholarships may not serve on the committee. Committee members who intend to apply for a scholarship must resign from the committee before application review.

II) Confidentiality

Information provided on the application is strictly confidential, including applicant's names. All applicants and supporting data will be destroyed on an annual basis, after an annual summary has been written. No names or personal data are to be included in this summary. The existence and status of the fund itself is public knowledge.

III) Fundraising Goals

The scholarship fund is funded with the Spring Fling fundraiser annually. The fundraising goal for the Scholarship Fund is the equivalent of one MWF morning program tuition. If the fundraising goal is not met or other financial circumstances present themselves then the amount budgeted for scholarship funds will be less than the fundraising goal.

IV) Emergency Reserve Provision

10% of the fund is to be set aside for emergency scholarship purposes. This reserve is to be used to help families who are having problems meeting tuition requirements due to unexpected family financial situations. Application for these funds should be made to the scholarship committee. All requests for scholarship funds are to be accompanied by a letter of explanation. The scholarship committee shall respond, in writing, within ten days.

V) Notice

Information regarding scholarship funds availability shall be provided via various school information including brochures, information packets and applications and admissions materials.

VI) Application and Assignment

Scholarship application deadlines shall be announced in the school's general application materials. All scholarship applications need to be submitted to the TCS office by the published date. Later applications will not be accepted, with two exceptions: 1) a family that enrolls after the deadline may make an application provided there are still unallocated funds, and 2) emergency scholarship applications.

Monies will be assigned on the basis of need following a formal application process. Applicants must complete the application for SRS financial assistance. If the family is eligible for SRS assistance, application must be made to SRS first. If a family is not eligible for SRS assistance, they may still be eligible for scholarship assistance from The Children's School. For example, SRS guidelines indicate that if one parent is a stay at home parent the family is ineligible for SRS assistance. That family may be eligible for assistance from The

Children's School. The family should complete the SRS application and include it with the documents submitted to The Children's School. In every case, a completed copy of the SRS application must be included with The Children's School application. Incomplete applications are not eligible for consideration.

Level of need may be determined by a formula, using the current SRS Daycare subsidy guidelines as a reference. A copy of the current SRS income guidelines is attached to this policy and will also be kept on file in The Children's School Office and made available to all parents.

VII) **Scholarship Limits**

Scholarships may not exceed 33% of the applicant's total annual tuition.

VIII) **Determination for Distribution**

Determination for distribution will be made prior to contracts being distributed. Scholarship application deadlines shall be announced in the school's general application materials. All Scholarship funds are awarded at first pass. If a family who has been awarded funds decides to leave, their award is reserved for future scholarship applicants. If new applicants do not present themselves it is to the discretion of the scholarship committee to award more to those already awarded or maintain the funds for other emergencies

Distribution of scholarship funds shall be made once annually, upon receipt of the signed contract and acceptance of the awarded amount.

IX) **Provision if Requests Exceed Available Funds**

If requests exceed available funds, scholarships will be distributed proportionally (according to the SRS Table) as follows:

X = Total Monies to be allocated at time of review

3 applicants fall on SRS table at A%, B% and C% income levels
A's scholarship = A%(X) / A+B+C
B's scholarship = B%(X) / A+B+C
C's scholarship = C%(X) / A+B+C

X) **Increase in Family Income**

If a recipient's income changes, the committee shall review the statement of continued need and make changes in grant amounts accordingly.

XI) **Unallocated Funds**

If funds remain in the scholarship fund after awards are made they are available for new applicants. Funds may also be allocated by the Board to be used for other school emergency or capital improvement needs. Unassigned monies will be carried forward into the next year's scholarship fund. Information as to the status of the scholarship fund shall be made available to parents upon request.

XII) **Other Uses for Scholarship Funds**

Scholarship funds do not need to be used strictly for tuition. Money may be requested for various fees throughout the year. All requests for scholarship funds are to be accompanied by a letter of explanation for the request. The scholarship committee will provide a written response within 10 days of the request.

XIII) **Annual Summary**

The Chairperson of the scholarship committee is responsible for writing a summary of the year's scholarship activity by the end of each school year. No names or personal information are to be included in this summary. This information is to be kept in the Scholarship file for the benefit of future Scholarship Committees.

Once the annual summary has been written, all applications and supporting data are to be destroyed, except information regarding returning families who will be applying for scholarships in the next year.

THE CHILDREN'S SCHOOL
COMPLAINT AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION POLICY

Revised and Approved February 7, 2002

I) Statement of Intent

The Children's School strives to be democratically operated. Parent input is both welcomed and encouraged. General suggestions regarding staffing, hours of operation, choice of toys, books and equipment, tuition, etc., should be submitted through the suggestion box located near the parent mailboxes or presented to the Board at its monthly meeting. Notify the Board President if you would like issues to be placed on the agenda to be discussed at the next scheduled board or corporation meeting.

In every community individuals come into conflict with one each other. When conflict arises, we encourage direct communication between the individuals involved. If direct communication breaks down then the problem shall be brought to the board for mediation. Please follow the steps below if you are involved in a conflict which has not been resolved through direct communication.

II) Step I: Initial Complaint or Concerns about your Child, Staff Members, or the Program

If a parent or a staff member has a concern about a child, they should first speak directly to the person or member of the staff with which they have the complaint. If this is not possible, or if the complaint is about the program, they should speak with one or both of the Head Teachers. Staff members should speak to one another or to the board president. If the complaint is with a Parent Helper, the issue should be brought up with one or both of the Head Teachers. If the complaint is with a member of the board, the issue should be addressed with the President of the Board or any other Board officer. If the complaint is with the president, complaints should be addressed with the Vice President or another officer. If the complaint is with a Board officer, the complaint should be addressed with the President. If the subject is likely to take some time or is of a confidential nature, please make an appointment with the appropriate person(s) (as noted above) to discuss the matter. If, after they have left the school for the day, parents or staff members are concerned about their child, the children of the school in general or an incident that has occurred at school, they should call the office to speak with one of the head teachers or contact a member of the Board.

III) Step II: Dissatisfaction with Step I

If the parents or staff member feel that their concerns have not been met after speaking directly with the appropriate staff or board member, the complainant has the choice of two courses of action. First, the complaint can either be put in writing and submitted to the president of the board of directors or, alternatively, submitted for mediation. The process for both Written complaints and mediation are described below:

Written Complaints:

The president will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing and it will be reviewed by a sub-committee appointed by the board within *5* days of acknowledgement. If they wish, the parent or staff member may address the members of the sub-committee to discuss the complaint. The course of action determined by the sub-committee will be communicated in writing to the parties in question within 5 days of their meeting.

Mediation:

1) One or both parties shall request a meeting with the personnel chair and/or board president to discuss the area of concern and determine if a mediation meeting is needed.
2) If necessary, the individuals, personnel chair and/or board president, and perhaps an additional listener and/or note-taker will meet to discuss the situation. The goals of the personnel chair and/or board president at this meeting shall be:

    A) To help the individuals discuss their thoughts clearly and hear each other's point of view.
    B) To facilitate a resolution.

3) Resolution may require more than one meeting, but at the end of each meeting there should be agreement that there has been forward movement on both sides.
4) If the personnel chair and/or the board president feel that there is not progress after one or more meetings, he or she may discuss this with the individuals and may recommend that the issue be presented before the board for consideration.
5) After the resolution, the personnel chair and/or the board president shall follow up with the parties involved.

IV) Step III: Dissatisfaction with Internal Complaints Procedure and Very Serious Complaints

If the parents or staff member are dissatisfied with the outcome of the internal proceedings and/or if the complaint is of a very serious nature, the complainant should contact The State of Vermont Child Care Consumer Care Line at 1-800-649-2642.