

Together We're Better



... NAPA VALLEY ...
NURSERY SCHOOL

PARENT HANDBOOK

(Revised May 2020)

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Napa Valley Nursery School, a Parent Cooperative. A parent participation (*or cooperative*) nursery school is a nonprofit, nonsectarian, democratic organization where each family shares in the planning and operation of the school. Parents participate in the classroom on a rotating basis, serving as assistants to our Director. The efforts of parents and their direct involvement during the school day make parent participation nursery schools a uniquely rewarding educational endeavor.

This handbook has been prepared to help you understand the policies of the school and to assist you and your child in adjusting to nursery school education as a participating parent.

Our school is licensed by the State of California Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing Division. This department regulates and licenses group programs for young children. Each year a Licensing Program Analyst may visit our school (*in a surprise visit*) to verify our compliance in the following areas: child admission requirements, staff qualifications, adult to child ratios, building repair and maintenance, and health and safety standards. If we are found lacking in any area, a citation is issued and we are given 30 days to make corrections, or the school will be fined. The regulations established by Community Care Licensing are for the protection and well-being of the children, and we make every effort to run our program in strict compliance with their rules and guidelines.

NVNS is also an independent member of the California Council of Parent Participation Nursery Schools, CCPNS. Our membership in CCPNS as an independent school provides us access to group liability and accident insurance, and entitles us to participate in an annual conference for parents and teachers, which offers enrichment and new ideas for curriculum expansion.

It is the policy of Napa Valley Nursery School not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, religion, creed, age, national origin, ancestry, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, military status, disability, or any other classification protected by Federal or State law in any of its educational programs, activities, policies, practices, and procedures.

While you are a member, this is Your School!

HISTORY

Napa Valley Nursery School had its beginning in 1950 under the name of Mt. George Play Center. It was under the direction of Donna Connell, and was located at the Mt. George Farm Center. The school then moved to a small house in Alta Heights and then to the basement of a house on Main Street.

In 1957, the name was changed to St. Mary's Cooperative Nursery School. The teacher was Mrs. John L. Lucas and the parents became directly involved in raising money for the school and assisting in the classroom. As in the case of the Mt. George Play Center, the St. Mary's Cooperative Nursery School was state licensed and run in a professional manner.

In 1958, because the Main Street location did not pass fire inspection, the school moved to the First Church of the Christian Scientist on Polk Street. After this move, the State Department of Social Welfare then granted the application for license renewal.

In November 1958, the school moved to 952 Napa Street, and in 1962 came to the present location at the First United Methodist Church on Randolph Street. Participating families took a very active part in preparing the location for the school including grading and graveling a play area, acquiring and arranging the toys and schoolroom supplies, etc. Jan Clark became the Director and was replaced by Mrs. Larry Dybe in 1965-1966. Mrs. Jane Whitehair, an experienced teacher in kindergarten and first grade, was hired to direct the school in 1967. She continued in this position until the fall of 1983. At this time Karen Frisinger was hired as the new Director to teach the MWF classes, and Lori Ware was hired to teach the T/TH classes. In the fall of 1987, Lori Ware became the full-time Director and began teaching all of the classes.

Since the beginning, NVNS, a Parent Cooperative, has provided a quality pre-school experience for the children of Napa in a closely supervised atmosphere, with a high standard of parental involvement and support.

SCHOOL VISION, MOTTO, AND MISSION STATEMENT

Vision

Napa Valley Nursery School is an engaging environment for children, families and community to grow together.

Motto

Parents, teacher and children, "Together We're Better"!

Mission Statement

Napa Valley Nursery School offers a safe, nurturing, sensory-rich environment, where parents share in their child's first school experience outside of home. Teacher, parents, and children can work, play, learn and grow together as family and as a supportive community for each other.

Promoting individual interests and offering a rich environment for exploration and discovery, we support the growing physical, social, emotional, and cognitive needs of the whole child.

We believe that a creative, developmentally appropriate, child-directed learning environment, supported by family, can create a positive attitude towards future learning.

Parents and families have the opportunity to learn child development and gain an understanding of the values of the activities offered within the program as they work in the classroom under the direction of an accredited teacher.

The diverse, cooperative parent community is there to support not only their child, but other children and families in the school.

NVNS provides parents an opportunity to learn more about child development, their own child, themselves and each other, in a friendly, supportive, community environment.

As members of the California Council of Parent Participation Nursery Schools, we also offer many extra nursery school and parent education opportunities for families.

THE NVNS CO-OP IN A NUTSHELL (*Things You Must Do*)

1. Work in the classroom (see [Working Parents](#))
2. Pay your monthly [tuition](#) on time
3. Fulfill the duties of a [School Job](#)
4. Attend monthly [Parent Meetings](#)
5. Participate in one [Housekeeping Saturday](#) per year
6. Participate in [End-of-Year Clean-Up](#)
7. Participate in and contribute to school [fundraisers](#)

WHOM TO CALL

Communications are best when they are as direct as possible. The following list should help you get in touch with the people who can best help you.

Whom to Call	...If your suggestion or question is about:
Executive Director	children at school; the daily program, school equipment, or working parents
Administrative Coordinator	the Wait List and/or admission process, Parent Information Night, school tours, tuition assistance, financial reports and the school budget, etc.
President	the general administration of the school; suggestions or board requests; topics for Parent or Board Meetings
Vice President	the board election process, questions about the NVNS handbook and/or by-laws, or if you will be unable to attend a Parent Meeting, Housekeeping Saturday, or End-of-Year Clean-up
Secretary	all meeting minutes
Treasurer	the school budget, outstanding bills, reimbursement for expenses, deposits, tuition and/or fees/fines, etc.
Enrollment Coordinator	enrollment forms, the school roster, annual enrollment survey, or withdrawal procedures
Job Coordinator	School Jobs, the summer mailer, or Orientation
Communications Chair	having information shared via email with the entire school, suggesting website improvements, encouraging communication between current families, alumni, and the community at large, etc.
Fundraising Chair	annual fundraising activities, raffle donations, etc.
Maintenance Chair	suggesting projects, offering materials, or sharing ideas for facility improvement
Class Schedulers	class schedules, E-Parent duties, snacks, etc.
Newsletter Editor	offering ideas or text for the school newsletter including recipes, funny stories, classified ads, etc.

Communicating with the Board

Parents are free to attend board meetings (*unless they are closed*) and the board welcomes communication with the parents.

THE CHILD'S PROGRAM

When the children come to nursery school, the Director and parents will welcome them. Activities in the classroom and outdoors reflect the nursery school curriculum, based on early childhood development. Areas of the curriculum include:

Motor Development

Learning stations are provided for the children to use their bodies. There is opportunity for large muscle activity, such as: running, climbing, jumping, balancing, and dancing. Materials designed to increase manual dexterity as well as both gross motor and fine motor development are provided.

Use of Language

The child's use of language is stimulated. The adults use simple and logical language, and progress as the child is ready. Interest and praise in their communication, books, journal writing and play is encouraged.

Intellectual Growth

The program is intended to stimulate the intellectual growth of the children. We present a wealth of concrete experiences that will provide the children with the raw material of ideas and symbols. "The more a child has seen and heard, the more he wants to see and hear." (*Piaget*) Concrete objects will be available for handling and knowing with all of their senses. Cooking experiences, animals, nature walks, and trips into the community will provoke their curiosity. They will be encouraged to observe and to verbalize their discoveries.

Social Growth

Socially, the stage is set for interaction with their peers in meaningful work-play. The Director is unobtrusively aware of the children's situations so that she can help one child to understand and accept another's behavior, suggest suitable social techniques when a child needs them, and sensitively guide children through various times of their development.

Free choices of play activities, inside and out, will be available to children. The children will have an opportunity to participate in music and movement, whether actively or by watching and listening.

Our nursery school schedules are designed to provide enough routine so that our young children will feel the comfort of knowing what is going to happen next. The program is varied occasionally by excursions, simple birthday celebrations, and the special learning opportunities the seasons and holidays provide.

PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR THE FIRST DAY

Be brief when explaining to your child about entering school. It usually works best not to discuss school too far in advance or to overwhelm a child with elaborate descriptions. In spite of the excitement you may feel, try to be casual with your child.

Activity in a social setting makes physical and emotional demands on small children, just as with adults. Your child may be more tired than usual at first, and more ready for nap time or evening bedtime. Some children may be highly stimulated or keyed up initially. For these reasons, it is best for you to simplify the daily routine as much as possible.

The First Day

On this day, as on other nursery school days, please dress your child comfortably for vigorous indoor and outdoor play. When you reach school, the Director will greet you both. Allow your child to investigate the new surroundings. Your child may prefer to stay by your side or to sit on your lap. Bear in mind that this is a big adventure. In no way must the child feel pushed or forced to join the other children or start an activity.

When to Leave

Since there is no way to be sure beforehand just how your child will react upon starting school, please arrange to be available to stay for the first few days, if necessary. It is natural for a young child to need support in a strange experience. The separating period is sometimes only a few days, but for the younger, less experienced child, it may be several weeks. During this time allow your child to cling to you, sit on your lap, or stand on the sidelines watching. Also, if you leave the room, let your child know you are leaving and how long you will be gone.

Your child's reactions are the best indications of readiness to participate, so be as passive as you can. Let your child work into the group at a comfortable pace. Avoid suggestions of specific activities or behavior. Relax and do nothing but be there.

The Director will be looking for some clues that your child is feeling comfortable. Examples are: children knowing where things are in the playroom and the yard, remembering "what happens next" or accepting help from the Director or one of the working parents. Steps such as these suggest growing self-confidence. Soon your child will be ready to let you leave.

When you and the Director have agreed that the time has come, you will say goodbye calmly and firmly while the Director stands ready to give moral support as needed. Never leave without your child knowing! It sometimes helps to inform your child of what you will be doing during school time. Bringing a favorite toy from home often helps the child over this period. Leaving a scarf or some other possession of your own is tangible proof that you will return.

When you leave, don't be alarmed if your child cries. It is a natural way to express upset feelings. The Director is there and will help the child accept your "goodbye." The Director will call you at home if your child truly needs you.

Reactions at Home

At first, your child may express displeasure over going to nursery school. Let your child talk about these feelings. It won't do any harm, and it may help the child feel you understand. Because school is a new experience, you and your child may feel fatigue and strain at first. You will both relax and enjoy yourselves as you adjust to the routine.

Despite all of the planning and preparing that you and the Director do, there are likely to be reactions at home during the initial days at school. Young children do not take big steps forward without taking a few steps back. Toileting accidents, temper tantrums, clinging and crying at school and at home are sometimes part of the adjustment to nursery school. Try not to make a fuss about this. After the adjustment period, these behavior problems will probably stop. Also, because your child sees you less, there may be excessive demands on you when you are together. Giving a little undivided attention after school will reduce adverse behavior such as crossness and whining.

Please keep the Director posted on what happens at home, and she will keep you informed on what happens at school. Above all, remember these are symptoms not of unhappiness, but of coping with a new and big experience. They won't last.

When You Are Not Here

You may find it surprisingly difficult to part from your child. After all, this may be the first time that you have shared with someone else so much responsibility for your child's time and welfare. Please rest assured that the Director will contact you if your child really needs you. Please feel free to call the school anytime you are concerned or would like to check in.

PROGRAM HOURS (*Arrival & Departure Times*)

Arrival Times:	Departure Time:
<u><i>Tuesday/Thursday Class</i></u> 8:30-8:45 A.M. (<i>on your working days</i>) 9:00 A.M. (<i>all other days</i>)	12:30 P.M. (<i>on your working day, approximately</i>) 12:00 A.M. (<i>all other days</i>)
<u><i>MWF Class</i></u> 8:30-8:45 A.M. (<i>on your working days</i>) 9:00 A.M. (<i>all other days</i>)	12:30 P.M. (<i>on your working day, approximately</i>) 12:00 P.M. (<i>all other days</i>)

Do not bring your child into class earlier than the scheduled start time unless you are a working parent. Parents, guardians or carpool drivers must bring the child into the school and remain until the Director greets the child. Please wait in the hall until the classroom door opens.

The Director will need a written note from the parent to release the child to someone other than those listed in their files.

If your child will not attend school that day, please notify the school by calling 224-3319.

DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP PROCEDURES FOR NON-WORKING DAYS

Drop-Off Procedures

When you arrive to drop-off your child on one of your non-working days, please line up in the hallway outside Room 1, sign-in your child on the clipboard for your class, and wait for the Director to open the second door of Room 1 (*i.e. the one nearest the bathroom*). Once the Director has greeted your child and you are ready to leave, please go out through the first door of Room 1 (*i.e. the one nearest the cubbies*).

Pick-Up Procedures

When you arrive to pick-up your child on one of your non-working days, please make sure the children are no longer in Room 1, then check your child's cubby to see if there is anything you need to take home. Next, line up in the hallway outside Room 2, sign-out your child on the clipboard for your class, grab anything that belongs to your child from the shoe-shelf (*e.g. shoes, jackets, etc.*), and wait for the appropriate Working Parent to open the second door of Room 2 (*i.e. the one nearest the music corner*). Once you have greeted your child and are ready to leave, please go out through the first door of Room 2 (*i.e. the one nearest the refrigerator*). Please do NOT allow your child to go out through the door that leads to the play yard as this creates potential safety issues and causes unnecessary disruptions for the Working Parents who are trying to clean. Instead, if you need to go back into Room 1 for any reason (*e.g. to pick up something you forgot, let your child use the bathroom, etc.*), please exit Room 2 through the first door and enter Room 1 from the hallway.

ACTIVITY CENTERS

Room 1

Art Center

Children have free choice and exploration of a variety of materials and art media. Parents are there to supervise the use of materials and to provide encouragement and support. No models or examples are given at this time. There is no comparison between children's work. Art at the preschool level is a process and not a finished product.

Sensory Table

This table will offer a variety of materials that are rotated. Examples are play dough, cornmeal, sand, texture board, etc.

Manipulative Table

Each day a selection of manipulatives, puzzles, and games will be placed on this table. The manipulatives will encourage hand-eye coordination, spatial relations, problem solving, taking turns, etc. Let children do as much as they can on their own but if they become frustrated, lend a hand.

Cut/Color Table

This center provides many choices of prewriting activities. The availability of a variety of tools offered will allow children to explore at their own level of developmental interest. Items such as stickers, hole-punches, scissors, markers and paper are to be used as the children wish.

Reading Corner

This is a quiet area of the room where children may look through books. Parents may read to an individual child or a small group. Everyone must remember that this is a place for quiet activity and redirect those who forget.

Room 2

Block Center

Children have the opportunity to build with large and small blocks.

Imaginative Play

This is the housekeeping area where the children have dress-up clothes, dolls, cooking and cleaning props, etc. At other times there will be props to encourage pretending at grocery store, gas station, restaurant, doctor, etc. Parents may have a great time pretending right along with the children.

Science Table

The science table will offer a variety of items for children to explore. Sometimes the table will have "hands-on" activities and at other times there will be "looking activities."

Music Making

The music shelf offers drums, rattles, horns, triangles, etc. These instruments can be used freely and are especially helpful in celebrating during birthday parades.

Live animals

Room 2 is home to the guinea pig, several goldfish, and walking stick bugs. Children can feed and pet the guinea pig (*with close parent supervision, mostly for the guinea pig's safety*), handle the walking stick bugs (*with close adult supervision*), and feed and watch the fish. (*For added safety, children use the "holding basket" to hold the guinea pig on their lap.*) Special visiting animals may also make an appearance on occasion in Room 2, including silk worms, lady bugs, tadpoles, newly hatched chicks, and butterflies.

Outside Yard

Outdoor Activities

Children explore fort/playhouse, sandbox and climbing equipment under parent supervision. Children will risk and challenge themselves within their own ability limitations. Parents do not lift children onto the equipment.

Easel Painting & Build Center

Please remember the following guidelines when helping children:

1. Place one brush in each paint container.
2. Print children's name on artwork using a capital letter for the first letter only. Be sure to ask the child where they would like their name placed; it's their artwork.
3. Any comment on the child's artwork must be sincere. Ask "Will you tell me about your picture?" instead of "What is it?"
4. Process is more important than product.

ROUTINES FOR THE CHILDREN

Group Time

During group time, all of the children are asked to come together for full-class activities such as Music Time, Story Time, Show-and-Tell, etc. During group time, the children are learning to sit and listen to both the Director and other children. Parent participation in activities and songs is a good model for children to follow. The children are encouraged to participate at group time, but may observe or participate in non-disruptive substitute activities. A child may bring one item from home for show and tell **on his or her parent's workday**.

Snack Time

All food allergies will be posted in the snack preparation area of Room 1, so the working parent preparing snack should check this list.

The working parent setting up snack will prepare a tray for each table with napkins, cups, snack, juice/milk and other supplies as needed. At least one working parent will sit at each table. Once the children have washed their hands and the class is seated for snack, the Director will lead the thank you song. When the song has ended, one working parent will bring a tray to each table. The parent at the table passes napkins to the first child, who takes one and passes to the next and so on. This continues with snack, cups, and the beverage. Remember, you are modeling the words and manners, and helping to facilitate sharing.

Toward the end of snack, wastebaskets will be offered to the children of the working parents, and those children will have the option to be the garbage helpers for the day or allow other children volunteers to perform that role in their place. When the table is clear, all children put their heads on the table for a quiet moment and wait for direction to the next activity.

WORKING PARENTS (*The Parent Participation Day*)

Parental participation in the classroom and the overall school program is a cornerstone of our co-operative preschool, and working parents act as crucial assistants to the Director. Your Class Scheduler will assign your family to work an appropriate number of days in the classroom each month (see the [“Number of Scheduled Workdays”](#) section below), and the following general guidelines should help you prepare for your scheduled workdays:

- You should wear clothes that are comfortable for an active and possibly messy day. During cold weather, please make sure to bring enough layers that you can comfortably work outside as needed.
- Your first duty is to arrive on time and sign the attendance sheet. The children start play immediately, so it is essential for adults to begin their supervision responsibilities upon arrival. Learn the name of each child as soon as you can. Don't be discouraged or overwhelmed by the apparent mountain of things to learn. The Director and returning parents are happy to help you and explain routines. Everyone was new once, so please don't hesitate to ask if you have any questions or concerns.
- Choose a work card from the bulletin board to the right of the bathroom, and consult the activity card that corresponds to it – together, these cards will direct you in preparing that day's activities in your chosen work center. Work card choice occurs on a “first come, first served” basis, so you should plan to arrive a bit early if you have a strong preference for a particular work center.
- Help yourself to an apron from the phone closet located in the reading area of Room 1 if you so desire.
- Your child may bring a favorite item (e.g. *toy, book, etc.*) or bit of news for “Show & Tell” on your scheduled workdays. Have your child place “Show & Tell” items in the basket just inside the entrance to Room 1 – they will be returned during group time right before the end of class.
- As a working parent, please refrain from discussing events of the day with other parents. The Director will discuss all children behaviors or accidents in the classroom directly with the appropriate parent(s).
- As a State Licensing regulation, working parents are not allowed to bring other siblings to class on their scheduled workdays.

On your participating day, your child may behave quite differently than other days at school. It is helpful to consider it from your child's point of view. You are here, but you are busy helping several other children. Your child may feel challenged to recapture your exclusive attention, even to the extent of clinging, crying, or showing anger at you or someone else. It may be quite difficult for your child to share you with the other children and adults, but learning to do so without losing your love is another big step forward. Feel free to give special considerations as you fulfill your participation duties: the smile, hug, or the place next to you while you serve juice or read a story. Your acceptance of feelings of possessiveness will make it easier for your child to allow you to help the other children and still feel loved.

Our school's program is designed around a low child-adult ratio, and our state issued license does not allow us to begin the school day without the correct number of parents. Therefore, it is essential that you find another parent to work for you if you must be absent for any reason on one of your scheduled workdays. (See the [“Trades, Paid Substitutes, and E-Parents”](#) section for more information.) All of us need the cooperation of others at times of schedule complications. Please don't hesitate to ask for help, and try to be available when someone needs you.

INTERACTING WITH CHILDREN & SAFETY RULES

Suggestions for Interacting with Children

- Bend down to the children's eye level whenever possible. Please do not sit on equipment such as tables, blocks, climbing structures, or shelves. *(If adults sit on equipment, it is unavailable to the children.)* Use a quiet voice and simple, direct words. Walk up to children before speaking to them. Bend or lean toward them or squat to their level. Be within hearing and touching distance of children that you are supervising.
- Make statements in the positive whenever possible. Use direct action verbs, such as "keep the sand low," rather than "don't throw the sand."
- If your child's behavior or the particular area you are supervising on some days get difficult, don't be afraid to call on the Director for help or trade areas with another parent.
- Avoid intervening in children's activities. Your display of interesting materials is the best stimulus to good play. Avoid making samples for children. Modeling discourages children's own creativity.

If a Child Ignores Safety Rules or Behaves in a Disturbing Way

- Use a question form to suggest a constructive activity. [Could you find some boards to hammer?]
- Suggest taking turns. [Scott, a good way to get a turn is to say, "Let me know when you're finished. I want a turn."] When the arrangements between the children are made, ask, "What will help you wait?" Then you may help the child get started in that activity.
- Suggest cooperation. [Could Tina give you a ride, and then you give Tina a ride?]
- Lead the child off to another play area and promote interest in that activity. Above all, prevent the hurting or dangerous activity. Say, "You cannot push Mark, it hurts, and I won't let you." **Then do not allow it.** There is no foolproof recipe. Each situation is different. Your suggestions may be rejected, and that's alright. Feel free to call on the Director for help at any time.
- When a child doesn't have a choice, use words like time and need. For example, "It's **time** for snack." "We **need** to put away the blocks so that we can have music." Don't pretend to give a choice when there really is no choice. When you give a choice, abide by the child's decision.
- Give the children advance notice of the next activity so that they can finish what they are doing and be prepared to change. For example, "It's almost snack time." "Finish what you are doing."
- Respect the child as an individual. Be as courteous as you would be with an adult. There may be a child who appears unlike you or whom you do not like immediately. Sometimes making a special point of observing such an individual gives you more insight into that child. Respond in a friendly way to a child's show of affection, but don't force your own feelings on any child.

Safety

- Face as much of the play area you are supervising as possible.
- Watch the children.
- When play becomes unsafe, intervene physically, if necessary.
- Prevent sand throwing by saying, "keep it low," or "just use the buckets".
- Prevent the throwing of hard objects.
- Do not allow pushing on high places, running inside the building, biting, kicking, or anything else you think is harmful. If in doubt, use your own judgment and ask the Director for clarification later.
- Report all accidents, however minor, to the Director.

TRADES, PAID SUBSTITUTES, AND E-PARENTS

If a Parent Cannot Work on the Assigned Day

If a parent cannot work on their assigned day for any reason, they must find another parent to work for them - either by trading workdays with another parent, or by hiring a paid substitute. When you trade workdays or arrange for a paid substitute in advance of the scheduled day, it is your responsibility to mark the change on the master schedule on the bulletin board at school. If it is a last minute change, please call the school and leave a message. This practice will help the Director and other working parents contact the appropriate people if there are any problems with scheduling.

Historically, there has been some confusion about how to handle various scenarios when a parent is unable to work on their assigned workday – hopefully this breakdown will help:

- If you know in advance that you won't be able to work, you are responsible for finding a trade or a paid substitute.
- If you realize within the emergency timeframe (*i.e. 9pm the night before to 8am the morning of class*) that you can't work due to a last minute or health related emergency, call the E-Parent as early as possible (*but please be respectful of sleep times*). The E-Parent is then responsible for working your shift, and you are responsible for covering their NEXT workday (*either by working, arranging a trade, or paying a substitute*). Regardless of how you cover it, you are responsible for that new date! (*Note: If you are BOTH agreeable to it, you could potentially negotiate to cover a different workday for the E-Parent – but ONLY if it is mutually agreeable.*)
- In the extremely rare event that you realize within the last hour before class that you cannot work, call the E-Parent right away. If they are unable to work for you, the two of you should work together and help each other make phone calls to find someone to cover your shift. If you still haven't found someone by 15 minutes before the start of class, call the school and the Director will try to find someone in line who can work at the last minute. (*If all else fails and we are still short a working parent by the start of class, school may have to close, so it is very important that we work together to avoid that situation as much as possible.*)

Paid Substitutes

If you are interested in being a paid substitute for other working parents, please let your Class Scheduler know. You can volunteer to be a paid substitute for either or both of the classes (*not just the one in which your child is enrolled*) – and if you serve as a substitute for the other class, you are welcome to bring your enrolled child with you. (*The parent for whom you work is responsible for paying you in a timely manner – see the [“Fees, Fines, and Payments for Substitutes”](#) section for the appropriate substitute payment amount.*)

Emergency Parents (a.k.a. “E-Parents”)

The Emergency Parent is the extra person assigned to be on-call for each workday. This person is the school's “insurance” that we will never be shorthanded. Everyone will be scheduled to be the E-Parent at various times during the year.

The E-Parent must **only** be called to work for you if you have a **last minute or health related emergency** (*i.e. you or your child wakes up ill, there is a death in the family, etc.*).

- A **last minute emergency** is defined as an emergency occurring between the hours of 9:00 p.m. the night before and 8:00 a.m. the morning of your scheduled workday.
- A **health related emergency** for a working parent is defined using the same criteria as keeping a sick child home from school (*see the [“Health & Illness”](#) section for more details*) – if you are truly sick, we ask that you stay home from school.
- If you know prior to the “last minute” timeframes described above that you will be unable to work for any reason, then you need to find a paid substitute or arrange a trade. This process can include (*but*

should not be limited to) emailing the entire class requesting a trade, calling several parents asking for a trade, etc.

Please be respectful regarding the time of day you phone the E-parent.

If you call the E-Parent to work for you, then you are responsible for their NEXT workday. If you are unable to work that day or are already scheduled, then you must arrange a trade or pay for a substitute.

When you are Scheduled as the Emergency Parent

When you are scheduled as the Emergency Parent, you are on call and need to ASSUME THAT YOU WILL BE WORKING. Please make all of the necessary arrangements (*i.e. babysitting, carpools, etc.*) to ensure that you will be able to work if called.

If you need to trade the day that you are scheduled to be an Emergency Parent, it is your responsibility to notify all of the working parents scheduled on that day and to make the change on the schedule posted on the bulletin board at school.

You must be available for phone calls on the morning of your scheduled E-Parent workday.

If you are called, you must change the names on the schedule posted on the bulletin board. The person who called you will work your next scheduled day or will find a trade/hire a substitute.

If you are scheduled as the Emergency Parent and you become ill, you MUST arrange for another person to be the Emergency Parent for you, and inform the other working parents immediately of the change.

NUMBER OF SCHEDULED WORKDAYS

Generally speaking:

- **T/TH Families** work an average of 2-3 days plus one scheduled "E-Parent" (*on call*) day per month.
- **M/W/F Families** work an average of 3-4 days plus one scheduled "E-Parent" (*on call*) day per month.
- **Families with more than one child enrolled** may work up to 3 days plus one "E-Parent" (*on-call*) day per month for each child in the MWF class AND up to 2 days plus one "E-Parent" (*on-call*) day per month for each child in the T/TH class.

NOTE: Families with more than one child enrolled need only participate in one School Job, one Housekeeping Saturday, and one End-of-Year Clean-Up Shift.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Bulletin Boards

The Bulletin Board as you walk into the school, the “Look” Board in the school library and the small bulletin board by the cubbies contain a lot of important information. Listed below are items you can find on these boards.

- Work Cards and Activity Cards: These cards direct working parents in preparing the daily activities for the various work centers.
- Lesson Plans: You may read the lesson plans to know what your child will be doing at school so you can talk with him or her and ask questions about what he or she has done.
- Church Rules: Please read, know and abide by the CHURCH RULES. *(One very important rule to note is that NO SMOKING is allowed in the church building at any time.)*
- Meeting Minutes: Parent meeting minutes will be posted. You must read and initial the Parent Meeting minutes if you miss a Parent meeting. *(See the “[Parent Meetings](#)” section for more details.)*
- Schedules: Class and Housekeeping Saturday schedules are posted.
- Other: A copy of the current newsletter and our latest budget reports may be posted for reference. Additional notices are put up all the time, and it is vital that everyone be aware of what is happening at our school. Look for sign-up lists so you can volunteer your time, bring treats to any upcoming events, etc.

Clothing

For your child’s happiness and your own peace of mind, dress your child in clothes that enable them to play without worrying about getting their clothes dirty or wet. Many of the paints and art supplies used at NVNS are difficult to remove from clothing. Clothes with elastic waistbands are easiest for children to remove themselves. In case of spills or other messy accidents, the school keeps a supply of old play clothes donated by the members. Remember to clearly mark outer clothing *(including hats)* and changes of clothing with your child’s name.

- Loaner Clothes: If your child becomes wet or messy, a working parent may help them change into “loaner” clothes from the bathroom cabinet. Please launder and return these loaners to school as soon as possible to ensure that we always have enough loaner clothes available. *(The working parent will put your child’s wet clothing into a plastic bag in their cubby.)*

Sun Safe Policy

1. NVNS will follow the guidelines of the CA Early Childhood Sun Protection Curriculum provided by the CA State Department of Health Services.
2. NVNS will provide a UVA/UVB *(Broad-Spectrum)* sunscreen for parent/guardians to apply to their children before entering class. *(The school will not be responsible for applying sunscreen.)*
3. NVNS will provide sufficient areas of shade for playing in our outdoor yard.
4. NVNS will provide a class set of wide brimmed hats and a class set of sunglasses for children’s use. Children may bring their own hats and sunglasses from home and keep them in their personal cubbies.
5. For all outdoor activities *(especially occurring between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.)*, children will be encouraged to seek areas of shade for play and wear wide brimmed hats and sunglasses.
6. Working parents will be encouraged to practice sun safety principles and strategies to serve as positive role models for the children.
7. NVNS will provide ongoing parent education using sun safety protection tips as outlined by the CA State Department of Health Services. *(This will include personal strategies for preventing skin cancer.)* Guidelines will be communicated and reinforced to staff, students, and parents, using our school handbook, parent education notices, monthly newsletters and meetings, etc.

Cleaning Supply Safety

All cleaning supplies will be stored under the kitchen sink cabinet. This cabinet must be locked at all times. For the children's safety, cleaning products must not be left on tables or counters at any time. Remember our motto, cleaning supplies must be "In your hand or in the cabinet."

Health & Illness

Our state licensing requires the Director to be aware of the general health condition of each child upon arrival. If a child is found to be unwell in the Director's judgment, it is the responsibility of the person who brought the child to return the child home.

Clearly, it is in everyone's best interest to minimize the spread of germs as much as possible. Each parent is responsible for keeping his or her child home from school if:

1. S/he has a temperature or has had one within the last 24 hours. *(A child may return to school when s/he has had no fever and has not required medications for fever for at least 24 hours.)*
2. S/he is currently contagious as confirmed by your doctor.
3. S/he has a dry hacking cough *(unless a doctor's certificate states that it is due to an allergy)*.
4. His/her cold is less than 3 days old.
5. S/he has abundant nasal discharge.
6. S/he shows signs of illness such as fever, rash, red eyes *(with or without discharge)*, upset stomach, unusual cough or cold symptoms, signs of nausea or diarrhea, etc. Inform the Director of any allergic symptoms the child might have.
7. Report to the Director any exposure to communicable disease.

Communicable Health Problems

Disease	Incubation	Isolation if Disease Develops
Chicken Pox	10-21 days	7 days or when the last lesion is dry and scabbed over
German Measles	14-21	At least 4 days after onset of rash
Scarlet Fever	2-5 days	7 days
Strep Throat	1-3 days	24-48 hours after Penicillin therapy has begun
Whooping Cough	7-21 days	5-7 days after the onset of therapy
Common Cold	12-72 hours	At least three days
Conjunctivitis (<i>Pink Eye</i>)	24-72 hours	Once eye appears healthy
Fifth Disease	4 days or less	Until facial rash disappears
Impetigo	4-10 days	Until lesion is dry and healing
Head Lice		Until eggs in hair and clothing have been destroyed, and nits are no longer present

First Aid

A child will be comforted for bumps, and scratches will be washed with soap and water and covered with a Band-Aid. The first aid kit is on top of the cubbies in Room 1. If your child is hurt in class, you will find an "Ouch Report" in their cubby describing the accident and the first aid administered.

Emergencies

Immediate action is left to the discretion of the Director. The parents or other emergency contacts will be notified. The parent with the "Room 1" work card is designated to call 911.

If there is a long-term emergency situation and we are forced to leave the facility, we will be located at the Salvation Army building on the corner of Division and Randolph. NVNS keeps water and emergency supplies on hand. Emergency bins are stored in Shed 2 and are easily accessible. The Director will stay with the children until all children are picked up.

Additional Emergency Procedures: IF A CHILD IS MISSING OR WANDERS

(Note: If a Substitute Teacher is covering class when a child goes missing, they will perform the "Director" duties described in this section.)

- Whoever discovers that a child is missing, IMMEDIATELY NOTIFY THE DIRECTOR.
- The Director will get another working parent to help search inside the school, then alert all working parents if the child is not located promptly.
- The Director will instruct some working parents to gather and stay with the other children, then direct a thorough search both inside and outside the school perimeter to locate the missing child with the other working parents.
- As soon as it has been confirmed that the child is not inside the school and if the child is not located outside the school promptly, the Director will instruct a working parent to call 911 for assistance.
- The Director will then notify the child's parents.
- When the child is located, the child's parents and the Director will discuss further actions and support as necessary for safety.

Fire Drills

During a fire drill, the parent with the "Room 1" work card pretends to call the Fire Department (911), evacuates the entire room (*including the bathroom*) and takes the attendance clipboard as they leave Room 1 through the door near the fire extinguisher. The other working parents evacuate their respective areas, and all working parents walk with the children to our "safety tree" in the nature area to the left of the outdoor playhouse - it is the large Redwood tree to the left by our school fence. The Director will take attendance.

Snacks, Allergies, and the NVNS Organic Policy

Working parents provide snacks for their child's class on a rotating basis, as assigned in the monthly class schedules. Snacks provide important fuel for our children and should be healthy, well-balanced, and made up of wholesome, nutritious foods. The best way to select a well-balanced snack is by providing simple foods that combine carbohydrates, fruits/vegetables, and protein in the same sitting. Examples of easy snacks are: cheese and crackers with fresh fruit; mini bagels with cream cheese and carrot sticks; pita bread triangles with hummus and cheese slices along with apple wedges; etc. Although sugar treats are fun and exciting, they are not appropriate as the only item in snack and we discourage them from being served at school. If you would like more snack ideas, please refer to the snack suggestion list posted in the snack supply cupboard (*i.e. Cabinet #3 located in Room 1*). Two very important notes:

- **Allergies:** NVNS will respond appropriately to specific allergies of children enrolled at the school, and all food allergies will be posted in the Room 1 snack cabinet and on the refrigerator in Room 2. Some children may be asked to bring their own snacks in order to ensure their safety, and NVNS may operate as a peanut and/or tree nut free school depending upon the needs of the specific children enrolled. Parents will be kept appropriately informed of specific allergy requirements at parent meetings.

- **Organic Policy:** Food that is provided by NVNS (e.g. *cooking snack supplies, additional snack items and daily snack beverages*) will be organic whenever possible. Snacks provided by families are not required to be organic, but organic options are encouraged.

Birthdays

In order to celebrate your child's birthday at school, you will be scheduled as Birthday Snack Parent on your child's party day. Please bring a healthy birthday snack as a special treat for the class – ideally, something that your child will really enjoy. (*Fancy napkins, cups and/or plates are optional.*) If you would like to do so, your child may bring a gift for the school. During the celebration, your child gets to unwrap it and give it to the school. The children enjoy doing this and it helps keep our school supplied with new games, etc. (*A school Wish List is on file at Toy B Ville, or you can ask the Director for ideas specific to your class.*)

Holiday Parties

Please check the school calendar to see when your child's class is celebrating special holidays. We welcome younger siblings at specific holiday parties with their non-working parent. (*A sign-up sheet for younger siblings will be provided in advance for those parties so that the party parent can plan snack and activities accordingly.*) More detailed information about holiday parties will be provided as appropriate via Parent Meetings and/or hand-outs in the cubbies.

Field Trips

Field trips are scheduled periodically throughout the year. Most field trips are within walking distance of the school (e.g. *library, fire station, post office, park, etc.*), but some may require off-site drop-off and pick-up. Field trips may vary from class to class and from year to year, and they are always an exciting experience for the children.

Saturday School

Each school year we will invite your child's class to a special Saturday School session. This is an exciting day for your child to spend a Saturday morning sharing his/her preschool activities with a special adult who is not working in the classroom that day (e.g. *Dad, Grandma, Grandpa, Aunt, etc.*). Children have a chance to show and share their school and friends. Together with their "special adult," children will participate in a regular daily program of art, building, playing music, drama, cooking, outside play, stories, etc. This is a special day only for your **enrolled child** – no younger siblings are allowed.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

You may request a conference with the Director about your child any time you feel it necessary and the Director may request a conference with you if it is necessary. If, at the end of a month in school, it is the Director's opinion that the child is not ready for nursery school activities, the Director will discuss this with the parent. The Director has the right to ask the parents to withdraw the child from school. Parents whose children are leaving NVNS for kindergarten will have scheduled parent/teacher conferences in the spring.

School Cancellations

There may be conditions beyond our control (flooding, unhealthy air quality, fires, all teachers ill, etc.) where NVNS will need to cancel school and will not offer refunds or make-up days. The director(s) in conjunction with appropriate board members will determine when NVNS cancels school days. We will notify all families by 5PM the day before via e-mail, if at all possible.

Visitor Policy

Unrecognized Visitors

Maintaining a safe and undisturbed play environment for our children is paramount. In order to do so (*and in compliance with State Licensing Standards*), all unrecognized visitors may only be admitted to the classrooms and play areas with the Director's approval. In the event that an unrecognized visitor arrives during class hours and you answer the door, please politely explain that you will locate the Director and that in the meantime, they will need to wait outside the door of the classroom, in the hallway. If the Director is not available due to classroom activities, you will need to tell the person that they will have to wait until she is available, take a message, or let them know a time when they may return. When the Director is able to greet them, proper identification will be made/verified and if appropriate, the visitor will then be permitted to enter the school.

Visiting the School as a Non-Working Parent

In the event that you need to visit NVNS on a non-workday, we ask that you please remember that the classroom is in operation and request that you make as little impact as possible. When not working and coming into the classroom, please come to the first door, near the cubbies in Room 1. Knock and identify yourself to the working parent by giving them your name, your child's name, the class day of your child and the reason for your visit (*e.g. checking a cubby, restocking the shed, etc.*). By doing this, we make a point of getting to know each other, we ensure a safe environment for our children, and we respect that the classroom environment belongs to different families and children on different days. If at all possible, if you are not a working parent, try to avoid coming to school until after the workday is over for all classes (*i.e. after 12:00 during the week*).

Visiting Children

A child accompanied by an adult may visit Napa Valley Nursery School (*e.g. for a school tour*) and is exempt from State requirements.

STANDING POLICIES

Admission Requirements

1. To be eligible for admission, children must be at least 2 years 9 months old by September 1st for the T/TH morning class, and 3 years 9 months old by September 1st for the M/W/F morning class. All children must be completely toilet trained.
2. All required State and School forms must be on file prior to attendance. An enrolled child will not attend Napa Valley Nursery School until his/her file is determined complete by the Administrative Coordinator and/or the Enrollment Coordinator, and all tuition and enrollment fees must be paid in full by September 1st.
 - a. If a child who was admitted to NVNS on or before August 1st has an incomplete file as of September 1st, then, upon agreement between the Director, Administrative Coordinator, and Enrollment Coordinator, that child's space will be released immediately to the next person on the Wait List and any applicable pre-paid tuition will be refunded in a timely manner.
 - b. If a child is admitted to NVNS after August 1st, all non-medical paperwork (*as well as tuition and enrollment fees*) must be returned within 10 days, and all medical paperwork must be returned within 30 days in order to attend school. If after 30 days the file is incomplete, then, upon agreement between the Director, Administrative Coordinator, and Enrollment Coordinator, that child's space will be released immediately to the next person on the Wait List and any applicable pre-paid tuition will be refunded in a timely manner.
3. Current immunizations are required for every child attending NVNS unless appropriate exemptions are on file. (*More detailed information about medical requirements for children is included in the NVNS Admission Agreement and in the enrollment packet.*)
4. Medical paperwork (*i.e. physical health statement, proof of current negative TB status, and proof of current immunizations unless appropriate exemptions are on file*) is required for every adult planning to work in the classroom, and no adult will be allowed to work in the classroom until their medical paperwork has been received and processed. (*More detailed information about medical requirements for working adults is included in the NVNS Admission Agreement and in the enrollment packet.*) In addition, every adult who is planning to work in the classroom must attend Orientation. (*Working adults who attended Orientation and/or worked in the classroom the previous year do not need to attend Orientation again, but all new working adults and returning working adults who have been away from the school for more than 1 year must attend Orientation.*)

Wait List and Priority for Class Placements

A Wait List is maintained for all families, and names are added to that list on a "first-come, first-served" basis. Generally speaking, the order of priority for class placements is current enrolled families, then families who left mid-year and are rejoining, then alumni families, and finally families who are brand-new to the school – all based on Wait List date within each category. Also, students who are eligible for kindergarten, but whose parents know in advance that they want to continue for a third year, automatically have a space in the school for the following year – their class placement will be dependent upon Wait List date.

Registration and Insurance Fees

1. A one-time non-refundable registration fee must be paid for each newly enrolled child and is due within 10 days of receiving the enrollment packet.
2. Non-refundable insurance fees are paid each year for each enrolled child and are due within 10 days of receiving the enrollment packet.
3. Registration and insurance fee amounts are subject to change as part of the annual budget process, and the rates for the current school year are detailed in the NVNS Admission Agreement.

Tuition

1. The monthly tuition amounts for each class are detailed in the current NVNS Admission Agreement. The tuition amounts for each class are determined by operating costs and will be adjusted accordingly as part of the annual budget process.
2. Tuition is due the first day of each month, and must be paid one month in advance. *(So, September's tuition is due August 1st, May's tuition is due April 1st, etc.)* Tuition will be considered late on the 11th of the month and a late fee will be attached. *(See the "[Fees, Fines, and Payments for Substitutes](#)" section for the current tuition late payment fee.)* Late notices will be sent out by the 15th of the month via email, and tuition is due within 10 days. If payment is not received by the end of the month, the Vice President will give a dismissal notice. *(Note: For families offered a space at the school after the 1st of the month, tuition is due within 10 days of receiving the enrollment packet.)*
3. New and returning families admitted to NVNS by August 1st who do not have fees paid in full by August 10th will be subject to having their child's space released immediately to the next person on the Wait List, and any applicable pre-paid tuition will be refunded in a timely manner.

Tuition Assistance

The Napa Valley Nursery School tuition assistance program is supported 100% through the school's fundraising efforts. Tuition assistance can pay a percentage of your monthly tuition, and will be awarded for one year at a time. Tuition Assistance will be awarded based on the number of applicants, available funds and the applicant's good standing with the school. Recipient families must be in compliance with the current NVNS Admission Agreement contract.

To be eligible for tuition assistance, your total gross family income must meet the requirements detailed on the application form, which can be obtained by contacting the Administrative Coordinator. You must complete the entire application and submit a current 1040 for your family *(with social security information blacked out)* to the Administrative Coordinator by the deadline detailed on the application form. *(Families who join NVNS after the initial tuition assistance due date may still apply for tuition assistance by including the application with their enrollment packet, but approval will depend greatly upon the status of available tuition assistance funds at that point in time.)* All applications will be kept CONFIDENTIAL among the Administrative Coordinator, Executive Board, and Tuition Coordinator.

You will be notified of the outcome of your tuition assistance application by the Administrative Coordinator once your application has been reviewed and processed. If your request is approved, your reduced tuition will follow the same due dates and late fees as regular tuition payments – you will simply pay less tuition than families who are not on tuition assistance. *(Note: Tuition assistance does not apply toward the one-time Registration Fee or the annual Insurance Fee.)*

If you receive tuition assistance, you MUST pay your tuition on time in order to keep it. Tuition is due the 1st of each month, and if you do not pay by the 10th of each month, for the first occurrence, you will receive a formal warning letter and pay the appropriate late tuition payment fee, and for the second occurrence, your tuition assistance will be terminated for the remainder of the school year.

Transportation Policy

Parents are responsible for transporting their child to and from school. Parents are reminded that California law requires that all children be in an appropriate child restraint.

Parking

As a stipulation of our lease, we may not park in the parking spaces along the white wall of the church building. These are reserved for CHURCH STAFF ONLY. Parking in the marked spaces in the rest of the lot is on a first-come, first-served basis. You may also park on the street. *(Please be courteous and give priority to any elderly church members who may be trying to find a space in the parking lot.)*

Privacy Policy

The information that is contained in the school roster is intended solely for enrolled Napa Valley Nursery School families for school business and cannot be given to anyone else for any reason. It is prohibited to use this information for commercial or solicitation purposes.

School Job

Each family must actively participate in either an elected Board of Trustees position or a general School Job. (See the "[Employees, Elected Positions, and School Jobs/Teams](#)" section for more details.)

Parent Meetings

- The Director and Executive Board will decide upon the schedule and agenda for the monthly Parent Meetings.
- One parent from each family is required to attend each monthly Parent Meeting in its entirety. *(A sign-in sheet to verify attendance is available at each Parent Meeting; please make sure to sign it as your signature verifies your attendance.)*
- Each family in attendance at a Parent Meeting has one vote in all school decisions.
- With the exception of nursing infants, children are not permitted to attend parent meetings.
- Each family is allowed two missed Parent Meetings each year. If a parent meeting is missed, it is the responsibility of the parent to read and initial the minutes of the missed meeting *(which are posted on the school bulletin board)*. Further missed Parent Meetings must be made up prior to the next Parent Meeting – see "Parent Meeting Make-Ups" below.
- **Parent Meeting Make-Ups:**
 - Parent Meetings may be made up by attending the NEXT open Board Meeting. Most Board Meetings are open to all members, unless a personal and confidential matter is before the board. *(The Board has the authority to close that portion of the meeting as appropriate.)*
 - The May Board meeting is traditionally a closed Board Meeting to facilitate transition between the current and incoming Board. If you miss the May Parent Meeting and that is your third missed meeting of the year, you will not be able to attend the May Board Meeting as a make-up. Instead, you will be required to work an additional three-hour shift during the [End-of-Year Clean-Up](#). *(Note: The December Board meeting is generally closed as well, so if you need to make-up Parent Meeting misses at that point, you will probably need to attend the January Board meeting instead.)*
 - It is the parents' responsibility to arrange all missed Parent Meeting make-ups with the Vice President.
 - If a Parent Meeting *(beyond the two allowed)* is not made up, you may be required to leave the school. The Executive Board will evaluate extenuating circumstances.

Board Set-Up

All Board Members are required to assist with beginning of the year set-up and are therefore not required to participate in Housekeeping Saturday workdays.

Housekeeping Saturday

- All families (*with the exception of Board Members*) are required to participate in one Housekeeping Saturday per school year.
- Housekeeping Saturday will generally be the first Saturday of each month (*unless noted in the school calendar and sign-up sheet*) and shall begin at 9:00 AM and end at 1:00pm.
- Please be sure to sign in on your Housekeeping Saturday, so your presence is known. (*A “sign-in” sheet should be posted on the cabinet door.*)
- If you are unable to attend your chosen Housekeeping Saturday, you have the option to arrange a substitute in advance (*who must be a current NVNS family*) and you must pay them directly in a timely manner. If you arrange a substitute, you will need to notify the Housekeeping Parent with the name and telephone number of the substitute. If you do not show up on your scheduled Housekeeping Saturday and do not hire a substitute, you will be fined and you will be required to reschedule your workday. (*See the [“Fees, Fines, and Payments for Substitutes”](#) section for the appropriate Housekeeping Saturday fine and substitute payment amounts.*)

End-of-Year Clean-Up

Every family in the school is required to work three hours at the End-of-Year Clean-Up. If you would like to hire a substitute for your work shift, you must make arrangements with a current or alumni family in advance and pay them directly in a timely manner. If you do not show up to the End-of-Year Clean-up and do not hire a substitute, you will be fined. (*See the [“Fees, Fines, and Payments for Substitutes”](#) section for the appropriate End-of-Year Clean-Up fine and substitute payment amounts.*) Failure of a family to fulfill this obligation may result in the family not being allowed to return to the school in future years.

Fees, Fines, and Payments for Substitutes

- Tuition Late Payment Fee - \$25
- Returned Check Fee - \$15
- Payment to Substitute E-Parent - \$20; If Substitute E-parent becomes Working Parent - \$50
- Payment to Working Parent Substitute - \$50
- Payment to Housekeeping Saturday Substitute - \$100
- Payment to On-Call Housekeeping Saturday Substitute - \$25/Hour
- Missed Housekeeping Saturday Fine - \$200 (*plus reschedule to work a Housekeeping Saturday*)
- Payment to End-of-Year Clean-Up Substitute - \$75
- Missed End-of-Year Clean-Up Fine - \$300

All fees and fines are due as noted on the NVNS invoice. Also, all checks written to NVNS (*e.g. tuition, fees/fines, fundraisers, purchases, etc.*) that are returned for insufficient funds will be assessed a \$15 returned check fee as indicated above.

Fundraisers

We generally hold one major fundraising event each year that generates extra funds needed to run our school (*especially tuition assistance*), along with a variety of smaller fundraising efforts. Currently, our major annual fundraising event is the “Instant Wine Cellar”, for which we require that each family sell a minimum of 12 raffle tickets and donate at least one bottle of wine for each enrolled child.

Families may be requested to participate in other ways as identified by the Fundraising Chair and as agreed upon by the Board of Trustees.

Leaves of Absence

For Child

If your child is to be out of school for a prolonged period of time, you may apply for a one-month leave of absence. This must be done while the child is still in school. You will be required to pay half of a month of tuition to hold the child's place, and your child will not be allowed to attend class during their one month of leave. *(If your child is going to be out of school for more than one month, you will have to either pay full tuition for the rest of their absence or withdraw your child from the program <which will result in your child's name being placed on the Wait List>.)* During your child's one-month leave period, you will not be expected to work in the classroom or make up any classroom work days you miss during the leave – but if your child is absent beyond the one-month leave period, you will be scheduled to work in the classroom normally during the remainder of your child's absence and will need to arrange coverage via trades or paid substitutes if you are unable to work your assigned shifts yourself. All of the other family participation responsibilities will still be required during the one-month leave period, including performing your School Job, attending Parent Meetings, meeting fundraising requirements, participating in Saturday Housekeeping and End-of-Year Clean-up, etc. *(Note: Taking a leave of absence does not reduce the overall number of times your family will be expected to bring snack during the school year.)* The Board of Trustees will consider exceptions.

Medical-Working Adult

Medical leave is allowed for up to six weeks with a doctor's written notice and Board of Trustees approval. During this time your child will remain in school, but you will not be expected to work in the classroom or make up any classroom work days you miss during the leave. All of the other family participation responsibilities will still be required during the leave period, including performing your School Job, attending Parent Meetings, meeting fundraising requirements, participating in Saturday Housekeeping and End-of-Year Clean-up, etc. *(Note: Taking a leave of absence does not reduce the overall number of times your family will be expected to bring snack during the school year.)* The Board of Trustees will consider exceptions.

Maternity

Maternity leave is the same as Medical leave but a doctor's notice is not required. Maternity leave begins with the birth of the baby and extends for six weeks. *(Please notify your Scheduler of your expected due date so they can plan accordingly.)* The Board of Trustees will consider exceptions.

Withdrawal from School

To withdraw your child from the NVNS program, you must deliver written notice to the Enrollment Coordinator two weeks prior to the planned withdrawal date. *(The Enrollment Coordinator will contact you to confirm receipt of this notice.)* During those two weeks, withdrawing members are obligated to carry out all school responsibilities including meeting attendance, School Job, classroom work, and financial responsibilities.

Withdrawing families will not receive a reimbursement of their registration or annual insurance fee when they leave NVNS. However, they may be entitled to a partial tuition refund, depending upon the timing of their withdrawal. Failure to provide two weeks' notice will result in monies being withheld from whatever tuition refund is due in order to pay substitute families to work their missed shifts. For example:

- A family withdraws, they do not give two weeks' notice, and they have two workday slots to fill. Funds to pay two substitutes to cover their workday slots would be withheld from their refund. (See "[Fees, Fines, and Payments for Substitutes](#)" for the current substitute payment amounts.)

Termination of Membership or Dismissal from School

Failure to comply with any of the policies or obligations in this Handbook may result in termination of your membership at NVNS, as described in the 'Termination or Suspension of Membership' section of the NVNS By-Laws.

EMPLOYEES, ELECTED POSITIONS, AND SCHOOL JOBS/TEAMS

Executive Director

The Executive Board of Trustees shall appoint the Executive Director/Teacher (*frequently referred to as the School Director*). The State Department of Social Welfare sets the qualifications for this position. The Executive Board of Trustees shall review, draft, and present a new contract to the Executive Director for the following year in June of each year.

The Executive Director will work closely with the Board of Trustees to insure the smooth organizational functioning of the school and will assume full responsibility for the daily educational administration of the school program and supervision of the daily participation of staff.

Administrative Coordinator

The Administrative Coordinator provides assistance to the School Director and handles a variety of administrative duties for the school. In particular, the Administrative Coordinator (*together with the Enrollment Coordinator*) is responsible for the overall enrollment and admission activities of NVNS. As part of this effort, the Administrative Coordinator handles incoming enrollment inquiries (*both calls and emails*), maintains the school Wait List, conducts school tours, and works closely with the Enrollment Coordinator to plan the annual Parent Information Night and manage all enrollment paperwork. The Administrative Coordinator also receives and processes tuition assistance applications and works closely with the Treasurer and school Bookkeeper to provide financial oversight and continuity for the school.

Executive Board of Trustees

President

The President presides at Parent and Board Meetings, works as a liaison with the First United Methodist Church (*landlord*), renews school licenses and contracts, ensures adherence by all board members and parents to a yearly timeline of jobs/duties/projects, helps arrange substitute teachers when the primary teacher has a last-minute emergency, and facilitates communication among board members and the membership as a whole. (*School Team*: *The President leads the “Board”.*)

Vice President

The Vice President acts in conjunction with and in support of the President on matters regarding school operations, parent participation, and future planning for NVNS. The main role of the Vice President is to track parent participation and communicate with parents and the board when a family is not fulfilling its admission agreement. In addition, the Vice President performs a variety of specific annual tasks and administrative duties, including enrollment processing assistance, as needed, and overseeing and coordinating the annual Board election process. (*School Team*: *The Vice President leads the “Events Team”.*)

Secretary

The Secretary is responsible for taking and distributing written minutes of all NVNS Parent, Board, Executive Board, Emergency, and annual Budget Meetings. The Secretary is the point person for tracking changes for the annual Handbook revision and other administrative tasks as outlined/assigned.

Treasurer

The Treasurer is responsible for processing and depositing tuition and fundraising income as well as fines/fees, paying all school bills, and issuing reimbursements. The Treasurer also provides information to the

Administrative Coordinator and school Bookkeeper as needed to support their efforts to reconcile financial accounts and manage the school's books, prepare information for the school Tax Preparer, provide monthly financial statements for the Board and Membership, and create the annual budget.

Board of Trustees Positions

Enrollment Coordinator

The Enrollment Coordinator (*together with the Administrative Coordinator*) is responsible for the enrollment and admission activities of NVNS. As part of this effort, the Enrollment Coordinator processes incoming enrollment paperwork as it arrives, administers the annual enrollment survey, and maintains the class rosters, birthday lists, and student files when school is in session.

Job Coordinator

The Job Coordinator is responsible for all tasks and activities regarding School Jobs. The Job Coordinator also coordinates and facilitates Orientation and manages the annual summer mailer. (*School Team*: *The Job Coordinator leads the “**Classroom Operations Team**”.*)

Communications Chair

The Communications Chair is responsible for keeping the NVNS Community, past, present, and future, informed about NVNS goings-on and philosophy. The Communications Chair collects and consolidates school news and information, and creates improved systems of communication and information sharing between all classes and positions at NVNS. This job also has PR responsibilities regarding Alumni and school outreach to the community, and either serves as the school's Webmaster or works with the Webmaster to maintain the school website and Facebook pages. (*School Team*: *The Communications Chair leads the “**Communications Team**”.*)

Fundraising Chair

The Fundraising Chair oversees all fundraising efforts at NVNS throughout the school year (*including all aspects of the annual Instant Wine Cellar fundraiser*). (*School Team*: *The Fundraising Chair leads the “**Fundraising Team**”.*)

Maintenance Chair

The Maintenance Chair is responsible for overseeing all maintenance for the NVNS facility, including the classrooms, sheds, and play yard. This effort includes coordinating and participating in periodic workdays with Maintenance Team members to make improvements and perform regular maintenance. (*School Team*: *The Maintenance Chair leads the “**Maintenance Team**”.*)

Class Scheduler

The Class Scheduler (*one for each class*) is responsible for creating and distributing the monthly parent work schedule for their child's class, including assigning snack and E-Parent duties. The Class Scheduler also acts as a point person to coordinate communications between their class and the Board and vice versa. (*School Team*: *The Class Schedulers lead the “**Scheduling Team**”.*)

Alumni Advisor

The immediate past President may, if desired, become the current year's Alumni Advisor. If not, the Board may vote to ratify another Alumni volunteer for the position if an Alumni Advisor is needed. The Alumni Advisor (*if used*) shall be a voting member of the Board. (*School Team*: *The Alumni Advisor leads the “**Alumni Outreach Team**”.*)

Board of Trustees Responsibilities

A representative from all Board Member families is required to attend all Parent Meetings. Missed Parent Meetings by Board members will generally be handled as described in the "[Parent Meetings](#)" section, but they cannot be made up by attending Board Meetings. Therefore, if a Board Member family misses more than two Parent Meetings and is unable to make them up as stated in the "[Parent Meetings](#)" section, they must petition the Board for further make-up options.

Board Members are required to attend all Board Meetings (*including Summer Board Meetings and the annual Budget Meeting*), Board Set-up, Orientation, and End-of-Year Clean-Up. Board Members are allowed three absences total from required board events. (*A family member proxy is permissible only for Board Set-Up and End-of-Year Clean-Up.*) If more than three Board obligations are missed, that Board Member must petition the Board for appropriate make-up options. (*Note: Board Members are exempt from Housekeeping Saturday since they participate in Board Set-Up.*)

In addition, Board Members may be asked to bring snacks for special occasions (*e.g. Orientation, first Parent Meeting, etc.*), and are expected to support the endeavors of all other committees and School Teams. Finally, the operations of the Executive Board (*which consists of the President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary*) are stated in the Bylaws.

General School Jobs

Each family is responsible for actively participating in either an elected Board of Trustees position or a general School Job. For families who are not participating on the Board, there are a wide variety of other jobs available to fulfill the one School Job per family requirement. Some of these jobs require a single individual to perform a unique function, while others pull together multiple people to become a team that handles a wide variety of related tasks. All non-board School Jobs report up to a specific member of the Board of Trustees, who provides guidance and leadership for that team as needed.

The make-up of the various School Jobs and School Teams changes somewhat from year to year based on enrollment numbers, current school needs, individual talents, etc., and the Job Coordinator helps connect families with jobs where they will be a good fit. The NVNS website contains a detailed list of School Jobs and job descriptions for those interested in more specifics.

CONCLUSION

In addition to tuition, each family offers the school talent, skill and experience. The wealth of variety here is an asset to the school and to each child.

It is our hope that the ideas and suggestions in this handbook will help you feel at home more quickly. In time, you may have suggestions of your own to make. Please feel free to take them to the President, Director, or any other Board Member.

As with most worthwhile endeavors, you will find the benefits reaped from this experience will be in direct proportion to your unique contribution and efforts applied. It is your school and will be as good as you make it for your child and your family.

Now, please relax and enjoy the children and your association with Napa Valley Nursery School!

TOGETHER WE'RE BETTER

UPDATE PROCESS FOR THIS HANDBOOK

Each year, the outgoing Board should review and update this handbook to reflect any changes that are needed to ensure that it is current and ready for the membership to use during the next school year. *(Technically, the Secretary is responsible for tracking needed handbook changes throughout the school year and ensuring that they are made. However, another member of the Board may choose to tackle the update effort instead – the important thing is that someone on the Board needs to review the entire handbook and make the appropriate changes, then the entire Board needs to vote to approve the final version. Once the updated handbook has been approved by the Board, it needs to be sent to the Webmaster so it can be uploaded to the NVNS website prior to the start of the next school year – ideally right around the end of the current school year so that it’s available when new parents start signing their admission agreements for the new school year.)*

A few (hopefully) helpful hints for whoever is actually updating this document:

- If the information you are capturing is being maintained in another document, please keep your handbook entry general and refer people to that other document for the details. This will help ensure that our handbook information is accurate and prevent us from having to update the handbook every time we decide to change a minor detail somewhere else. *(For example, tuition amounts, registration and insurance fees, etc. are all subject to change each year as part of the annual budget process, and they are captured in the admission agreement – so they shouldn’t be listed in this handbook.)*
- If you want to create a new internal hyperlink within this document *(so readers can quickly jump to a different section of the document for further information about a particular topic)*, this link to the online instructions from Microsoft should be helpful:
 - [Create a hyperlink to a location in the current document or Web page](#)
- The Table of Contents for this document is automatically generated based on the use of heading styles. For example, text that uses the “Heading 1” style is reflected as a main section in the Table of Contents (*Level 1*), text that uses the “Heading 2” style is reflected as a sub-section (*Level 2*), etc. So, if you create a new section and want it to appear in the Table of Contents, make sure you use the appropriate heading style. *(Honestly, if you aren’t very familiar with heading styles, the easiest way to do this is probably to copy/paste one of the existing sections that looks similar to what you want so you have the right formatting, then simply change the text to whatever you want it to say.)*
- When you are finished making your updates, make sure to change the “Revised” date on Page 1, then update the Table of Contents to re-sync it with your revisions. *(To do this, right click inside the Table of Contents and select “Update Field”. In the resulting dialog box, select “Update entire table”, then click “OK” – which should cause the table to update automatically. Take a quick look to make sure that the page numbers look correct, and test a couple of the links to make sure they take you to the correct section of the document. If everything seems to be working properly, save your changes and you are finished.)*