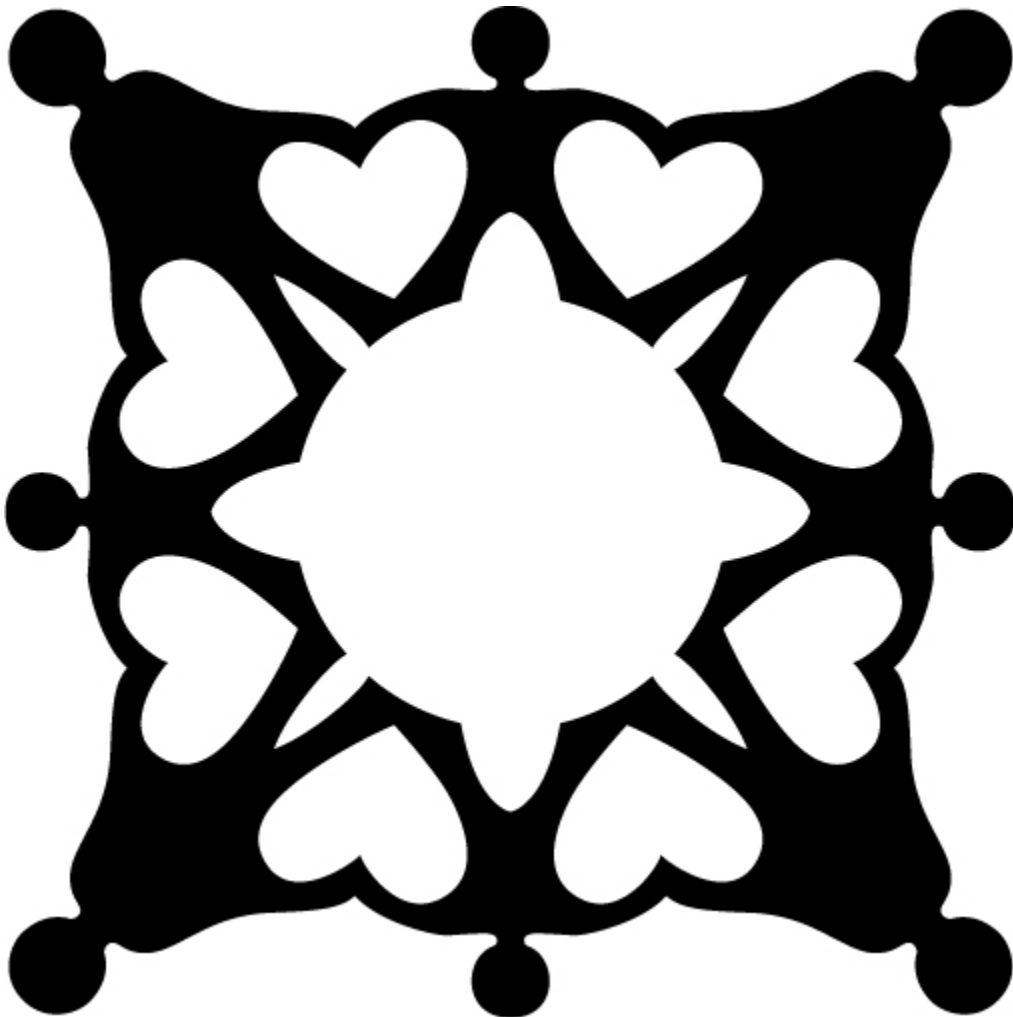




A cooperative school bringing heart from the start
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PARENT HANDBOOK



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Table of Contents

Section	Page Number
History of Yorktown Community Nursery School (YCNS)	3
Purpose of YCNS	3
Educational Policy	4
The Learning Environment	4
Starting Nursery School	5
Discipline Policy	5
Special Needs	6
The Board of Trustees Elected Parent Board	6
Grievance Policy	7
The Parents' Role	7
Parent Participation	8
Individual Conferences	9
Group Conferences	9
Educational Meetings	9
Parent Library	9
School Committees	9
School Regulations	15
Admissions Requirements	15
Arrival & Dismissal	16
Bad Weather/School Closings	16
Fire Drill Procedure	17
Health Regulations	17
Health and Safety Guidelines	18
Outdoor Play	18
Outdoor Safety Guidelines	18
Snack Time	19
Birthdays	21
Holidays	21
Transportation	21
Tuition	22
Withdrawal	22
Public Emergency or Natural Disaster Procedures	22

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE SCHOOL

The Yorktown Community Nursery School (YCNS) started as a vision in September 1947, when a group of parents met to discuss the possibility of creating a cooperative community nursery school in Yorktown Heights. A month later, a public meeting was held at which time parents actively began to form a new school.

In March 1948, YCNS, thanks to the involvement of the area parents, officially opened. With the continued involvement and support of the families in the Yorktown area (including Somers, Ossining, Peekskill, Cortlandt, etc.), it has grown from a one-group, one-teacher school housed in temporary quarters to its present status as a cooperative school space for 5 groups, 74 students, 5 staff and its own building.

In the fall of 1950, YCNS was chartered by the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York, under the provisions of the Education Law of the State of New York. In 1988, YCNS became accredited school by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

The building which houses YCNS was completed in April 1952, and was named as a memorial to Dr. Nathan B. Bluestone, one of the founding members of YCNS. Dr. Bluestone embraced the mission that YCNS still strives to maintain -- providing a constructive program to enrich the lives of all children in the community.

The building is the result of years of work by the parents of YCNS students and scores of local businesses, some still in the area, who contributed to the original building fund through donations, time, energy and various services required to transform the original dream of 1947 into a functioning center and reality. This tradition of hard work, parental participation and service continues today with twice-yearly work weekends and involvement by parents in the various programs and committees required to keep the school functioning.

For 60 years, YCNS has provided area children with their first educational experience outside the home. Over the years, many people have given themselves to keep the original dream going -- so that the next generation of children and families can participate in the original concept of a cooperative nursery school.

PURPOSE OF THE NURSERY SCHOOL

The purpose of the Yorktown Community Nursery School is to provide the children with the opportunity to be with playmates their own age, and to help them adjust to life outside the home; to afford them the opportunity to select and use materials and equipment in a variety of ways; to provide a program for the physical, cognitive, social and emotional development of the preschool child; to aid parents in adopting constructive attitudes toward children's behavior through their actual participation in the operation of a cooperative nursery school.

EDUCATIONAL POLICY

Our educational purpose is to provide each child with the opportunity for self-expression and development of his/her interests and abilities, as well as successful experience in group living. In order to achieve this purpose, we must have a pleasant, relaxed atmosphere and loving teacher guidance which will encourage each individual to be himself; to feel he/she is understood and appreciated and has a valuable contribution to make to the group; and to develop new interests and techniques in handling materials and human relationships. We want our children to explore and experiment and live out their thoughts and problems in play. In this way, we believe that nursery school children will learn and grow.

THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The learning environment for our children at YCNS is essential for the school's philosophy. In the article, Continuity from Pre-Kindergarten to Kindergarten, Dorothy Cohen, an expert on learning through play, states, "If we think of curriculum as something we do to children, we think of products we teach them to make and lessons we have them remember. But, if we think of curriculum as something that happens to children, that children mesh with, then we think more of our role in preparing an environment and offering experiences through which children undergo the process of learning perhaps even without producing a product."

This is the type of environment which allows for the practice of Developmental Education, the basis for the educational policies at YCNS. The learning process allows each child to develop at an individual pace and learn about and make sense of one's own world through play. This process of learning about the world enables every child to develop cognitively through age-appropriate experiences in an interesting and fulfilling way.

Learning through play is learning about symbols, and symbolization is basic to human development. A child pretending a block is a garage is engaged in symbolization. He learns that one thing can represent something else. Symbolization in its more advanced form is reading, writing and arithmetic. Before a child can understand such abstract systems, he must become a symbolizer himself.

The teacher's role in the classroom is to observe and respect each child's play and to build that into a curriculum. The teacher can provide new opportunities and materials that allow the children to expand their own ideas as well as have a sense of community. The focus is to allow each child to learn and grow at his own pace and develop socialization skills.

The staff at YCNS is dedicated to the well-being of the children. We work hard to create a warm, enriching and safe environment. The children are challenged and encouraged to learn and grow.

While the parent body of the school is ever changing, the *Educational Policy* and *Learning Environment* continue to be the foundation upon which YCNS grows.

STARTING NURSERY SCHOOL

Adjustment to nursery school is gradual. The teacher will arrange for each child to visit the classroom before the child's school begins. The children will meet the teacher, assistant and select their cubbies to gain a sense of the room. The exact visiting time will be received in the mail in August along with other relevant material.

Classes will begin on a staggered schedule in order for small groups of children to be introduced to school on successive days. The session is shortened for the first few days so that adjustment is easier. Each parent should be able to remain at school if necessary until their child is comfortable. The following suggestions may prove helpful:

- Do not be disturbed if during the first days of school your child is shy and clings to you, becomes aggressive and won't share, cries easily or catches a cold. These can be symptoms of tension in a new situation and can disappear as the child becomes accustomed to school. Be sympathetic and supportive.
- Allow your child to bring a favorite object for the first few days if it will help him/her feel at ease.
- Let your child just stand and watch if he/she wishes. Watching is one way of taking part.
- When it is time to leave, do so in a positive way and be certain your child knows you are leaving. Your confidence will be conveyed to your child. Be assured, the staff will be there to help your child have a positive and happy nursery school experience.

Please remember that no pressure is put on a child to conform to routines until he/she has adjusted. There is never any pressure to join in activities. The more relaxed the parent, the more relaxed the child. Remain in the background as much as possible, but let your child stay with you if he/she so wishes.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Young children need adults to help them learn what acceptable behavior is and how to relate positively to others. At YCNS, we focus on social skills and self-discipline because we know that children who practice these behaviors are more successful in life. The teachers take a positive approach to guiding behavior. They try to prevent conflict, for example, by having multiples of the same toys. At other times, the teachers will redirect children's behavior offering acceptable substitutes. They model and teach the children social, communication and emotional regulation skills and how to use problem-solving techniques. When necessary, they intervene directly to stop dangerous behavior like hitting or biting. Since the ultimate goal of discipline is to teach self-control, rewarding acceptable behavior is our best strategy.

In the instance of continual problems, the teachers will work in partnership with the parents to devise an individualized, mutually acceptable plan to support the development of social skills and self-control for your child.

SPECIAL NEEDS

The preschool years are an important time for identifying and beginning to work with the special developmental and learning needs of children. The staff and Board of YCNS are committed to meeting the particular needs of every child in our school. Therefore, it is important that parents, in applying to enroll their child in YCNS, inform the Director of any diagnosis, known special needs, or even concerns and questions they may have about their child's development. This information will help the staff to plan classes effectively. Parents are always welcome and encouraged to request meetings with their child's teacher and/or Director if they have questions, concerns or need guidance or support in ensuring that their child's needs are properly identified and met. YCNS teachers work with parents and the local public school district's Committee on Preschool Education (CPSE) to make recommendations regarding the educational and developmental needs of individual children.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES - ELECTED PARENT BOARD

The following description is taken from the By-laws of YCNS, which are on file in the office:

Section 1: Governing Body: The governing body of YCNS shall be the Board of Trustees (herein referred to as the "Board") which shall consist of 15 trustees. The Board will elect from among its members a President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary and two (2) Co-Treasurers, who together shall constitute the Executive Committee.

Section 2: Election of Trustees: Election of Trustees shall be held at a regular meeting of the Board no later than May, with the newly-elected trustees to attend meetings thereafter, but to assume office at the regular June meeting of the same calendar year. Eight (9) trustees shall be elected to the Board each year for a term of two (2) years so that the number of trustees shall remain fifteen (15). The term of each trustee shall be two (2) years, unless otherwise arranged or until his/her successor has been duly elected and qualified. A trustee whose term of office expires shall be eligible for re-election as trustee for a total period not to exceed four (4) consecutive years, after which time at least one (1) year shall lapse before (s)he may be eligible for re-election. A slate of nominees for new trustees shall be prepared in advance by the Nominating Committee to be made public two (2) weeks prior to the scheduled meeting. Additional nominations may be made from the floor. Election shall be by a majority vote of those Trustees present at the meeting. The Trustees elected shall be parents of children currently enrolled in the school.

Section 3: Election of Officers: Election of Officers shall take place at the June meeting of the Board. The Nominating Committee as defined below shall prepare the slate of Officers to be made public two (2) weeks prior to the scheduled meeting. Additional nominations may be made from the floor. Election shall be by a majority vote of those

Trustees present at the meeting. The newly elected Officers shall take office immediately upon election, shall together constitute the Executive Committee of the Board and serve two (2) year terms, or until their successors are elected. The newly elected Officers shall meet with their respective predecessors as soon thereafter as practical.

Section 4: Vacancies: The Board, at any regular or special meeting, shall fill any vacancy by the election of a substitute Trustee or Officer for the remainder of the unexpired term. If any Trustee fails to attend three (3) consecutive meetings without excuse acceptable to the Board, he/she shall be deemed to have resigned. Any vacancy which remains for more than one (1) year or any vacancy which reduces the total number to less than ten (10) may be filled by the Board of Regents of the State of New York.

Section 4: Removal: Any Trustee may be removed from the Board without assigning cause, by a vote of the Board at any duly called meeting. Any Trustee may be removed by the Regents for misconduct or incapacity or where it appears to the regents that the organization had failed to carry into effect its purposes. A hearing for the removal of any such Trustee shall be had before the Regents and the Trustee shall be given at least ten (10) days notice of such hearing. In the event of removal, the Regents may appoint a successor Trustee.

GRIEVANCE POLICY

Open, honest, ongoing communication with your child's teacher and with the Director is strongly encouraged. Most problems that arise can be easily solved if addressed immediately.

- A. Parents having a concern involving their child or class should discuss the issue with their teacher as soon as a concern arises. Then if issue is not resolved to their satisfaction, discuss the issue with Director.
- B. Any other issues/concerns regarding school policies should be discussed with the Director.
- C. If Issue is not resolved, present issue to Board President and Executive Board
- D. If issue is still not resolved present issue to Board of Directors

THE PARENT'S ROLE

When you enroll your child at YCNS, you enroll yourself as well. YCNS is a cooperative nursery school and its future depends on parent involvement in all levels of the school's operations. There are three categories that require parent participation at YCNS.

1. The parent's participation in the classroom is done on a rotational basis. Each class has a different set of requirements for the parent. The cleaning of the classroom is a required and important part of participation. Another is providing a healthy snack along with drink for the students in your child's class.

2. YCNS has several organized committees and housekeeping jobs. Each family is asked to participate in two (2) committees. However, there are some committees which represent a major time commitment and chairing or serving on one of those committees fulfills the requirement. These major committees may also exempt the family from Workday responsibilities (see below). Committee participation should be chosen based on the amount of time you have available.
3. There are two (2) Workdays per year. The Workdays are for general maintenance in the building and on the grounds. One parent from each family is expected to participate in both Workdays. For the parent who finds this impossible, it is possible to perform an alternative service or pay the Workday fee. It is important to maintain a clean, healthy and safe environment for our children as well as a great learning environment.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Parent participation in the classroom is dictated by the number of children in any one session and is approximately every 4-6 weeks when enrollment is full. Participation begins in September and each parent will receive their participation schedules for September in the summer mailing in August with other relevant materials. Thereafter, parents will receive participation schedules for at least three months in advance, and it is their responsibility to find a substitute when unable to participate. Parents can switch days with one another. If switching days is impossible, a parent can pay the school a \$25 fee snack fee or provide snack. The teacher should be advised if a parent cannot participate on their scheduled day. Parents are encouraged to find coverage for sibling(s) when they are participating since this is to not only be a "special day" for the parent and child, but the participating parent needs to help maintain the classroom routine. Siblings are allowed, as long as the parent can fulfill their participation responsibilities and obtain prior permission from the director. Parents need, for insurance purposes, a signed waiver with the understanding that parents assume full responsibility for the supervision and safety of the sibling.

The first twenty minutes in the classroom often sets the tone for the entire session. A participating parent's promptness is important if each child is to receive adequate attention. On your participation day, do not be disturbed if your child reverts to "first days" behavior. All children have "participation-itis" to some degree. Your child may become whiny, demanding or unduly aggressive with other children. You will need understanding and patience. It is not easy for a child to share his parent or care-giver with a class full of children. Sympathize with these feelings and provide your child with the warmth and reassurance needed.

- Supervision is an important part of participation. Our first concern is the health and safety of the children. Supervision is more important than snack preparation, cleaning, etc. Be ready to stop such tasks at a moment's notice if you become aware of a situation needing adult attention.
- Choose a strategic position and be alert to the total situation in your area. Avoid turning your back on the group while helping one child. Please do not engage the staff in social conversation, as it is impossible for them to then give their full attention to the children. The teacher will give direction to the participating parent regarding

coverage, cleanup and interaction with children. However, if you are unsure, feel free to clarify your role with the teacher.

Suggestions for working with children

- In general, children will feel most comfortable if you can:
- Use a low voice when conversing.
- Sit on the floor or a child-sized seat so that your physical size does not overwhelm.
- Listen carefully to what children say. This indicates adult respect of their ideas and models listening behavior that the children will eventually imitate.
- Be available but not intrusive. If children are productively engaged, it's okay to watch. Be aware that preschool-aged children learn more by doing than by talking (or listening to adults). Too much adult chatter is a distraction, and in the case of the youngest children it prevents them from practicing newfound vocabulary.

Classroom techniques that have met with success over the years

- Telling children what to do rather than what not to do. For example instead of, "We don't throw the toys," a more helpful comment might be "Balls are for throwing; blocks are for building."
- Giving choices when possible. Where compliance is necessary or expected (such as at clean-up time, on field trips, or at fire drills), use a matter-of-fact, no-nonsense tone. In some situations, a humorous approach works well.
- Giving children sincere approval when they accomplish a task that is difficult for them.
- Encouraging growth toward independence. Certainly a child's request for help should be honored but in a way that leads him/her in the direction of self-reliance. Our goal is to help each child develop the self-esteem that comes with a sense of one's own competence.
- Verbally acknowledging children's feelings. Language can serve to moderate strong emotions. Assuring children that these emotions are universal helps them to feel they have an ally in the understanding adult. Anger, frustration, hunger, fatigue, sadness, and excitement can all be part of a young child's day.

INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES

Formal, individual conferences for the Seniors are held in November and March and are 15 minutes in duration. Formal, individual conferences for the Juniors are held in January and May and are also 15 minutes in duration. However, parents are encouraged to contact teachers as soon as a concern arises. The discussion can be

held in person or over the telephone or via e-mail. Most problems that arise can be easily solved if addressed immediately.

GROUP CONFERENCES

Group conferences between parents and staff are generally held two times per year. At these meetings, the classroom program is discussed, as is parent participation and other topics of interest to the parents in the group. The teachers and Director schedule these meetings.

EDUCATION MEETINGS

The Education Committee schedules these meetings. Outside speakers are invited to hold a discussion on various topics relating to early childhood development. Subjects discussed vary and meetings are usually held in the evenings.

PARENT LIBRARY

The Parent Library is located in the downstairs playroom. This library consists of books dealing with various topics of early childhood and parenting. These books are for the use of YCNS parents and can be borrowed at any time. The library works on an honor system and the contents of the library are the responsibility of the Education Committee.

SCHOOL COMMITTEES

Admissions Committee (Chair exempt from second committee)

Responsible for helping the Director with the process of enrollment by making application packets, distributing in-school applications and hosting the Open House, the New Family Open House and Community Day. Committee members may be asked to periodically help give tours of the school to alumni parents.

Art Festival Coordinator (exempt from spring Workday)

The Art Festival is a wonderful annual spring event at YCNS involving the whole school. The YCNS Art Festival is an outdoor exhibit featuring a framed work of art from every child in the school. A parent is needed to order frames and coordinate parent volunteers to supply, set up and clean up refreshments and display art work for this event.

Board Of Trustees (see page 6 for details)

Building and Grounds Committee

Members are responsible for monitoring short- and long-term upkeep and improvements of the building and grounds in conjunction with the Director and the president. Committee Chair is responsible for checking with the Director on a monthly

basis to identify repair needs. Members will repair minor problems. Major findings will be reported to the Board.

Building Rental Committee (fall/spring Workday)

The chairperson of this committee is responsible for renting the downstairs room for meetings and parties throughout the school year. This person is required to do the following:

- Receive phone calls at home from potential renters
- Keep a log and calendar of events and collect a deposit from the renter to reserve the room for the future date. Return the security deposit if the building has been left properly
- Arrange for renter to receive the key
- Record payment in the log and pass the check to the Treasurer
- Show the room to the renter if he is not a member of YCNS
- Distribute flyers in the Yorktown area advertising the availability of the room
- Distribute a letter in the fall to parents in the school reminding them about the availability of the room.

Classroom Library

One parent is needed to keep our classroom libraries in order throughout the school year. About once each month, the classroom books need to be refilled in the boxes in the storage room. Occasionally, as you are filing books, you may also need to do some repair work, such as taping pages. If you keep up with it, refiling can easily be done in an hour or two during your child's school session.

Classroom Library Database

Our library database needs periodic updating. New books acquired through the Scholastic Book sales need to be classified and entered on the computer database before filing. This is most easily done by a parent who can use their home computer and copy the files onto a disk or e-mail them to the school.

Computer Support Committee

YCNS uses computers in the office as well as in both classrooms. The committee keeps the school's computers, printers, etc. functioning properly, updates the systems as required, and implements new computer technologies for the school as needed.

Education Committee

Organizes parent education events, distributes parent education information and supports the educational purposes of YCNS. The chair is responsible for periodic evaluations of the Director as toddler teacher. (The Director evaluates the other teachers.) The Director may also enlist the help of the committee in screening job applicants for the teaching staff, should the need arise.

First-Aid Kit Monitor

YCNS has a first-aid kit in each classroom, three in the kitchen (two are for field trips) and one in the mailbox outside in the playground. These kits must be fully stocked at all times. This committee member must check the first aid kits each month and

replenish supplies as needed. We have a list of what should be in each first-aid kit to guide you. Records of the checklist are filed in the office.

Fundraising Committee (chair exempt from second Committee)

Works with the board to determine what fundraising activities are needed. It is anticipated that the committee arrange one or two major functions each year. Proceeds from the committee should be deposited in the fundraising account and utilized at the discretion of the Board with ideas presented by the committee. Maintaining an active fundraising committee is crucial to raising necessary money for our non-profit school each year.

Garden Committee

Members are responsible for beautifying the front and back yards of YCNS through planting and garden maintenance. Major landscaping projects may be undertaken by the committee with the approval of the Board. This committee may also work with teachers on gardening projects involving the children.

Grant Writing Committee

This committee member is responsible for finding out about possible grants for which YCNS may be eligible, writing and submitting the applications.

Hospitality Committee

Under the auspices of the co-chairs, this committee organizes and serves refreshments at school events. The persons in charge of an event are asked to come early and set up refreshments for the event and then make certain the refreshments and coffee remaining is put away at the end. The chair may need to obtain donations of refreshments as required.

Legal Committee

To review parent and teacher contracts, when necessary, and provides legal advice to the Director and Board if the need arises.

The Eleanor and Matt Manno Miracle Fund

YCNS sponsors a needy local family throughout the school year. YCNS parents, students and staff donate goods and money based on the family's specific needs, and to celebrate the family's holidays and birthdays. YCNS teachers integrate the concepts of "giving" and "taking care of each other" in age-appropriate ways into the curriculum of each class. YCNS parents, meanwhile, mobilize to do shopping and make monetary gifts. The committee chooses the family in the fall, and organizes and delivers donations. Ideally, the committee consists of one parent from each class.

Native American Day Organizing Committee (Chair exempt from fall workday)

Members of this committee work with the staff to plan our annual Native American Day celebration. This day is a spectacular festival in which we essentially recreate a Native American village here at YCNS with music, food, crafts, storytelling, games and all kinds of experiences of life in New England among the native peoples – as realistically as we can make it. Every family in the Junior and Senior classes participates and helps to make it happen, but this committee gets the ball rolling.

Newsletter Committee

The Newsletter Committee is responsible for putting together the school newsletter, usually issued 2 or 3 times during the school year. The members of this committee work closely to design and construct each issue, while keeping within the parameters of the school budget. Members should be interested in writing, photography and/or graphic design. Each year, the committee is given flexibility in design and content, and prior years' newsletters are available for guidance.

Office Assistant

Our Director needs help now and then in the office filing and photocopying, etc. As an office assistant, you can schedule time to work in the office during your child's session according to the Director's need for help (usually twice a month). Experience with office work is useful but not required.

Paper Supply Parent

This member will be responsible for informing the Director when new paper and cleaning supplies need to be ordered and unpacking deliveries of supplies into the blue cabinets in the upstairs hallway when they arrive.

Pet Care Parents

We usually have a hermit crab and fish in both classrooms and sometimes a hamster. The pet care parent is responsible for seeing that the pets are well cared for throughout the year, including school vacations and summer. These parents can arrange for someone to take the pet home over vacations or may take the pet to their own home. A key to the school is also available to allow the parent to come in regularly to take care of the animals when school is not in session.

Photographers

Committee members would be responsible to take digital pictures monthly of the Senior, Junior and Toddler classes as well as any special events such as Native American Day and the Art Festival. Committee Chair is responsible to electronically organize all photographs to be used by the school for classroom use, accreditation and archival purposes.

Play-Dough Makers

YCNS has the best play dough because we make it ourselves. Member of this committee make new batches of play dough for each classroom every two weeks. The recipe is simple, easy, remarkably quick and lots of fun. The teachers will supply the food coloring.

Playground Committee

This committee works with the Director to establish a long-term vision for the YCNS playground. Based on the vision, they recommend to the Board the purchase of new equipment as well as the maintenance of the current equipment. They work with the Director to obtain any permits required for any proposed work. They make sure the playground is in compliance with NAEYC regulations regarding safety.

Post Office Parent

This parent is responsible to drop off and pick up the school's mail at the Yorktown Post Office at least three times per week. Therefore, this job is best done by

a Junior or Senior parent. You will have a key for our PO Box to keep with you for the school year and you can pick up the mail at your convenience. You may also be asked to purchase stamps or mail things for the school.

Publicity and Marketing

Members work with the Director to formulate and execute a marketing communications plan. Based on the plan, members will be responsible to write and place advertisements and press releases as needed. Members will also be responsible for identifying and organizing publicity events that highlight our expertise and showcase our programs (i.e. Native American Day, etc.)

Recycling

All juice containers, boxes, cans, etc. that can be recycled are put in the recycling bin in the front hall. Whenever the bin is full, or once per week, the recycling parent takes it home to put out with their family's recycling, since the town will not pick up from YCNS. The parent also washes out the bin every week before returning it to the front hall.

Rummage Sale (Chair exempt form fall Workday)

The annual YCNS Children's Tag Sale is a fun event that YCNS parents and people throughout the community look forward to every year. It's a great fundraiser for the school. This committee is responsible for organizing the collection of donations, advertising the event, organizing and sorting donations, organizing volunteers to work the days of the sale, set-up, and clean-up and arranging for the pick-up of all unsold items by other charities.

Sandbox Parents

Our lovely sandbox needs to be covered at all times when not in use so that the local cats can't visit. A parent who regularly comes for pick-up is needed to cover the sandbox after the morning session and another for the afternoon session.

Scholastic Book Sales

YCNS has been enjoying and benefiting from the Scholastic Book Club sales run by parents for years. When parents buy books through these sales, the school gets free books for our class libraries. A parent is needed to organize the sales, distribute flyers, collect money and distribute books.

Shopping Parent

This committee member does errands for the school on short notice and is best taken on by Senior parents who come to school four or five times each week. A few times each month, the shopping parent will be called upon by the Director or one of the teachers to pick up supplies, food, etc. for the school. You will be given a tax exempt form and can submit the receipts to the Director to be reimbursed.

Slayton Photo Fundraiser Organizer

For several years, YCNS has had a professional photographer come to the school in the fall to take individual and class photos of the children. YCNS also earns a 20% commission on whatever Slayton takes in from YCNS. A parent is needed to help organize the photo shoot and collect and process payments.

Staff Substitutes

This committee is for parents who enjoy working with the children and don't have any regular commitments during class hours. Staff substitutes fill in for staff members in case of illness or family emergencies. A parent substitute normally takes the role of the Assistant Teacher in the classroom. Teaching experience is not required in order to be a substitute. You may be called on short notice, i.e. the night before or in the morning of the day on which you're needed. Please do not sign up for this committee if you have other children for whom you would have difficulty arranging childcare.

Towel Washing

Each week, this committee member takes the towels in both classrooms and the kitchen home to wash, fold and return to the school.

Toy Washing

The toy washing committee is responsible for washing all the toys on the lower shelves of the classroom and in the play kitchens as outlined in the sanitation frequency table put forth by NAEYC. Teacher will also periodically set out toys to be taken home, wash and return.

Webmaster

A parent is needed to maintain and update the school Web site.

Workday Supervisor/Coordinator

The Workday Supervisor/Coordinator is responsible for the following:

- Working with the Building and Grounds chairperson and Director to plan what tasks will be done on the fall and spring Workdays.
- Sending a letter before Workday asking parents to sign up for Workday jobs or alternative service.
- Posting sign-up lists for Workday and alternative service on the bulletin board about a month prior to Workday.
- Making certain that all necessary tools and supplies are on hand for Workdays.
- Planning how parents will be organized to work together to accomplish the tasks.
- Supervising parent volunteers on Workdays ensuring parent attendance or collecting the fee from families who choose to pay instead of doing a job.

**The Board may add new committees as the need arises.

SCHOOL REGULATIONS

ADMISSION POLICY

Yorktown Community Nursery School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarships and loan programs, and athletic and other school administered programs.

Admission Requirements

Age requirements

- Toddlers: 2 years old by December 1st
- Juniors: 3 years old by *December 1st
- Seniors: 4 years old by *December 1st

Note: Age requirements are coordinated with the age requirements of the Yorktown School District. Exceptions to this requirement will be made only when an enrolling child's school district has a later age requirement for entrance into Kindergarten.

- Interview with the Director
- Signed application and contract
- Health form signed by your doctor

Enrollment is limited to 16 children in the four-year old class, 15 children in the three-year old class and 12 children in the two-year old class.

Admission Process

- A **non-refundable application fee** is required with the application to hold a place in the school or on the waiting list.
- In-School applications are accepted in October. Placement will be made in order of receipt with preference given to children already enrolled in the previous year's session. Opening will then be made available to applicants wishing to change sessions in order of receipt.
- Alumni applications are accepted in November. Applicants will be placed in order of receipt.
- New family application will be accepted in December. Applicants will be placed in order of receipt.
- A waiting list will be maintained for all classes in order of receipt. Applicants will be informed in writing of placement on a waiting list.

All new applicants will have a guided visit to the class with the Director at which time expectations for participation in a cooperative nursery school will be reviewed.

Finally, no child can be admitted to the program without a completed medical form from a doctor.

Enrollment policy classes will be mixed when enrollment does not exceed 18 total students in either the junior am and senior am classes or the junior pm and senior pm classes. We will continue to accept applications on a wait list basis and when the total number of students enrolled is at least 22, we will split the session into two classes. No individual class will run with less than 5 students.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

If you arrive before 9:00am or 12:30pm, please take your child downstairs to the playroom. Waiting in the hallway prior to class is not permitted; the director will come downstairs and invite everyone up when the classes are ready to open. Teachers need time to be certain that their rooms are ready for session as well as time to finish their lunch. Since the same teachers teach both sessions, it is very important the parents

arrive on time for dismissal. The morning session ends at 11:45am and the afternoon session at 3:15pm. If an emergency arises, please notify the school that you will be delayed. Please do not chat in the classroom or the hall once you have collected your child, as children can easily slip out the door when adults are distracted.

Children will not be dismissed to anyone other than a parent unless we have written permission to do so. Although we have a list of acceptable people on the Child Release Form, we still request a note from you on any day your child will be going home with anyone else.

BAD WEATHER

The school will be closed when the Yorktown School District closes for bad weather. If Yorktown has a one- or two-hour delay, all morning sessions will begin at 10:15am. If the Toddler class is meeting that day, their session will extend until 11:45am. Parents will be informed by the Director of cancelations and delays via email in the morning. This information can also be obtained by listening for Yorktown Central School closing and delays on WHUD at 100.7FM, Channel 12 news and by clicking on the link for Yorktown Central Schools on our website.

In the event of an inordinate number of school closings due to snow, YCNS will extend the school year as follows:

<i>CLASS</i>	<i>DAYS MISSED</i>	<i>MAKE-UP DAYS</i>
Seniors	1 through 5	0
	6	1
	7	2
	8	3
Juniors	1 through 5	0
	6	1
	7 and over	2
Toddlers	1 through 5	0
	6 and over	1

Make-up classes will begin on the Monday following the last scheduled day of school, and will be held on the days and at the times the particular class was regularly scheduled.

For example, a class that regularly meets on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday in the morning and misses seven or more days due to snow will have two make-up classes on the Monday and Tuesday mornings following the last scheduled day of school.

Parents will be notified of early dismissals through the class phone chain.

FIRE DRILL PROCEDURE

Fire drills will be discussed with the children and taken one step at a time. At the sound of the fire bell, stop your activity and help the children line up by the door. Whatever the weather, do not stop to put on outdoor clothing.

Children walk one behind the other. The teacher leads the line, the assistant takes the end of the line and the participating parent will close windows and doors and check the bathroom for stray children before joining the line. If a child does not join the line or seems upset, pick the child up and carry him/her. Walk to the ramp door where the teacher gets the gate key. The teacher checks to make certain all of the children are there and then the class walks out to the gate via the Primary rear exit or the Secondary front exit. The teacher should check the gate lock to make certain it can be opened. At the Director's signal, the children shall return the same way.

If the class is downstairs during a drill, they walk to the EXIT door, go outdoors and up the stairs to the gate. NO ONE is permitted to remain in the building during a fire drill.

HEALTH REGULATIONS

By observing good health standards, you will be protecting your child and others in the program. We appreciate your cooperation and adherence to the policies regarding your child's health.

A physical examination must be done within the calendar year for each child. To be admitted to school, a child must have a signed form from the doctor indicating that the child has had a recent physical and is immunized against Diphtheria(DPT); Polio; Measles; Mumps; Rubella; Hepatitis B; HIB and Varicella (Chicken Pox).

Emergency Contact Information, Child Release and Emergency Evacuation forms must be completed and returned to school on or before the child's first day of attendance. The child will not be permitted to attend school until all the emergency forms are received.

It is the parent's responsibility to keep sick children home and away from others in school. The following are guidelines as to when to keep your child home:

- Fever within the last 24 hours
- Diarrhea or vomiting in the last 24 hours
- Sneezing, coughing, or runny nose (with green or yellow discharge),
- rash of unknown origin or diagnosed as illness-related, or that makes your child uncomfortable.
- For communicable diseases including Impetigo and Conjunctivitis, a parent should receive clearance from a doctor before returning the child to school.

If the child has allergies with a persistent cough, we need a note from your doctor explaining the condition.

Parents are urged to notify the school if anyone in their family has a contagious disease so we may take precautionary steps where warranted. Parents of children who have been exposed to communicable diseases at school will be notified by the Director.

If your child becomes ill in school and you cannot be reached, an individual on your Emergency Contact form will be called. To the best of our ability, the child will be

made comfortable and separated with a familiar adult until someone arrives to take them home.

HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDELINES

- Smoking in and around the school is not permitted
- Please do not drink hot liquids in the classroom
- Dress your child sensibly in clothing which will allow them to play comfortably and safely.
- Children are taken outdoors daily so please make sure they have clothing appropriate for the weather. If you wish your child to wear sunscreen, please apply it prior to class time.
- All children and adults working in the classroom must wash their hands upon arrival, prior to snack or cooking, after diapering or using the toilet, after playing in the water table and after handling classroom pets.
- Masks cannot be worn, nor should mirrors, combs or brushes be brought into school.
- Pets may only be brought into school with the approval of the teacher.

OUTDOOR PLAY

Except on rainy days or extremely cold days, we have outdoor play. If you do not want your child to play outdoors, please pick up your child before the class goes outdoors. Check with the teacher for the exact time. Inform the teacher when your child first comes to school that you will be coming early. No child will be left indoors without adult supervision.

OUTDOOR SAFETY GUIDELINES

- Adults should supervise different areas of the play yard.
- Children should use two hands in climbing. They should not hang from their legs on any equipment. Hold a child's toy while they are climbing.
- Bicycle riding is limited to the blacktop. If children are waiting turns, riding should be limited to five minutes each.
- Children should be kept out of the path of swings. If other children are waiting, count to 15 for turns.
- Children may not throw sand. After a verbal warning, a child throwing sand must leave the sand box and play elsewhere. Sand must not be dumped around the yard.
- Pointed objects may not be used.
- Children are not allowed by either outdoor gate area unless they are with an adult.
- Wait until dismissal to bring sibling out to play.
- At dismissal time, the children will line up on the benches by the exit gate. Parents are asked to collect everything from the child's cubby and then come down the ramp to get the child. Dismissal is then done through the gate nearest to the garage. During inclement weather or when the grounds are very muddy, children are dismissed from the classroom.

- Children may not be outdoors without an adult. If you stay after class in the playground you are responsible for the supervision of your children and are asked to adhere to the same safety guidelines. You need to clean up after your-selves including covering the sand box and the last parent out must lock the gate.

SNACK TIME

Snack at YCNS is not just about getting kids to eat. In fact, whether or not the children eat much at snack is not really the most important goal. When we serve snack to the children they are learning attitudes about food. It's important that the children have a snack experience at school that will give them a healthy and balanced context for enjoying food with others.

Sharing food as a group, appreciating food that is given (whether or not it is our favorite), trying new foods that we don't eat at home, practicing table manners and working on eating skills (e.g.: taking "a few" rather than fistful; chewing with your mouth closed; saying please and thank you) are some of the hidden "curriculum" goals of snack at YCNS. Also, in a culture where we have so much, we have to actively teach children to minimize waste by offering much smaller portions, than most of the pre-packed foods offer. When you spend the effort and money to bring food to school for the children, you should not be throwing half of it away--- neither should the children be routinely tossing food in the garbage.

Parent's role at snack time

Preparation

Begin by washing your hands and those of any child helping you with warm water and soap prior to handling, preparing or serving food. List everything being served for snack on the snack of the day board located outside the classroom. Bowls for snack are located on the shelves above the sink as well as two pitchers for each table. Tables should be disinfected using the marked spray bottle and paper towels than should be set with one napkin and cup per child and adult in the classroom (plates should be set only if the snack being served is messy or wet). There are also spoons, forks and knives in the bin on the kitchen shelf if needed for your snack.

Place each snack item (see healthy snack guidelines) in a bowl and set it out on the table with tongs or spoons for serving. One pitcher should be filled ½ way with water and the other pitcher should be filled ½ way with your beverage of choice (see healthy snack guidelines) and set out on each table.

During Snack

Sit at the table to help children get settled. The children can pour their own drink; this is an important skill for them to practice so please treat spills casually by assisting the child in getting a paper towel and helping them clean up. They may need your help passing the tray to one another.

Snack time with the whole group is a good time to build the group spirit and a feeling of family. Encourage conversation with the children allowing them to tell about their day or share a story from home for example. Waiting to speak until someone has spoken should be supported. The children should enjoy one another's company but may need your guidance to keep their voices at a moderate level so everyone in the class can enjoy their experience. Table manners and good eating skills should be reinforced.

Encourage children to take small amounts of food and return for seconds.

Clean-up

Encourage the children to stay in their sets until they have finished eating. Once again it is important for the children to clean up their own snack, remind them “when they clean up then they can go get a book”. When most of the children have finished, remove the bowls. Any kitchen scrapes (fruits or vegetables) should be taken out to the composter. AM parents should wash the pitchers and bowls, placing a paper towel between them and returning them to the shelf. PM parents, and Friday Senior parents should place the pitchers and bowls in the dishwasher downstairs in the kitchen (the Senior snack parent is responsible for turning on the dishwasher). Restock the classroom with cups, napkins, plates and utensils from the blue cabinet in the hallway.

Healthy Snack Guidelines

A nutritious snack contains at least two of the following five components

	1-3 years One serving	4-6 years One serving
Grains-6-11 serving/day	Bread, ½ slice Cereal, dry ¼ cup rice, pasta cooked ¼ cup Crackers 2 to 3	Bread, ½ slice Cereal, dry, ½ cup Rice, pasta 1/3 cup Crackers, 3 to 4
Vegetables – 2-3 serving/day	Vegetables, cooked, ¼ cup	Vegetables, cooked, ¼ cup Salad, ½ cup
Fruits – 2-3 serving/day	Fruit, cooked or canned ¼ cup Fruit, fresh, ½ piece Juice, ¼ cup	Fruit, cooked or canned ¼ cup Fruit, fresh, ½ piece Juice, 1/3 cup
Dairy – 2-3 servings/day	Milk, ½ cup Cheese, ½ ounce Yogurt, 1/3 cup	Milk, ½ cup Cheese, 1 ounce Yogurt, ½ cup
Meats and other proteins – 2 serving/day	Meat, fish, poultry, tofu, 1ounce (2 1-inch cubes) Beans, dried, cooked ¼ cup Egg, ½	Meat, fish, poultry, tofu, 1ounce (2 1-inch cubes) Beans, dried, cooked 1/3 cup Egg, 1

American Academy of Pediatrics

Remember:

1. Choose nutritious foods that have little or no sugar (also called corn syrup, sucrose or fructose).
2. Choose 100% Fruit Juice (not fruit drinks, or light juices)
3. Cupcakes, cookies, chips or similar treats are acceptable when celebrating a child’s birthday but should not be brought in on a regular basis and will not be served.
4. Popcorn, grapes, nuts and similar hard-to-chew small food items are not recommended for preschoolers involved in group situations. The risk of choking is very high. IF YOU BRING IN GRAPES, PLEASE CUT THEM IN HALF.

5. Check with the teacher to learn if any of the children in your class have allergies. A list of allergies is posted in the kitchen. **YCNS is a peanut-free school**, please read labels carefully. If you bring in anything homemade, please make sure it is peanut-free and has not been baked or cooked on pans or dishes that may have been exposed to nut foods.
6. You may use the oven in the kitchen downstairs to make or heat-up your snack. If you plan to cook snack with the children please tell your teacher ahead of time so they may plan accordingly.
7. **If you have any questions regarding snack choice ask your teacher or assistant teacher.**

At YCNS *part* of your classroom participation is being “snack parent”. This is a very important thing for the children, a potentially rewarding learning experience for you and a great opportunity for the staff and children to get to know you better. Our goal and our hope is that you and your child will always have fond memories of sharing snack at YCNS in these early years of your child’s life!

BIRTHDAYS

Children enjoy celebrating their birthday in school. Parents are welcome to provide a special snack on that day and will have their participation scheduled for the birthday celebration. Usually, the teachers are well aware of the birthdays but it is helpful to remind them if you can. No gifts are exchanged at school and party invitations should never be handed out at school unless all children are invited.

HOLIDAYS

All holidays are listed on the YCNS school calendar; they coincide with the Yorktown School District calendar. Individual teachers at orientation discuss the format for celebration of holidays.

TRANSPORTATION

Arrangements for car-pooling are done by parents. The teacher should know which children are part of a car pool. The use of car seats and safety belts is mandatory by law through the age of seven.

Cars may be parked on either side of Veterans Road. However, please do not park in the crosswalk on either side of the street or block the VFW mailbox. In crossing the road, please use the crosswalk, hold the children’s hands and accompany them to the classroom.

TUITION

Parents will pay a non-refundable contract deposit at the time of enrollment and contract signing. Tuition may be paid annually or in 10 monthly installments, each due on the first day of each month beginning in September, deposited in the mailbox downstairs or mailed directly to the school P.O. Box. Parents will not receive invoices. Since YCNS depends on tuition revenue month to month, if monthly installments are

received after the tenth of any month, a late fee should be added to the payment. If a receipt is required, please contact the Director.

WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURE

Parents are requested to indicate their intention to withdraw their child to both the Director and the president of the Board. YCNS is dependent on tuition for maintaining all aspects of the school. Therefore, if it becomes necessary to withdraw your child(ren) from the school, your tuition deposit will not be refunded and you will be held responsible for the remaining month's tuition unless the vacancy is filled prior to the end of the month.

PUBLIC EMERGENCY OR NATURAL DISASTER

If it is necessary to leave an area temporarily, students at YCNS will be bussed directly to the following school reception center:

**John Jay Senior High School
60 North Salem Road
Route 121-124
Cross River, NY**

Children will remain at the school reception center until their parents pick them up. In the event of an emergency that develops slowly, please arrange to pick up your child at school

Ref:HANDBOOK