

# ***Turlock Nursery School***

## **Parent Handbook**

**Last Updated & Approved:  
April 2021**

***DISCLAIMER for academic years affected by Pandemic/Extenuating Circumstances:***

***For the purposes of continuity, the following policies and procedures are outlined in their entirety in accordance to past academic years. In accordance with updates mandated by federal, state, and local health and education authorities, updates to multiple policies and procedures have been instituted and may change moving forward in order for school to remain open. Affected policies include, but are not limited to: sign in/sign out procedures, tuition for the remainder of the 2020/2021 school year, and health and safety protocol for students and parent participants.***

***Updates to policies will be voted on during school board meetings, detailed on the school's website, and emailed out to all enrolled families of the school.***

Turlock Nursery School is licensed by the State of California. TNS is also a member of the California Council of Parent Participation Nursery Schools. License No. 500332283

## Introduction

We are so glad that you have chosen Turlock Parent Participation Nursery School to be a part of your child's educational experience! We hope you and your children will love being part of our community. Not only will your child experience amazing learning opportunities, you, the parents in this co-op, are encouraged to create relationships with other parents through setting up playdates and/or organizing community activities. As members of TNS, you are the driving force in the school and are integral to our success. Above all, we hope that you find a community that supports you and your child educationally and socially. Please feel free to ask the teachers, board members, or other parents any questions you have regarding TNS. We want your family to feel supported!



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## Who to Call, If:

You have questions concerning fees and tuition.....	Board Treasurer
You have registration, immunization or TB questions.....	Membership Chair
You can't work on your scheduled day.....	other families, then Scheduling Chair
You need to change your participation days indefinitely.....	Scheduling Chair
You have questions concerning the school program or your child.....	Director
Your child contracts a communicable or contagious disease.....	Teachers/Director
You have a suggestion, complaint or an agenda item.....	Board President
You have questions regarding leaves of absence.....	Board President/Membership

***For up-to-date contact information, please visit the school's website***

Website: [www.turlocknurseryschool.com](http://www.turlocknurseryschool.com)

\* Please make sure that any problems NOT pertaining to your child be directed to the appropriate board member, not the staff. Thank you!

## History

Turlock Nursery School (TNS) was established in 1972 as an educational organization devoted to preschool children and their parents. In January of 1972, a group of local parents and teacher/director, Penny Wade, came together to form our non-profit. After 8 months of preparation, the school was opened in September of the same year. Initially, the school was located at the Presbyterian Church on the corner of Crane and S. Palm. During the 1977-78 school year, after many years of fundraising and parent support, the school was able to purchase our current building on Grant Street.

## School Structure

TNS is a non-profit corporation licensed by the State of California. We offer a cooperative morning preschool program and afternoon enrichment program. Families enrolled in the parent participation TNS become members for the school corporation. This entitles each family to one vote and is further detailed in the By-Laws. The Board of Directors is elected by and from the membership. Their responsibilities include, but are not limited to, establishing school policy reflecting preferences of the membership and handling much of the administration. Any member of the school is welcome to attend the monthly board meetings. This a working Board of Directors that handles the "behind the scenes" running of the school.

## TNS Philosophy

Turlock Nursery School is an educational organization devoted to preschool children and their parents. We provide a warm, inviting and well-equipped setting, where children are free and safe to play and learn. The equipment and the program are both selected and planned to stimulate cognitive, physical, social, emotional and creative growth.

We believe that the experiences at TNS will lead our children to have self-confidence, promote satisfying friendships, and help them deal effectively with their expanding world.

This specially designed setting also provides parents with many opportunities to learn about themselves, their child, and children in general. Through observation, participation, and discussion, parents may see new questions and resolve old problems. We believe that the parent is the first and best teacher for the preschool child.

Our school is designed to meet the needs of the "Whole Child". That is, their physical, creative, social, cognitive, and emotional development. Our program offers a balanced curriculum that encourages and allows for total growth and development. It is a planned and structured free-flowing, learning environment geared to the individual needs of the child as well as the group as a whole. The program alternates between active and quiet times, indoor and outdoor activities, group and individual play, art, music, crafts, language arts, dramatic play, block play, science, story-telling and dictation, creative expression, fine and large motor skills, problem-solving skills, and socialization. The educational needs and methods of learning for a preschool child vary dramatically from those of an older child. "PLAY IS THE WORK OF THE YOUNG CHILD." Young children need to move about, experiment, explore and touch, rather than to sit, be lectured to and do worksheets. Their learning is active not passive. As an old Chinese proverb states, "When I hear I forget. When I see I remember. When I do, I learn." Young Children must have the opportunity to experiment with a wide variety of media and materials and in many different situations.

**They should be free to derive their own unique satisfactions from them and from associations with adults and with children their own age, as well as younger and older children.** They need a feeling of acceptance and appreciation for spontaneous behavior that meets their own needs and those of the group. They need praise and most of all, a belief in themselves and their value to others. The first step in learning is A POSITIVE, HEALTHY SELF-IMAGE!

## Goals for the Child

Our program is staffed by educated, experienced teachers, who provide an environment of varied experiences that will allow your child to:

### **A. Develop a positive self-image:**

1. Teachers strive to make children aware of their individual uniqueness.

2. Teachers reinforce positive behavior with verbal praise and physical affections.
3. Teachers strive to fulfill the needs of the individual child.
4. Children are encouraged to try new activities and build self-confidence.

**B. Develop self-expression and creativity through:**

1. Art
2. Dramatic Play
3. Home Center
4. Carpentry
5. Dress-up clothes
6. Blocks
7. Construction toys

**C. Increase Independence:**

1. Children are encouraged to choose how they would like to spend their free time.
2. Children are encouraged to help plan activities.
3. Open classroom centers are provided to motivate children to work independently.

**D. Learn to be with other children and to work in groups:**

1. The children work and play with small groups of children in a first school experience.
2. The children are encouraged to help each other and to cooperate with one another.
3. Many group activities are provided, such as music, story groups, circle time, and special art projects.
4. The children have the opportunity to meet new friends and learn about adults in a school setting.

**E. Develop Responsibility:**

1. Children are encouraged to take responsibility for their own behavior.
2. Children are encouraged to take responsibility for equipment they use and for their own personal belongings.
3. Practical life skills are encouraged, the children help with general clean-up and cooking projects, and each child is encouraged to wash his/her own hands.

## Goals for the Parents

1. To explore and discover the best ways for you and your young child to live together.
2. To observe and discuss the ways your child is learning, growing and adapting to his/her world.
3. To discuss and exchange ideas with other parents about family-child relationships and behavior.
4. To explore and discover your own creative potential in working with individuals, groups and materials.
5. To make new friends within the Turlock Nursery School community.



# Member Guidelines and Responsibilities

## ***Part One: General School Guidelines and Schedule***

### ***Requirements for Children Enrolled at TNS***

1. The child must be two years and nine months old. The child must be toilet trained.
2. The entire registration packet, including physician's form, must be completed before the child can attend school. Standard immunizations as well as a current tuberculosis test are required.
3. Enrollment in the nursery school is necessary before the child can attend.
4. A child's absence cannot be made up by attending a session in which the child is not enrolled.
5. Parents are asked to observe their child carefully and **keep them home if they have symptoms of colds and/or infections**. Please notify the teacher if your child comes down with a contagious disease, such as the chicken pox. **We may ask for a doctor's note before the child may return to school**. If your child becomes ill at school, the procedure outlined on the emergency form will be followed. Please notify a teacher by phone if your child will not be attending school. Please call between 8:45-9:00am.

### ***Daily Schedule***

**9:00-9:55: Inside Activities:** Choice of art, cut and color table, easel painting, puzzles and manipulatives, table games, science, cooking, play dough, music, books, animals, dramatic play, blocks, story writing, cornmeal or water play. Depending on the flow of the day and needs of the children, outside play may also be an option.

**9:50-9:55: Five minute announcement** for clean-up: notification to finish activity

**9:55-10:00: Clean-up time:** children and adults straighten up school.

**10:00-10:35: Outside Activities** (handwashing then snack)

**10:40-11:00 Snack time:** 3 tables with 3-6 children and 1-2 adults per table.

**11:00-11:30: Circle Time:** singing, stories, finger plays, flannel board, games, body movement, dancing, sharing, etc. All working parents participate.

**11:30-12:00: Outside activities:** climbers, obstacle course, swings, sand and water play, playhouse, creative movement, balance beam, fort, etc. Inside play may be an option also.

**11:30-12:00: Clean-up:** Parents clean school ie. Vacuum, sweep, clean up kitchen & dishes, clean bathrooms, and take out trash and recycling. .

**12:00: School closes: Time to go home, please be punctual. Overtime fees will be charged for late pick-ups. WE CHARGE \$1.00 PER MINUTE AFTER 4:00pm.**

### ***Rainy Day Schedule***

Follow the above schedule with the following changes:

#### **11:30-11:45 Dismissal at the front door.**

No outside play on rainy days. Most children and adults become restless on such days, so it is important to speak and act as calmly and relaxed as possible. Children still need movement activities, but the inside space of the school is limited, so it is likely we will put our hats and coats on and take a quick trip outside for a rain or fog run and yelling time and then return inside. And this gives working parents the needed time and space for clean-up.

### ***Yearly Schedule***

Turlock Nursery School is a pre-school that offers an enrichment program until 4:00pm for children and families who need it. We follow the Turlock Unified School District's yearly calendar (Note: We start school one week after TUSD and end school one week after TUSD). We offer a 4-day warm-up week for new students to familiarize themselves with the school, the teachers and their peers.

Closing the school between the end of the year and warm-up week allows time for our staff to clean up from end of the year activities and to set up for the new school year.

Occasionally parents ask why we are not open all the time, like other day care facilities. The answer is simply this: "We are not a daycare facility that offers a pre-school session in the mornings, we are a pre-school that provides extended care before and after the school session."

### ***Sign-in and Sign-Out Procedures***

When you arrive at school, sign in and notate the time your child arrives; do the same when you pick your child up. State law requires a full signature and that we keep accurate records of time children are at school. The sign-in documents are checked by our assistant treasurer and you will be billed if your child is attending school for more time than they are enrolled.

### ***Picking Up Your Child***

Please pick up your child promptly when their session ends. **It is disruptive to the school day for children who are not enrolled in a later program to still be on the school site, after their day has ended.** If you wish to speak to one of the teachers about your child, it is best to schedule a time with our director or teachers when we have enough staff to accommodate a private discussion.

### ***Child Pick-Up: For the Protection of the Children and the School***

It will be up to the teachers' discretion whether or not to dismiss a child with a parent or guardian who appears to be under the influence of alcohol or appears unable to safely drive the child home. The nursery school is held responsible for the children in its program and will act accordingly.



### ***Sharing or Talking Sharing***

We encourage children to tell us about something that is special to them or bring something special or interesting to share. Children may bring something to share when his/her parent works in the classroom. We encourage educational things to be shared, rather than toys. For example: books, nature items, pictures (iPhone), or talking sharing. We also do our talking sharing at our snack tables and everyone may have a turn each day if they wish. We do make an exception in January so that children may share Christmas gifts.

### ***Toys from Home***

We **do not** encourage children to bring their own toys from home to school. Too often they get lost or broken, leaving the child very unhappy. It is also a bit disruptive to the quieter time during circle time. The “no-toys-from-home” rule does not apply to a security blanket or security toy your child feels he/she needs.

### ***Medication***

Non-prescription drugs may be administered if accompanied by a note from the parent. If a child is to receive a prescribed medication and is well enough to attend school, a written statement by both the doctor and the parent are required before the teacher can administer the medication.

According to Education Code Section 2: 49423 “any pupil who is required to take, during the regular school day, medication prescribed for him/her by a physician, may be assisted by the designated school personnel if the school receives (1) Written statement from such physician detailing the method, amount, and time schedule by which such medications are to be given, (2) A written statement from the parent or guardian indicating the desire that the school assist the child in the matter set forth in the physician’s statement.

### ***Children’s Clothing, Cubbies and Clothes Hooks***

The nursery school is a place to learn, explore, experience, and enjoy. *PLEASE EXPECT THAT YOUR CHILD MAY COME HOME WITH SOILED CLOTHING.* During the day, children will have many opportunities to experiment with a wide variety of different media such as paints, clay, play dough, water, sand, mud, etc. *IF COMFORTABLE, OLD CLOTHES ARE WORN, THEN THE CHILDREN ARE TRULY FREE TO EXPLORE.*

We have limited cubby space, so each cubby must be shared. Please send a jacket or sweater when the weather warrants it, and take it home each day. We do not have room to store extra clothing or outerwear for each child. Also, please do not send backpacks full of toys or miscellaneous items; we simply do not have room for them at school. You may send a small bag or backpack with a change of clothes or comfort item, and take it home each day.

## ***Part Two: Attending School***

### ***If You are New to Turlock Nursery School:***

We expect each child to be different. Children grow and develop at different rates and they have individual skills and interests. This first experience is a big step for a child and his/her reactions may be new and different. Do not be disturbed if your child, in the first few weeks:

- Stands on the sidelines
- Hits a child while playing
- Wants to cling to you
- Refuses to give or to take turns
- Cries often

Try to keep in the background. However, if your child comes to you from time to time or remains clinging to you, reassure him/her, and follow your child's lead.

### ***Beginning School with Young Children***

Children meet new experiences in many different ways, and beginning nursery school is an important experience where parents and teachers need to respect a child's individuality. On their first visit, some children will act as though they have been in nursery school all their lives, some will cling, some will cry, others unexpectedly will try to do everything at once, and still others unexpectedly will hang back and watch. If the child is to learn effectively at nursery school, he/she must feel relaxed and secure. Parents may stay at school until the director and/or the teacher feel that the child is comfortable. During the first few days of school parents and teachers can help the child learn that:

- Teachers and other parents are friendly and dependable.
- People are called by their first names, both children and adults.
- There is a children's bathroom.
- The teacher will protect and support children who are hurt, threatened, or fearful.
- It is fun to have his/her mother, father, etc. come to school to help.
- His/her mother, father, or someone he/she knows will pick him/her up every day.
- Some familiar things will be there every day to play with.
- Sometimes there will be surprises and new toys and materials.
- There will be a choice of activities.
- This is his/her school and he/she is an important part of it.

## ***Part Three: Special Events for Students***

### ***Birthdays***

On the day that the birthday is celebrated, your child wears a special birthday crown and everyone sings Happy Birthday. Your child also picks out a "prize" from the special birthday treat box. Birthdays may also be celebrated at nursery school by bringing a special snack. Notify the teacher at least a week in advance. ***Please do not bring highly sweetened treats.*** Ask the teacher for ideas if you wish. Please save children's presents for home. If your child is having a party, please do not pick up the invited guests at school unless ALL children are invited. It is a very sad experience for those children not invited to see the others leave together. Past children have given the school a gift on their birthday. An appropriate gift could be a book with the child's photo inside.

During the last week of school we will celebrate birthdays for those children whose birthday falls during the summer months. We also have a "swimming party" and potluck on the last two days of school as a way to celebrate our year together.

### ***Field Trips***

Each driver must have the appropriate insurance information filled out in our registration packet and will take no more children than the number of seat belts per car.

Each driver counts the children before leaving and before returning and reports the count to the teacher.

California Law effective 1-1-2012, "children under the age of 8 must be secured in a car seat or booster seat in the back seats or children under the age of 8 who are 4'9" or taller may be secured by a safety belt in the back seat."

Wait until the teacher has checked the children in your car before leaving. Make sure you know the directions for the destination in advance.

Field trip permission is granted by parents or guardians in the registration packet. Parents will be notified of field trips in advance. Please notify the teacher prior to the field trip day if you do not wish your child to participate.

Field trips are limited in number. Some field trips will be scheduled for the four-year old group that are different than for the three-year old group. Many of the three-year olds (and some of the four-year olds) are frightened after leaving the school, and trips need to be a positive experience. Safety and pleasure must always be considered when planning a field trip.

The emergency card file box and a First Aid Kit are taken on all field trips.

### ***TNS Child of the Week***

Each week of the school year we honor one child a week: "Child of the Week." Throughout the year every child will have one week designated as their week, which will be his/her time to share information about themselves and their families with the children, parents, and staff.

The teacher will determine what week your child will be assigned, and this will be made available to all families at the beginning of the year. Each family should put together a poster board. You may use whatever materials you wish and be as creative as you wish. This is a wonderful activity for the child and parent to do together.

To help you get started, here are some suggestions:

- Pictures: (snapshots) from birth to present featuring the child, other family members, pets, favorite outings, and family heritage.
- Magazine Pictures: Show favorite food, toys, colors, etc. Child can also print his/her name, draw handprints or footprints, etc.
- Label Everything: This is so teachers and others can talk about the bulletin board throughout the week. If you and your child would like to provide special activities, please be sure to notify the director a minimum of one week in advance so we can be sure to schedule and prepare for it. A few ideas are:
  - Pets: Pets are welcome but must be accompanied by an adult.

- Cooking Projects: Parents are welcome to share any cultural or family recipes. You can come in for a day and prepare your specialty/bring food already made.
- Books: The child may bring a favorite book to share at circle time.

All children will have their special week at some time during the year. The director will be giving you a list as soon as the names of the children enrolled are available.

## ***Member Participation Responsibilities***

### ***General Member Responsibilities***

1. There will be a general orientation meeting in August for all families. Attendance is mandatory. Parents will be responsible for all information covered in the meeting.
2. Each family is responsible for participation days in the classroom. If you cannot participate on your scheduled day, please find a replacement. If maternity or surgical leave is necessary, please notify the Scheduling board member ASAP.
3. We ask that each family bring the items needed for snack on a rotating basis, approximately every four to six weeks. (See section on participation for further discussion of snack)
4. We ask that each family remain in the nursery school for the entire school year or give at least a thirty (30) day notice.
5. Each family must sign the Admission Agreement before the child may be enrolled in the nursery school. This signed contract will apply for the entire year, unless changes are needed, at which time the family must inform proper board members of necessary changes.
6. **It is important that each family keep informed of all information concerning the school. Please read all bulletins, email updates, and check your box regularly.**

### ***Fundraising - Why?***

As a small private school, *tuition only covers our operating expenses*. We use fundraisers to provide for a cash reserve, fund employee benefits and pay for any additional items/programs the membership decides on such as the music program and playground equipment.

We ask that each family participate in the fundraising events each year (one of which is the Spring Fundraiser). Participation in a fundraising event may constitute attending planning meetings for the committee you have been assigned and/or active participation in the implementation of the event. One example is selling tickets for the event or dinner.

Our Spring Fundraiser is the most important fundraiser of the year and participation is mandatory for its success. Through it, we raise about \$12,000. You may help with set-up & clean-up, baking desserts, serving, organizing the auction, etc. In addition, we require that every family provide one-two items for the auction with a retail value of at least \$50. You will also have the opportunity to solicit local businesses. This is a great community event.

### ***Classroom Participation***

Classroom participation is the foundation of our school philosophy. To be enrolled here, every family must provide one parent or adult to work in the classroom one to two days per month. Families enrolled for two days a week must work once per month, three days a week must work twice per month. Participation is per child. Parents will be scheduled on a regular basis and must notify the scheduling chairperson 30 days in advance if unable to maintain that schedule. If you are unable to participate on your scheduled day, please a) call another parent, b) call a family member or friend (must have TB clearance) or c) call the TNS director or teacher to try and arrange a substitute at a \$40 cost to you. Please note days traded with another TNS parent on the refrigerator calendar.

Please be punctual on your participation day. State law requires we have the proper adult/student ratio. If we do not meet those requirements, our school can be closed down.

**Please arrive at 8:45am, participate fully and stay until the end of clean-up, approximately 12:15pm.**

### ***Work Parties***

Each family is **required** to attend one work party day per year. Work party days are generally four hours. Typical jobs on work party days are either indoor cleaning such as cleaning carpets, waxing and buffing floors, cleaning walls and cupboards, fixing furniture, etc., and thorough yard maintenance. It can also include special projects, such as rebuilding the outside deck, fences, etc.

### ***Outdoor Maintenance***

We **require** that each family sign up for one outside general maintenance weekend per school year. Outside general maintenance includes sweeping decks and patios, raking leaves and apples, vacuuming the playhouse, etc. Generally, it takes about three hours to complete, and can be completed at any time during the scheduled weekend. Each family will receive an itemized list of tasks to be completed approximately one week prior to their assigned workday.

## **Member Financial Responsibilities**

### ***Termination***

The following are cause for termination:

1. You or your child are not profiting from the pre-school experience for physical, social, or emotional reasons.
2. Failure to meet contractual agreement.
3. Tuition payments are 30 days delinquent, unless arrangements have been made with the treasurer and approved by the board.
4. Failure to keep child's file (medical history, emergency form, etc.) current.
5. Missing five consecutive school days, unless you notify the school of the absence.
6. **Conduct that is detrimental to the functioning of the co-op, such as repeated prolonged criticism of TNS curriculum, director, teaching staff or board.**
7. Failure to have a current TB test for you and others working for you within the first two weeks of school.

### ***Payment of Fees***

Registration fees are due upon registration and are non-refundable. The first and last month's tuition is due at orientation (We combine August and June). Subsequently, bills for tuition and our enrichment program will be in your box by the first of each month. Payment is due by the 10th of each month and payments not received by the 10th are subject to a late fee of \$10 to be assessed to your account. All payments are either mailed to Turlock Nursery School, PO Box 814, Turlock, CA 95382 or delivered to the tuition box at the school. Mid-month enrollments will be prorated. We are working on an online tuition option. Currently we have access to PayPal if needed for credit card payments.

### ***Withdrawal and Fees***

Please give Turlock Nursery School a thirty (30) day notice of withdrawal if your child needs to leave the nursery school before the end of the school year. Withdrawing families will not be required to participate in further fundraising activities beyond the final membership date.

### ***Leaves of Absence***

No fee credit is given for absences. If you will be gone for two weeks to a month, you must notify the board a month in advance. To hold your place in the school, you must pay half of the regular tuition for the time you are gone. For example, if you are gone for two weeks you would pay the daily rate for the days you are here, and 1/2 of the tuition that would be due for the time that you are gone. The leave of absence discount may be used only once during the school year. For any additional absences, you must pay the full monthly tuition rate to keep your place in the school. Leaves of absence may only be taken for 14 – 30 days.

### ***Siblings in School***

When siblings are enrolled at TNS, each must pay the registration fee. The sibling attending the most days will pay the regular tuition, a sibling with the same number of days or fewer days will receive a 10% discount on tuition. Fundraising, work party, and outdoor maintenance responsibilities are per family. Participation days are ***per child***. You, or a family member, must work in the classroom the number of days required for each child's enrollment plan. Siblings that are enrolled in different classes are not permitted to join their sibling on a non-school day. For example, if one child is enrolled in our T/TH class they may not also attend the M/W/F program with their sibling unless previously arranged with our school director.

## **Fines for Non-Participation**

- For non-participation in the fall or winter Fundraiser: \$50
- For non-participation in the Spring Auction (mandatory for each family): the fine will be \$100 and \$50 for donation of auction item
- **For non-participation in a yard maintenance day or a work party day: the fine will be \$100** (this is only applied if a family fails to contact the yard maintenance or work party chairperson to reschedule, and does not follow through with their rescheduled date. This also does not apply if a family chooses to hire our yard maintenance substitute to do their yard work for them, and makes arrangements with him before their

scheduled date and pays the agreed amount of \$100) Note: a portion of this goes to the school.

## Classroom Participation

The following guidelines are designed to help you learn how the school operates and the important role that you will play as a parent participant. Please read these guidelines thoroughly prior to your first workday and ask one of the teachers or a fellow member if you have any questions about your responsibilities.

### ***Health Requirements of Participating Parents***

A current tuberculosis test is required of each participating parent and those working in their place. These are given, for a small fee, at the County Health /Department office on Scenic Drive in Modesto. You may also be able to get a TB test from your family physician. Verification must be supplied to our membership chairperson before the parent or person working for them can attend school.

### ***General School Rules:***

- No child is allowed to harm him or herself.
- No child is allowed to harm another child or adult.
- No child is allowed to destroy property.

**The school director, site supervisor or teachers have the authority to ask that a student be taken home if the behavior is deemed harmful and affecting a positive and safe school environment.**

### ***Student Supervision***

- Help children become aware of the right use of materials and equipment.
- Allow children freedom to choose materials. Help children to accept the limitations necessary with group play.
- If a child is persistent in the improper use of materials help him/her to change activities.
- Enter into children's play if invited, but avoid long periods of participation when it detracts from their play.
- Avoid overcrowding in any one area of play. 5-6 children in any area is a general rule of thumb.
- Print the child's name on their artwork. Ask the child where they would like their name. Ask the child if they wish to write their own name.
- Encourage children to complete one activity and put it away before going to another play area.
- Supervise all play with animals closely. Children must be seated when holding animals, with an adult present.
- All toys are to remain in the designated play area. For instance, no manipulative toys are to be taken into the art area or outside. There is room for using your own judgment;



especially if the children are engaged in imaginative play that you feel is manageable and beneficial.

### ***Classroom Organization***

- Learn where things are kept, the routine, and the names of the children so that you can gradually assume more responsibility in the group.
- Make sure your area is cleaned up when you are finished. Enlist the children's help in putting toys away.
- When children go outside to play at 11:30, you may begin your clean-up duties. Please refer to the checklist on the kitchen wall for details, and division of duties between participating parents.
- Please report any broken or unsafe equipment to the director or teacher.
- Please report supplies you notice are low to the director or teacher.

### ***Conversation***

**KEEP CONVERSATION BETWEEN ADULTS AT A MINIMUM** . The children need and deserve your attention.

**Anything discussed at school about children and families is confidential and is not to be shared with anyone outside the school. Please do not talk negatively around children about families or other children.**

### ***Parent Activity***

On one of your participation days, you may bring in or plan for a special game, task, project, music, etc. This may be as simple or as involved as you wish, as long as it is developmentally appropriate and preferably child directed. Please talk to the director ahead of time, if you plan to bring in a project. Sharing a project provides you with an invaluable means of becoming involved in the cooperative spirit of the school.

### ***Siblings***

Please do not bring siblings on your workday or to visit on a non-workday. ***In addition, siblings increase the number of children at school and could jeopardize the school's license.***

### ***Special Procedures Fire Drill***

When the teacher sounds the fire alarm, walk your group out the nearest door or gate to the sidewalk in front of the school. Have the children hold hands and face the street. The teacher will check the school before leaving the building. Outside, the teacher will count the children before having children and adults return to the school.

PLEASE READ AND EXAMINE FIRE DRILL PROCEDURES (posted in the kitchen).

### ***Injuries***

Report all minor and major injuries to the director or teacher immediately.

### ***Hitting***

"No hitting" is an important rule at nursery school. However, it is known that most young children hit occasionally. At first, a discussion about "no hitting" at nursery school may be used. Later, if hitting occurs, it is usually enough to remove the child from the situation and have him or her sit down. Explain that hitting hurts others and that it is frightening for the one being hit as well as the one hitting. Everyone should feel and be safe at school. Explain to the child that they may go back and play when they feel they are ready. It is always necessary to help children to learn verbal skills for aggressive action. Some things you might say are:

*"You seem very mad. You need to use your words to tell how mad you are."* OR

*"You were worried about his/her pushing. Use your words to tell him/her to stop it."* Sometimes you can help the child learn to empathize with the other child by saying, *"You made \_\_\_\_\_ very sad. Is there something you can say that might make \_\_\_\_\_ happy?" ("I'm sorry.")* If two children are having an on-going difficulty, you might say, *"You two seem to be having a problem playing together. Maybe you should play somewhere else or play by yourselves for a little while."*

### ***Biting***

Biting is a normal stage of development during early childhood. Biting occurs for many reasons whether it is teething, a lack of language, frustration, attention getting, being overly tired or simply just trying to get a reaction from someone. Our policy on biting is as follows:

1. If your child bites (even without breaking of skin) the school director, site supervisor or teachers have the authority to ask that a student be taken home if the behavior is deemed harmful and affecting a positive and safe school environment.
2. If at any time the skin is broken due to a bite, then the child will be asked to go home immediately.

### ***Discipline***

In any group of children discipline issues arise. These are opportunities for the child to develop the skills of self-discipline, self-control, and how to handle situations. Our method of discipline is the beginning of a lifelong training process that helps to promote those skills. Our emphasis encourages children to learn more appropriate and effective ways to meet their needs. Our teachers and parents teach children how to react appropriately to situations. The acceptable methods of guidance include: logical and natural consequences, anticipation of potential problems, **redirection and problem-solving techniques**, these methods are implemented in loving, nurturing ways.

Research in the field of early childhood education indicates that traditional forms of "Time Out" do not really help children understand conflict resolution and self-control. Talking about the problem, their feelings and choices available helps children understand. If a child is continually having too hard a time being in an area with others, teachers can require the child to choose another activity in a different area until they can return without disruption.

### ***Progressive Discipline Procedure***

1. Redirection: A child is reminded of the rules. If necessary, may be directed to a different activity.
2. Loss of privilege: If a child is posing a danger to self or others, he or she may lose the privilege of usage of an item or area for an appropriate amount of time.
3. Parent Involvement: If a child needs to have time away from the environment or situation they may be brought to the preschool Director. If a child is causing physical harm to self or others, behaving disrespectfully, causing major disruption, or being blatantly disobedient they will be sent to the Preschool Director for consultation and a call to parent to come to the preschool and take the child home.
  - a. Note: Discipline administered by the parent to their child must be done off the preschool campus.
4. Parent/Teacher/Director conference: If a child shows continual misbehavior or disrespect for the teacher's authority or school property or another student, the parent will be required to attend a conference with the teacher and the Director before the child will be allowed to continue in the classroom.
5. Suspension: A child may have to miss time at preschool if the above procedures are not effective.
6. Making other arrangements: We will make our best efforts to provide parents with resources and support for their family. However, if this effort is not effective, a decision may need to be reached that our Preschool is not the best place for the child. **We do reserve the right to dismiss any student who is habitually harmful to self or others, disruptive, disrespectful, or destructive to property.**

### ***Parent Classroom Schedule***

**8:45-9:00 Arrive at school promptly, ready to work.**

**9:00-10:50 Supervise Student Play:** Teacher will ask you to supervise one of the following areas: 1) Art Area, 2) Cognitive/Puzzle Table and Dramatic Play Area, 3) Cut and Color Table and Block Area, 4) Circle Room, and occasionally, 5) Outdoor Play.

1. Art Area: Art project and materials will be set up and ready. Assist children with the day's activity. When finished, wipe tables and clean up activity. Children at the play dough table and easels will also need your help.
2. Cognitive and Dramatic Play: Puzzles, games, beads, table manipulatives, etc. are offered at this table. Children may need assistance and encouragement to select and work with these activities. Please be sure to watch those in dramatic play. They may need help with ideas, overcrowding in the play area, or reaching props.
3. Cut and Color Table and Blocks: Assorted materials of papers, crayons, markers, sticky dots, scissors, stencils, etc. will be ready for the children. Assist children with name writing on their papers. This is a wonderful table for conversations with the children and a world full of creativity.
4. Circle Room: This is our cozy room used for reading stories, playing with puppets, singing or dancing or building with manipulatives.

5. Inside/Outside Play: Depending upon the flow of the day and the needs of the children, some children will play outside while others choose to play inside. The teachers will let you know how each day will flow.

### **10:50 Clean-Up Time**

1. Clean-up time is an important part of play as it gives children a sense of completion and satisfaction.
2. Five to ten minutes prior to put-away time, inform children that clean-up time will soon be here and they need to finish what they are doing.
3. Work with the child so he/she learns his/her part of the job.
4. Praise, as you work, for a job well done.
5. You may do most of the task, but see that the child helps finish. For example, the child puts the last few blocks on the shelf or the last dish in the cupboard.
6. Tools, water toys, and sand toys are put in their labeled baskets in the garage.
7. Send children to the restroom and help wash their hands in preparation for snack time.

### **11:00 Outside Play**

1. Choose an area: patio area, sandbox/garden area, back play structure/tire swing, and (if we have enough supervision) the playhouse.
2. Supervise and assist, if needed. You may need to help redirect behavior, help get items out of the garage, or mend a skinned knee. It is important the children are safe and are able to take small risks, such as jumping off the back deck and “nailing the landing.”

### ***Outside Play Guidelines***

1. Be alert to the correct use of the environment and equipment.
2. Know the limitations for use of equipment, sand toys, etc. When in doubt, talk to a teacher.
3. If you must leave the outdoor area, let a remaining adult know of your departure.
4. Avoid large groups of children on top of the play structures. Watch that children do not play near the swings or climb on the swing set.
5. Do not lift children up to play equipment. Anything they cannot climb themselves, they are not able to handle. If a child gets to a high spot on her own, spot her in case she falls.
6. Do not allow children to punch, hit, or shove others.
7. The climbing equipment is for climbing. Tree climbing is not permitted.
8. Encourage children to take turns, be considerate and be aware of the feelings of others.
9. Report any emergency to a teacher immediately.
10. DO NOT allow opening of gates. State law requires us to have the gate unlocked. We do have a gate alarm available for use.
11. Tire Swing: Only THREE children at a time and children must remain seated.

### **10:40 Snack Time**

1. You may be asked to help prepare snack and set up snack trays.
2. Gather 3-6 children at your table. The serving of snack does not start until all children are seated. Children will pass napkins, cups, snack, and then pour their own beverage. ("Take one, pass the rest")
3. All children sit while having snack. Talk quietly to the children and ask questions to get conversation going. Encourage simple politeness and soft voices (by being a good example). This is a wonderful time to sample new foods and develop social and verbal skills. As a parent, set a good example by sampling the snack yourself!
4. When finished with snack, the children put their empty cups and napkins in the trash. Have children wait for the others at their table to finish before leaving for circle time.

**11:00 Circle Time:** Join children in circle for group activities: Stories, songs, finger plays, etc.

**11:30 Outside Play:** Teacher/parent supervised

**11:45 Parent Clean-Up Indoors:** Parents will spend about fifteen minutes indoors cleaning up the school for the afternoon. Instructions are on the door of the utility closet.

**12:00 Children Leave** At this time it is important for 1 parent to keep near the front door to help observe and assist with children being picked up.

### ***Tips for Working with Young Children***

1. Listen to the children. Try not to interrupt them unless absolutely necessary.
2. Too much talk can be confusing. Simple answers are sometimes best.
3. Sit or squat to the child's level. Look directly at the child.
4. Use the child's name frequently.
5. Wait for the child to finish a thought. Respect their speed in talking.
6. Use a soft, friendly tone of voice.
7. Know what you want to say to the child. They need a clear definition.
8. Be positive. Say, "Do this" rather than "Don't do that."
9. When you have to ask a child to do something different, suggest another activity. "Rocks stay on the ground, Joe. You can throw that ball. Here, catch."
10. Whenever possible, go to the child to talk instead of calling across the room/yard.
11. Toilet accidents are taken in a matter-of-fact way. In no instance scold or punish for an accident. Putting him/her promptly into clean, dry clothes is one of the best ways to develop the habit of dryness. Suggest using the toilet before putting dry clothes on, in the event of an accident.
12. Let one adult handle a situation to the finish. The teacher will protect the child's needs and not let you take on more than you are ready to handle.
13. If you become involved in a situation more difficult than you can handle, please ask a teacher to take over for you.
14. If you discuss the children, in their presence or in the presence of any other children, include them in the discussion.

15. On your work day, you might ask for assistance in guiding your own child or let the child be guided by the teacher or another parent. You may ask a teacher for help and ideas for guidance and redirection. Remember, this is also a great opportunity for parents to learn as they participate.
16. Respect the child as an individual. Be as courteous to the child.
17. Remember the “invisible child”, the one who never seems to talk to adults, and the one who is always playing “over there.” Seek him/her out and get acquainted.

### ***Absence of a Participating Parent***

When absence is necessary on a participation day, each parent is responsible for securing a member substitute. Call five people on the membership list before calling the Scheduling Coordinator for help. Failure to show up or get a substitute will result in a fine on your monthly bill (see tuition and fee schedule).

If maternity or surgical leave is necessary, the family should file a written intention with the scheduling chairperson. Each family is eligible for two excused participation days and is responsible for finding a substitute. If a longer recuperative time is needed, arrangements should be made to trade work sessions with another parent. Please make sure the teacher is informed of all traded workdays, and mark the trades on the schedule on the refrigerator.

## **TNS Snack**

It is our goal to serve nutritious foods that are low in sugar, salt, additives, and preservatives. We occasionally like to cook and prepare foods with the children actively participating.

As we know, we are models for our children so our attitudes about new and different foods have a great impact on them. *Please be willing to sample the new and different foods so our children will also be more willing to.* Learning about nutrition and forming positive eating habits may be the most valuable benefits children develop from active participation in food preparation. By participating in a wide variety of food experiences, young children can learn to use important basics of nutrition.

***Snacks are planned by the director in advance and often relate to what we are presenting to the children during a given time frame.*** However, we are flexible and encourage new ideas and recipes, so if you would like to share them please let the director know ahead of time and she will try to work it in.

The following list of foods often causes confusion when requested for snack so we have added comments, suggestions, and preferences. Hopefully this will be of help to all of us!

- 1) **Peanut Butter:** Watch for added sugars, salts, and additives (remember sucrose and dextrose are sugars). Example Brand: Laura Scudder's (Raley's)
- 2) **Milk:** Vitamin D whole milk is preferred. Organic if possible
- 3) **Seeds and Nuts:** Shelled and unsalted are often less expensive if purchased in bulk. Raley's is a good source. Avoid peanuts-it's been recommended by doctors to avoid until

children are 6 years old because of the danger of inhaling the small stem that connects the two sides of the peanut.

4) **Juice:** 100% fruit juice, please, no soft drinks (including fruit “cocktails,” power soft drinks, Kool-Aid, punches, or sodas)

5) **Cheese:** Please avoid processed cheese spreads.

6) **Breads, Muffins and Crackers:** 100% whole wheat or 100% whole grains. Be especially watchful when purchasing packaged items. Often they have unusually high amounts of sugars, salt, and additives.

7) **Flour:** When we bake we prefer to use whole grains and have found whole wheat pastry flour is terrific.

8) **Coconut:** Unsweetened.

9) **Fruits:** Typically we use fresh fruits. If you are able to buy organic that is great, or if you have availability to a fresh fruit or vegetable in your garden.

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: Can I make up a day, since my child was absent a day?**

A: Unfortunately, because our school has two separate schedules, we are unable to accommodate children attending school on an unscheduled day.

**Q: Can I bring a special treat for my child’s birthday?**

A: Yes, we prefer healthy birthday snacks. Please ask the director for suggestions and share any of your own ideas.

**Q: Do I get credit for working in the classroom, if I drive on a fieldtrip?**

A: Only if it is your scheduled participation day

**Q: Can I bring a younger sibling with me on a field trip?**

A: Only if it is NOT your scheduled participation day. Please check with a teacher to make sure the field trip will accommodate siblings. Siblings can also be a distraction to the class experience.

**Q: Are board meetings open to anyone?**

A: Yes, any co-op member is welcome to attend meetings. We encourage your participation. If you have a specific idea or concern, please contact our board president so that he/she can add it to the meetings agenda.

**Q: What if I see something that could be improved? Who should I talk to?** A: Please talk to the director or a member of the board.

**Q: I still don’t understand why we need fundraisers. Doesn’t our tuition bring in enough money for the school?**

A: As a private school, we are not subsidized by a separate entity. Therefore, fundraising is necessary to meet any needs above our operating expenses.



**Q: Why are we closed between Christmas and New Years?**

A: We follow the Turlock Unified School District calendar that also gives this time off. We believe it is important for our staff and children to be able to spend this time with their families.

**Q: Why doesn't this school just operate continuously like other schools?**

A: We have found that it works best for our school to close during the summer. This again, is in line with the Turlock Unified School District's calendar. It also gives our students and teachers time to prepare for the next year.

## School Administration

Day-to-day administration of the school organization is essential to the on-going success of our school. Every year, the membership of TNS elects its Board of Directors. If you have any interest in running for office, please let one of the current board members know. In April, we will have an official nomination and election period. More detailed information about the school administration and job responsibilities can also be found in the By-Laws, which are kept on file at the school. We also have four (sometimes more) standing committees that require members from the general membership. Look through the description of these committees, and if you have an interest in them, please notify one of the current board members.

### ***Board Positions / Job Descriptions***

#### **President**

- Call and preside over monthly board of directors' meetings and general membership meetings (twice a year).
- Prepare written agenda, a copy to be given to each board member and one posted on the bulletin board for the membership three days before the meeting.
- Appoint committee chairs and serve as ex-officio member of all committees.
- Hold power to act in an emergency until such time as a special or regular meeting of the membership may be held.
- Fill vacancies in offices with board approval until an election can be held.
- Act as a liaison between staff, board, and membership.
- Present welcome messages at formal fundraising events.
- Submit a monthly president's message to the newsletter.
- Utilizing input from the incoming board, appoint a Historian to serve the following academic year.

#### **Vice President**

- In the absence or disability of the president, the vice-president will perform all the duties of the president until such time as the current president returns or a new election is held.
- Keep record of all families participation in fundraisers.
- Assist president with duties outlined above.
- Coordinate orientation before school begins in tandem with the school Director.
- Work with board members and families to coordinate fundraising events.

- Other duties as assigned by the president.

#### **Treasurer (CPA)**

- Authenticate with signature and that of the president all checks and other documents of the school.
- Disburse funds as approved by the board.
- Chair the Budget Committee, composed of the treasurer, assistant treasurer, the school director and a teacher representative chosen by the staff.
- Present the annual budget to the Board of Directors at the August board meeting.
- Keep up-to-date records on various categories of the budget to allow for accurate projection of expenses.
- Handle all tax exemptions forms.
- Be responsible for securing adequate property and liability insurance.
- Consult with and report to the board on issues pertaining to money and paying bills through a monthly report at the board meeting.

#### **Tuition Coordinator (Board Member)**

- Chair Budget Committee.
- Deposit all funds promptly into the checking account. Give the treasurer a report of deposits with a breakdown of how much toward each revenue category. Record tuitions.
- Check sign-in documents and bill families that arrive before or stay after their scheduled time.
- Check the participation calendar and bill any families that did not fulfill their participation requirements.
- Promptly notify parents of delinquent payments and penalties and bill accordingly.
- Report problems relating to non-payment of tuition to the board at monthly meetings.

#### **Secretary**

- Takes minutes of all membership and board meetings, filing one copy as a permanent record in the minute book.
- Give a report (mini-minutes) of the board meeting each month to the individual in charge of creating the Newsletter, including those items, which would be appropriate to print in the monthly newsletter and/or post on the bulletin board.
- Establish and maintain files of the school records, reports and communications.
- Record all changes in the By-Laws or standing rules and post virtually, as needed.
- Send thank-you notes and letters for donations of goods and services made to TNS.
- Maintain contact with supporting alumni through periodic mailings.

#### **Membership Coordinator**

- Prepare and distribute current membership lists' with names, addresses, and telephone numbers of members, keeping it up-to-date through the newsletter.
- Receives inquiries and applications for membership, maintaining a waiting list of potential members from our online waiting list forms.
- Meet prospective members; explain school activities and procedures, obligations of membership, etc. Assemble registration packets with necessary forms for enrollment.

- Receive requests for leaves of absence and letters of resignation and notify proper board members of any change in membership.
- Maintain files containing each family's enrollment forms. Keep files up-to-date.
- Keep an adequate reserve supply of current forms used with information on how they are obtained. Keep the webmaster informed of new or updated forms to add.
- Maintain an adequate first aid kit at the school and reference materials on first aid and emergency procedures, keeping emergency telephone numbers up-to-date. Post children's allergies and/or health issues disclosed by parents on the kitchen bulletin board.
- Complete annual immunization audit in a timely manner.

#### **Work Party Coordinator (Indoor/Outdoor Maintenance)**

- Chair the Maintenance Committee.
- Oversee committee members responsible for outdoor maintenance, work parties and indoor maintenance.
- Make sure all TNS families are signed up to work one outdoor maintenance and one work party per year.
- For outdoor maintenance and work parties, arrange chores to be completed during assigned workdays.
- A few days before a family's assigned maintenance weekend, place a check-off list in their box with all tasks to be completed and any supplies needed.
- Follow up to be sure families have completed tasks, signed their task lists, and returned lists to be kept on file and used as reference for the next week.
- Work with the director to identify indoor and outdoor projects for work party days.
- Coordinate with families who will be working on work parties to identify skills and abilities.
- Be sure adequate cleaning supplies are on hand at all times. If new equipment is needed, report to the board.

#### **Scheduling Coordinator**

- Schedule the parents' participation and snack schedule on a rotating basis and put a monthly schedule in each family's box.
- Find substitutes after the parent has called five other parents and calls for your assistance.
- Maintain a current list of which participation plan each family has chosen and notify the assistant treasurer if a family changes their choice.

### ***Standing Committees and Chairman***

#### **Historian**

- Chair the Membership Committee.
- Serve as webmaster and social media moderator.
- Coordinate with the board and Director to create and disseminate outreach information and solicitation, as directed, for alumni and prospective families.

- Collect and manage the content for the yearly scrapbook (pictures, newspaper clippings, etc).
- Create the yearly scrapbook and make available for families to purchase before the end of the school year.

### **Membership Committee**

**Chair:** Historian

**Members:** Membership Coordinator, Director, Scheduling Coordinator

**Duties:** Reserve display space in the Library for a TNS display once or twice per year and coordinate the display to make sure that it is in place/up to date. Coordinate PR events for the school.

### **Budget Committee**

**Chair:** Tuition Coordinator

**Members:** Tuition Coordinator, Director, Teacher Representative (if applicable), Treasurer (advisor, as needed)

**Duties:** Develop and present annual budget to Board of Directors at board meeting in August. Maintain monthly budget reports for presentation to board on a monthly basis.

### **Spring Fundraiser Coordinating Committee**

**Chair:** Appointed position from general membership

**Members:** President, Vice-President, and a number of members from general membership as decided by the committee.

**Duties:** Plan and implement the Spring Fundraiser.

### **Maintenance Committee**

**Chair:** Work Party Coordinator

**Members:** School Director, two appointed members from the general membership.

**Duties:** Develop and maintain plans for all outdoor and indoor maintenance.

## **Turlock Nursery School Financial Policy**

Turlock Nursery School is an exceptional school that has endured for 40 years. As a parent co-op, it has been through both stable and unstable financial times. It is with this in mind, that the 1998-1999 TNS Board of Directors adopted the following financial policy.

1. **Operate the school with the registration and tuition income meeting operating expenses (salaries, utilities, insurance, advertising, supplies etc.) each month**
2. Raise \$10,000-\$12,000 through fundraising to cover capital expenses. (Playground equipment repair or replacement, new windows, new classroom equipment, exterior paint etc.), school extra's (Last Day of School Party and End of the Year family picnic) and employee benefits (IRA's)

3. Maintain a savings CD with a minimum balance of \$3000.00