

# ORCHARD PARK COOPERATIVE PRESCHOOL 2012/2013 HANDBOOK

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**Children's experiences in their early years set a solid foundation for their future success. Our mission is to provide the highest quality early educational experience and to respond to the individualized needs of the total child in a creative, warm, nurturing, play environment.**

**The suggestions made in the following pages are to be used as a guide. All information contained in these pages can be accessed via our website at [www.opcoop.com](http://www.opcoop.com).**

## ORCHARD PARK COOPERATIVE NURSERY SCHOOL

### I. GOALS

To develop in each child curiosity, awareness and an understanding of the world through social, sensory, emotional and intellectual experiences.

To enable each child to express himself / herself creatively and constructively.

To teach acceptable social techniques by personal example and positive suggestions.

To develop each child's independence.

To enhance each child's ability to follow directions.

To increase each child's span of attention.

To help each parent to better understand their child's potentials and patterns of development.

To supplement and enrich the basic experience that a good home has to offer.

To provide a unique opportunity for parent and child to share the transition from home to school under the guidance of competent teachers.

### II. HELPFUL HINTS (THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLD CLASSES)

School hours are 9:15 am to 11:45 am

Four Plus hours will be 9:15 pm to 12:00 pm

Please be prompt in picking up your child.

Contact the scheduling parent (refer to list of Board of Directors) for your class by the 15th of the month, to inform him/her of any preference you may have for scheduling your participation days.

Your participation day is meant to be a special time with your child. Siblings may not be brought along on your participation days. Babysitting swaps are often arranged between parents who also have other children at home.

Participating parents should be in the classroom at 9:00 a.m. At that time, you will Receive instruction on the day's plans from your child's teacher(s) and help the teacher(s) get any activities ready for the day. All other parents and students must wait until 9:15 a.m. before entering the classroom in order to allow the teacher time to prepare for the day.

Teachers welcome all parents to “cooperate” by sharing a hobby or interest with the children. Examples may be playing a musical instrument, baking, etc. Please check with the teachers ahead of time.

To contact the teachers in the classrooms dial the church (662-9348) and request the extension for your child’s classroom. Extension #311 is the downstairs 3 and 4 year old classroom, and extension #317 is the upstairs 3 and 4 plus rooms.

### **III. ADVICE FOR THE BEGINNING OF SCHOOL**

Allow sufficient time for dressing, eating, etc. before school so that your child will arrive feeling relaxed and secure. Prompt arrival is not essential until a routine can be established (unless you are participating that day).

Have your child wear play clothes, sneakers and appropriate outerwear.

Help your child locate his / her hook to hang coats or jackets. It is the responsibility of the parents to see to it that coats or jackets are off and on the hook. Encourage your child to do as much of this as he / she can. Please label all jackets/bags/boots with your child’s last name.

Make sure your child has seen where the bathroom is and where to wash his/her hands.

Be willing to stay with him/her each day until he/she stays alone willingly.

Once having made the decision to leave, do so promptly. Say good-bye to the child and let him/her know you will be back when school is over.

Encourage your child to find his/her own activity at school.

Put nametags on all things that might get lost.

Your child should have a wide opening tote bag or backpack with his/her name on it. This is to carry home art projects.

Please notify the teachers if there is any change in the usual riding arrangements. In an emergency, call the school or send a note with the person who is picking up your child.

### **IV. LOCATION OF ARTICLES AND FACILITIES**

Kitchen:

Down the stairs and located through the first door on the right. Participating parents and their child should fill the water pitcher for snack time.

Restrooms:

Located to the right of the school entrance or in the classrooms.

Cupboards in Classroom:

Downstairs 3yr/4yr classroom: The cupboard near the tables contains the art and snack supplies.

Upstairs 3yr/4yr classroom: The art and snack supplies are located in the storeroom.

Broom/Dust Pan and Vacuum:

Downstairs: Near the tables next to the middle door of the classroom.

Upstairs: In the storeroom.

Paper towels/Spray cleaner:

Downstairs: Found in the cupboard near the tables.

Upstairs: On the high windowsill in the upstairs bathroom.

Pitchers for Water:

Found on the windowsill next to the tables. Wash the pitchers with soap and water after each use.

## **V. GUIDELINES FOR PARTICIPATING PARENTS**

Set up outdoor equipment when weather permits.

One parent and their child is responsible for taking the water pitcher from the classroom downstairs and filling it up with water and placing it in refrigerator and then taking a full pitcher of water from refrigerator to classroom for snack time.

During free time, the teacher will ask you to supervise a specific area or direct and activity (one you are comfortable with). This will vary according to the program.

At clean up, help children put toys away. Remind them to go to the bathroom before they join the circle. Encourage and expect children to work.

While teachers and students are in circle time, set up the cups of water and snack. Following this, feel free to join circle activities. After circle time, guide children to the sinks for hand washing before finding seats for snack time.

When going outside, help children to dress (encourage self-help). If two participants are working, one will go outside with the children, while the other will wipe tables, sweep the floor, and wash out water pitcher and place back on windowsill.

Observe proper hand washing procedures:

Use liquid soap and running water.  
Rub your hands vigorously for at least 10 seconds.  
Wash everywhere: back of hands, wrists, between fingers and under fingernails.  
Rinse well.  
Dry hands with a paper towel.  
Turn off water using a paper towel, not your clean hands.  
Wash your hands properly and frequently and help the children learn the proper way to wash their hands too!

## **VI. SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS / DETAILS BY ACTIVITY FOR PARTICIPANTS**

### **Climbing Apparatus:**

Supervise closely!  
Enforce limits (No jumping, only a reasonable number of children at one time, cautious use of slide, etc.).  
If the pace is too hectic, direct the children to another play area.  
Call another adult to help if you must leave a busy climber even for a moment.

### **Blocks:**

Keep blocks in specified area.  
Constructive block play may be initiated by a simple structure built by an adult.  
Encourage children to put blocks away according to size and shape.

### **Easel Painting:**

**THE PROCESS IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE PRODUCT!**  
Equipment - easel, brushes, paint cans (1/3 full), newspapers, clips and easel paper, crayon or pencil for writing name on paper.  
Children should wear smocks while painting and keep brushes in correct cans; one brush to a can. Wipe paint on edge of can to avoid dripping.  
Encourage free expression.  
Make sure the floor is covered or otherwise protected before painting begins.  
Put name on paper or ask child if they need help.  
Do not ask child what he/she is painting or tell him/her how to do it. "Tell me about your picture" is more appropriate.

### **Play dough:**

Show how to manipulate the play dough by pinching, rolling, pounding and attaching one piece to another, but do not make models or other objects.

### **Activity/Sensory Table:**

Individualized educational materials chosen by the teachers to develop

specific skills.

Housekeeping Corner:

Area for dramatic play and role-playing.

Usually self-directed.

Daily Art Project:

Each day during free play, there is a daily art project where specific skills are practiced and educational topics are explored. Skills include cutting, pasting, coloring and painting. Subject areas include: art, math, science, and reading. The emphasis is not on the end product, but on the process. Children are asked to participate but are given a choice and may choose not to if they are engrossed in their playing. Usually, students are allowed to say “no” once, and the second time, they are required to complete the activity. It is helpful to remind some students of this protocol. Using language that assumes compliance is almost always successful. For example, “It’s time for you to do the project.” Or, “It’s your turn now.” As opposed to “Would you like to do the project?”.

One parent a day is asked to help direct this activity.

Clean-Up Time:

During free play, encourage each child to pick up and put the things he / she has been using in their appropriate places.

Clean up time will be announced by the teacher with a short advance warning.

Encourage each child to put things away, praising his/her help and making it fun.

Remind each child to go to the bathroom when finished. One participant can supervise hand washing.

Snack Time:

Supplies are found in the cabinet located by the tables or in the upstairs storeroom.

Children are encouraged to do as much set up as possible.

Include a place setting for the teachers, the participating parents and the children.

Children should tuck napkins in cups and dispose of them after eating. Do not do this for them.

Participants are responsible for cleaning the tables and sweeping the floors.

Circle Time:

Circle time is the most structured time of the day. During this time the children come together as a group. This time is teacher directed, and

participants are encouraged to help by sitting with restless children.

## VII. SUGGESTIONS FOR WORKING WITH CHILDREN

### Attitude:

Be friendly and relaxed, quiet in manner and tone.

Show warmth and comfort when a child is hurt.

Be matter of fact and take compliance for granted. Let the child say, "I don't want to." Often he/she will comply after having the satisfaction of refusing.

Encourage independence. Let the child do as many jobs as he can handle by himself.

Relax at times. Continual activity is not necessary for you or the children.

Let each individual move at his / her own pace.

### Attention:

Have a child's attention when you speak.

Give one direction at a time.

Speak simply.

Show him/her if he/she does not grasp the meaning.

Give advance warning. Do not expect a child to stop instantly, forcing a child to perform too quickly or to turn abruptly from one activity to another causes frustration and irritation.

Suggest the next specific act when a child dawdles. "Can you reach a towel?" would be an appropriate prompt when a child needs to finish washing.

Give the child a choice when feasible. "Would you rather hand the blocks to me to put on the shelf or put them away yourself?"

### Activity:

The activity has the value. Process is more important than the product.

Allow the children to use equipment at their own developmental level. Give encouragement when needed.

You can show children where to use material or art media, but avoid making things for them.

Allow children to learn by experience. Help them only when necessary.

Encourage them to find out for themselves.

Breaking and spilling are not tragedies and should not be treated as such, but crashing and throwing are out of line.

### Acclimation:

A child should not be shamed or scolded.

Do not force the timid child to do things he is not ready to do. Your remaining close-by may give him/her confidence to try something new.

It is not unusual for children at preschool to have toilet accidents. Remind them to stop earlier next time. Extra clothing is kept at school.

## **VIII. SPECIAL EVENTS AT THE PRE-SCHOOL**

### **Parents' Night:**

There is one Parents' Night, held in September. This meeting is usually held at the Presbyterian Church Reception Room. The Parents' Night is an informational meeting at the start of the school year. Attendance at this meeting is strongly recommended.

### **Board of Directors Meetings:**

Board meetings are held once a month, in the evening, at the school. The Board consists of all parent volunteers. Throughout the year, there are always jobs for parent volunteers to do. Parents are encouraged to attend Board Meetings (dates are posted on the web site), and to share their ideas or concerns.

### **Open House:**

A Saturday in January is selected to provide prospective parents and children the opportunity to visit the school, meet staff members, and ask questions regarding the program. Parent volunteers for this day are always appreciated and invaluable.

### **Fundraisers:**

There is an annual fundraiser, held either in the fall or spring to raise money for our program's success. We encourage all families to attend and support the main annual fundraiser and any and all smaller fundraisers throughout the year.

### **Birthday Parties:**

Each child's birthday will be recognized in school. You will be assigned to participate on the day closest to your child's birthday. You may provide a cookies/treat and birthday napkins, but please do not plan a full scale party. Please check with your teacher about any food allergies in your classroom and you may want to ask the parent of a student with a food allergy about your birthday snack idea. Parties for birthdays which fall during the summer vacation can be arranged if you wish. Several holiday parties are also held during the school year.

### **Field Trips:**

You may be called upon to provide transportation for some field trips. They will be scheduled throughout the year.



## IX. RATES, FEES, POLICIES

### A. Tuition:

Checks are made payable to the Orchard Park Cooperative Nursery School and are to be mailed to P.O. Box 228, Orchard Park, New York, 14127.

Tuition is to be paid as follows:

a) A non-refundable \$100.00 installment due on April 1st ; and

b) the balance payable in three equal installments due August 1st, November 1st and February 1st. In the alternative, tuition can be paid in full (minus the \$100 April 1st payment) on August 1st. (Students whose parents choose the latter option will receive O.P. Co-op t-shirt and tote bag.)

The rates by class are as follows (for the school year 2012-2013):

#### 3 yr. participating:

\$800 per year or three installments of \$267/\$267/\$266 plus \$100 for the April 1 non-refundable deposit for 3 year olds (participating).

Total tuition: \$900.

#### 3 yr. non-participating:

\$1000 per year or three installments of \$334/\$333/\$333 plus \$100 for the April 1 non-refundable deposit for 3 year olds (non-participating).

Total tuition: \$1100.

#### 4 yr. participating:

\$1200 per year or three installments of \$400/\$400/\$400 plus \$100 for the April 1 non-refundable deposit for 4 year olds (participating).

Total tuition: \$1300.

#### 4 yr. non-participating:

\$1400 per year or three installments of \$467/\$467/\$466 plus \$100 for the April 1 non-refundable deposit for 4 year olds (non-participating).

Total tuition: \$1500.

#### 4 Plus:

\$1850 per year or three installments of \$617/\$617/\$616 plus \$100 for the April 1 non-refundable deposit for the Four Plus program.

Total tuition: \$1950.

#### Fees:

A \$30.00 fee is charged for payments not postmarked within 10 days of the tuition due date. A \$50.00 fee will be charged for payments not postmarked within 30 days of the tuition due date. Additionally, any fees incurred in the

event of a check drawn on an account with insufficient funds will be charged to the parent. Families are expected to volunteer at at least one school event. Failure to do so will result in a \$50.00 assessment.

**Sibling Discount:**

If a family has more than one child enrolled in the Preschool, they will receive a discount of 10% off their entire tuition bill.

**Registration:**

A \$45.00 non-refundable application fee is due with each application.

**Withdrawal:**

If a child must be withdrawn during the school year for any reason, deposited tuition (other than the \$45 application fee and \$100 non-refundable tuition payment due April 1st) will be refunded on a pro-rated basis when notice is given to the Director of the school.

**B. Participation:**

Participation is on an average of one to two times per month, depending on class size.

All specific date requests should be to the scheduler by the 15th of the month. All requests made after the 20th are the individual co-oping parents responsibility to find a replacement.

If utilizing the Swap & Sub List it is also the responsibility of the cooping parent to pay \$20.00 to their replacement within one week of the day the substitution occurs.

It is often possible to swap participation dates with other parents.

Non-participation is also available for those parents who are unable to participate. The additional cost is reflected in the tuition rates for non-participation.

**C. Health Form:**

A physical examination is needed before your child enters preschool. Your child's immunization records with dates must be received by the preschool before your child can begin school.

**D. Progress Reports:**

These are given periodically. If you would like to discuss your child's progress at any other time, the teachers are happy to take your call.

Susie Kapaun, Academic Director	667-3970
Kelly Abel	662-7330
Kathleen Lindel	839-3273

Jennifer Smith  
Sally Stephen  
Cindy Wiencek

207-9544  
662-5986  
662-5583

E. Health and Safety:

Children with obvious symptoms (runny nose, frequent or hard cough) should be kept home unless cleared by a physician.

Children who have had vomiting, diarrhea or fever should not return to school for 24 hours after symptoms end.

Children should return to school only when able to participate in all activities.

Children who become ill at school will be separated from the rest of the class, until a parent is notified and arrives to pick them up.

Please inform the school of any contagious illness, or an absence of more than a day.

Medication can be given only with written permission and instructions from parents.

Children will be released only to persons having parental permission and personal identification. Please notify the teachers if there are any changes in the usual riding arrangements. In an emergency, send a note with the person who is picking up the child.

Teachers are trained to administer basic first aid and CPR. The teachers may not do any medical testing.

F. School closings:

The Co-Op follows the Orchard Park Central School District calendar for all major holidays and storm related closings. Class will be held on all OPCSD conference days. There will be NO PRESCHOOL on those days when the Orchard Park Central School District operates with a delayed opening schedule.

G. Solicitation:

Solicitation of members of the Orchard Park Co-Op is discouraged. Single flyers promoting personal business events may be posted on the school bulletin boards for a period of one week.

Children centered product sales must be voted on by the Board of Directors and approved by quorum. These sales, if approved by the Board of

Directors will be advertised in the monthly newsletter. Catalogs or flyers will be placed out in a convenient location for parents to take if they wish. There is no obligation to make a purchase. A two-week period will be established for orders to be collected. Merchandise will be distributed by the sales associate with the assistance of the Co-Presidents of the Board and the Director. Any proceeds earned from these sales will go directly back to the Orchard Park Co-Op program.

H. Children with special needs:

The Co-op will reasonably accommodate children with special needs, whether physical or behavioral, if the needs of the child do not put undue burden on the school. In situations where a child requires an aide, it will be the financial responsibility of the child's parents/guardians to provide the aide. All situations of children with special needs will be evaluated and accommodated on an individual basis.

I. Mandatory Automobile Child Restraint Systems on Field Trips:

All parents must provide car seats or booster seats for their children when their children go on Co-op sponsored field trips. Effective March 27, 2005, New York state law requires that all passengers under the age of seven must be restrained in an appropriate child restraint system. (New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law, Section 1229-c). If a seat is not provided for your child, and one is not available in the cars being used to transport the class, your child will not be able to attend the field trip.