

# **Town & Country Nursery School**

## **Parent's Handbook**

**2020-2021**

**Town & Country Nursery School**  
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**Co-Directors: Toni Graeber & Sharon McCandless**

*Dear Parents,*

*We are delighted to welcome you and your family to our Town & Country community. We thank you for entrusting your children to us and hope that this first educational experience will be both nurturing and rewarding for all of you. We look forward to getting to know you as members of our family.*

*As we share in the care and development of your children, we will be building a close relationship. You are becoming part of a community of staff, parents, children, extended family and caregivers who provide a supportive environment for all of us. We look forward to enriching your child's everyday experiences by guiding his or her social, physical, cognitive and emotional growth.*

*Our Parent's Handbook contains a great deal of information that will be helpful to you during the entire school year. Please read it carefully and use it for reference. Also, please sign the last page and return it to the office with all of your child's paperwork as you enroll. Additional information is available on our website: [townandcountrynurseryschool.com](http://townandcountrynurseryschool.com)*

*We hope that we have anticipated and answered most of your questions, but this printed material is no substitute for personal communication. Remember that our doors are always open as Co-Directors and Teaching staff. We welcome your questions and concerns no matter how small. We have a common interest – your child!*

*Sincerely,*

*Miss Toni & Miss Sharon*

*Miss Toni and Miss Sharon  
Co-Directors*

## **INTRODUCTION**

This Parent's Handbook was written to provide an understanding of the philosophy, culture and rules that guide the Town & Country Nursery School staff in caring for your children. We work together as a community of children, parents, teachers, staff and caregivers to support the best possible educational environment for the children in our care.

## **MISSION**

The Mission of Town & Country Nursery School, in partnership with parents, is to provide a developmentally appropriate curriculum for young children in a nurturing and stimulating environment. Town & Country Nursery School believes in the use of encouragement as a motivator, in allowing children to make decisions and to experience the consequences of their choices. The Town & Country Nursery School experience strives to develop self-directed, confident and capable life-long learners.

## **OUR VALUES**

***Respect*** – interacting with kindness and understanding  
***Trust*** – building predictable, loving and dependable relationships  
***Integrity*** – responding with honesty and fairness to all  
***Community*** – greeting, acknowledging, including and helping others  
***Diversity*** – respecting and understanding for the individual, cultural and group differences  
***Tradition*** – supporting customs and beliefs of the Town & Country philosophy  
***Innovation*** – exercising openness to new ideas that improve children's growth  
***Learning*** - promoting school-wide education for children, teachers & parents  
***Nurturing*** – caring for and encouraging the growth of all within our community

## **ORGANIZATION OF THE SCHOOL**

Town & Country Nursery School is a 501©3, non-profit organization. It is governed by a Board of Trustees. The Director and Assistant Director report to the Board of Trustees and are responsible for the overall daily operation of the school, functioning as the executive decision-making team. The teaching staff is responsible in the classrooms and consists of Teachers, Teaching Assistants and volunteers. There is also a Parent Committee, composed of current and former parents, that reviews policies and makes recommendations to the Director(s) and Board of Trustees.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Open communication is the foundation of a harmonious child-care community. Parents are encouraged to be involved in their child's education and communicate often with your child's teacher and/or the Directors. Teachers maintain a close working relationship with families through frequent personal and phone conversations, email, class websites, written notes, home visits, newsletters, school events and parent participation in classroom activities.

Teachers and the Directors have the training and experience to answer your questions, discuss your child's development and work with you to resolve any problems you encounter. Teachers are parents' most direct source of information. If you have a specific concern, it is often best to schedule a conference with your teacher. Either you or

your child's teacher may invite a director to be present or not. You may also have an individual conference with The Director or Assistant Director. We are here to meet your and your child's needs at all times.

### **PEOPLE MAKE THE DIFFERENCE**

The most significant factor in the development and well-being of children is building relationships with responsive, skilled and loving adults. Learning for each child is maximized when he or she feels a sense of trust and belonging from the people and places around them. Town & Country teachers work to build close and loving relationships with your children.

Our staff is a loyal and cooperative team of talented, well-trained and experienced individuals who love their work - helping to nurture and enhance the education and development of our 2-1/2 through 5 year-old children and their families. Many teachers have BA degrees; all have at least 12 units in Early Childhood Education and each Teaching Assistant has at least 6 units of ECE. The average tenure of our teachers is 16 years. At least half of our teachers have been with us for 20 years or longer. We also understand that these experienced people, who live and breathe the T&C philosophy, will one day retire. So we take our mission seriously to bring in new staff members who are well trained and passionate in practicing the T&C philosophy. We value our weekly staff meetings as a time to continue our learning, communicate and remain consistent, build our experiences and environment for children and solve problems. Town & Country requires teachers to continue their training by taking at least one workshop every other year. We are committed to education and professional growth that will enhance our understanding, innovation and support of child development.

### **RATIOS OF TEACHERS TO CHILDREN**

The ratio of teachers to children is another essential factor in delivering quality childcare to young children. Having more teachers and support staff provides better supervision and individualized care and also a greater variety of personality types. Additional adults are helpful in setting up a rich environment for children – another critical factor that engages children in a variety of learning interests. Each trained staff member also acts as a social magnet - building friendships, facilitating the learning process, anchoring activities, helping to get children involved, mentoring and modeling in problem-solving skills as they support each child as a unique individual.

Children often have an initial adjustment period when starting school and also in changing teachers in the following year(s). After this transition period, children often develop strong attachments with one or more teachers in their class. A close connection to at least one adult is an excellent barometer of a child's happiness in the program. In all cases, our teacher-to-child ratios exceed the state requirements, which is 1:12. Our youngest 3 year-olds have a ratio of 1:4 while 4 and 5 year-olds have a 1:5 ratio.

### **TOWN & COUNTRY TEACHERS**

- Room 1 – Miss Joanne – Youngest 3s
- Room 2 - Miss Shannon – Young 3s
- Room 4 – Miss Alexis – 3s turning 4 year olds
- Room 5 – Miss Reyna – 3-1/2 year olds
- Miss Elizabeth – 3-1/2 year olds

Room 6 – Miss Holly – 5 year olds – Developmental Kindergarten

Room 7 – Miss Julie H – older 4 year olds

Room 8 – Miss Julie I – older 4 year olds

Room 9 – Miss Tana - younger 4 year olds

Room 10–Miss Christine - 4 year olds

Outdoor Classroom – Miss Elizabeth and Miss Cindy

### **HISTORY & PHILOSOPHY**

Town & Country Nursery School was founded in 1958 by Miss Pat Horan and Miss Mary Muchmore. It was created to serve the children and families of the surrounding communities. Since its inception, it has offered a nurturing and stimulating educational environment for young children between the ages of two and a half through five years old in 5 different locations. Since 2002, Town & Country has called St. Francis Episcopal Church our home. We partner with the St. Francis community, but do not have a formal religious orientation to our school.

Our school philosophy incorporates principles of many early childhood theorists, including Piaget, Erikson, Vygotsky, Montessori and Gardner. However, our core practices are based on the thinking of Alfred Adler and Rudolf Dreikurs. We believe that individuals, both children and adults, learn best by being responsible for their behavior. We encourage children to make developmentally-appropriate choices and to live with those choices. In experiencing their decisions, children determine how to participate, to cooperate or not and to live with the consequences. Our staff helps children to grow by remembering, “Never do for a child what the child can do for himself.” Encouraging attitudes coupled with allowing children to do many things for themselves, makes for a positive and happy learning environment. Children are free to explore, discover and test their ideas while developing their sense of capability, self-esteem and independence.

Town & Country’s philosophy is also based on the principle that children at this stage of life learn best through play. Since our children are likely to live to 90 years of age, we are committed to *preserve this wonderful experience of childhood.*

### **CURRICULUM**

Town & Country’s curriculum is child-centered, developmentally-appropriate and play-based. We believe that children learn everywhere all of the time. Using this principle, our children will spend half of their day indoors and half outdoors. We develop both the indoor and outdoor environments to present a great variety of irresistible activities in which children can choose to engage. We encourage you to send your children in play clothes and close-toed shoes that are easy for them to put on and take off, allowing children to get dirty, be involved in messy, sensory activities and help them to build capability.

Our daily activities embody learning for the whole child in areas of social, cognitive, emotional and physical development. Emphasis is placed on large and small motor skills, language arts, math science, art and music as well as many academic readiness skills. Academics are here, but not the most important focus. We know that young children who learn through play both indoors and outdoors, by exploring and experiencing challenges and successes in all areas of their development, grow in capability and independence, becoming excellent students as they grow older. It is our practice to treat children with the

love and respect due to every person and to encourage them to appreciate privileges and the responsibilities of those privileges.

### **The Importance of Play**

Play naturally provides the experiences by which young children develop and learn about the world around them. Through play, children learn how things work and how they can interact with them. Play allows children to explore ideas, practice new skills, solve problems, interact with others, learn to communicate, work with emotions, explore ideas and develop creativity. Albert Einstein describes play as “the laboratory for the synthesizing of cognitive and social-emotional skills in one experience.”

A common misconception with play is that it has less value than work or teacher-directed academic learning. But it is through play that children explore, construct and test ideas, refining critical-thinking skills. A strong emphasis on academic learning and achievement-oriented activities when a child is not developmentally ready, can undermine a child’s joy for learning and his later school success.

T&C teachers facilitate constructive play by engaging children in activities appropriate to their development. They keep them engaged by observing, asking open-ended questions and playing with them to stimulate thinking and encourage exploration. Our teachers understand and support this strong relationship between play and learning.

Some families may worry that play is not adequately preparing their child for the rigors of kindergarten. Our program, while play-based, is intentional, engaging and challenging. Our daily activities involve children in many concepts that contain math, literacy and science. Perhaps more importantly, children are developing their potential socially, physically, cognitively and emotionally, giving them the building blocks and self-confidence for advanced learning.

Town & Country believes that it is better to encourage a love of learning than to force a child to memorize the alphabet or count to 100. As part of class experiences, children at T&C will be building letter and number recognition and production skills, phonemic awareness, 1-to-1 correspondence, patterning, deduction and sequencing. In this regard, research shows that when children have frequent experiences that foster exploration, posing questions and seeking explanations, they develop a desire to find out, sophisticated logical thinking skills and the ability to problem solve. They also view themselves as competent learners.

Children who graduate from Town & Country attend a wide range of public and private schools. The feedback we receive from parents, teachers and principals, is that T&C children are confident, curious, independent problem solvers, valued friends and motivated learners who are well prepared for the next steps in cognitive and social development.

### **Learning Outdoors**

Town & Country Nursery School is a partner in The Outdoor Classroom Project, a statewide initiative, dedicated to increasing the quantity, quality and benefit of outdoor experiences and learning for young children. Like our indoor classrooms, the Outdoor Classroom has a Teacher and TA designing and staging the environment and activities for all children in the school. Play outside embodies the young child’s love of active learning and stimulates cognitive growth by allowing children the freedom of physical movement, a critical component in stimulating brain development. This is not recess, but an integrated

learning environment that engages children in all levels of goals planned for each day. Our staff is committed to help children connect and discover the natural world and the breadth of experiences that are available outside. We develop curriculum, take cues from children and allow the natural spaces surrounding our school to provide their own experiential learning to support this next generation as caretakers and stewards of our planet.

### **Building Blocks of Learning**

Town & Country teachers, the environment and our children all collaborate in creating curriculum. Teachers arrive with a plan each day and set up the environment. However, learning, like life, doesn't usually go according to plan. Social encounters, life events and celebrations, discoveries, news and family experiences all contribute to learning. T&C believes that a child who helps to initiate and influence learning is much more likely to be excited and joyful about the educational process now and into the future. We encourage children, as unique individuals, to bring their interests and findings, initiate and transform learning, move things and change activities, promoting questions and discoveries to help lead curriculum. We want children to know that the Town & Country space, equipment and supplies belong to them and that these are theirs to use, clean up and provide with care. Each child is part of the whole classroom and plays a role in contributing, provoking, cooperating and enhancing learning

In many ways, the strongest emphasis of Town & Country's curriculum is in social and emotional development. We believe that you bring your children to nursery school to build their first close relationships beyond their nuclear families, starting the learning process outside your home. Our youngest children may frequently play solo or parallel, participating in interactive play experiences offered here when they are ready. Even 4 and 5 year-olds may choose activities individually, but they will inevitably encounter other children. With teacher support, these encounters provide opportunities to take turns, express ideas, build friendships, deal with disappointment, build coping skills, face and resolve conflicts. When conflict arises over daily issues, as it inevitably does, our staff looks on these moments as opportunities for children to learn as individuals and as a group. Our teachers guide communication, listen to children and support their learning in how to solve problems on their own whenever they arise. Our low staff to children ratio (1:5) allows us to give these experiences the focus they deserve to help children grow in social and emotional intelligence and capability. Positive Discipline is used as the guiding philosophy in these circumstances.

Our T&C staff understands that each child comes to us as a unique individual. One may be exuberant and assertive while another may be more quiet or reserved. We respect each child's disposition and endeavor to engage them in our curriculum at a level that is comfortable while still containing challenge. Depending on the activity, a child may have difficulty participating or integrating into a group situation. Our staff provides choices for children in how or if they wish to join. At times, a child may choose to withdraw or feel challenged in focusing or participating in a constructive way. When one of these responses occurs, your child may be given one-on-one time with a Teacher or Teaching Assistant in a special activity, a walk or cardio activity away from the class or a cooling off time in the office. None of these choices are punitive in nature but rather an opportunity for the child to re-center and regain his or her interest and composure to enter classroom experiences with the group.

Discipline is truly an integral part of the curriculum. Many opportunities are presented daily for a child or groups of children to learn from their choices and their consequences. A bad choice or accident is treated as a learning opportunity where we keep children engaged in the process. No child is to be isolated, embarrassed or shamed when he or she makes a mistake or a bad choice. If a child chooses to crash his bike into a friend's bike, then that child will be asked to park his bike for 5 minutes, finding another activity to do. In 5 minutes, we encourage that child to try again, learning from that previous choice, and often, now motivated and able to be a safe driver. If a child spills his juice, we will engage her in finding the clean-up towel and ask for her help in wiping up the spill. Self-discipline and life skills are developed through practice with these experiences.

### **CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS**

Town & Country Nursery School provides nurturing and developmentally-appropriate early education programs for children from two and a half through five years old. We group children very closely by their birthdates, usually within a 3 to 4 month range when we first enroll them. They spend their first year in this class. In the following year(s), when you choose to enroll for the second and, if desirable, third year, we place your child in a class based on their social, cognitive, emotional and physical maturity. We want to create a chronological and developmental closeness in each class so children learn to share roles, interact more easily and are able to share a curriculum that is reflective of their growth. Our teachers' assessment and understanding of your children during their first year helps us to know where they will thrive in the following year(s). We also want to nurture and promote the peer friendships that they are building when they begin, so we place them with at least one or two friends from their first-year class at T&C. Often, children will transition to their next year's teacher and class during the Summer Session, if they choose to attend in either July or August, or as the school year begins again in September.

### **Understanding that Children are Competent and Capable**

As your child develops from infancy and total dependence on you, parents and caregivers begin the process of letting go while supporting the first steps of independence. Even the youngest infant is competent and capable. Town & Country builds on this thinking by respecting each child's temperament, style of expression and pattern of development as we communicate, encourage and support their steps of growth. We allow children to develop along their own path, meeting milestones when they are ready for the next level of social, cognitive, physical and emotional growth. Children who are rushed or pushed into something before they are ready, may experience confusion, frustration and failure.

Our staff encourages children to actively explore and learn at their own pace – being careful not to impose our interests on them or instruct them in how to do things. This exploration can require struggle and produce frustration for the child. We respectfully allow a child to struggle so they can find their own solution as we communicate our support and availability to help if they need it. This builds the child's sense of accomplishment, esteem and capability in doing for themselves.



## **Morning Program**

Town & Country's program consists of a 10-month school year from September through June and two Summer Sessions, one in July (4 weeks) and one in August (3 weeks). The heart of our day is a 3-hour morning program from 9:00am through 12:00pm. We also have added a separate 3-hour afternoon program from 12:00-3:00pm for older 4s which mirrors the morning schedule. Our day is divided between indoor and outdoor play. Children turning three years old may choose a 2-day (TTh) or 3-day (MWF) schedule. Four year olds may choose a 3-day or a 4-day (various) schedule. A morning child's school day may be extended into the afternoon Lunch Bunch program which operates every afternoon (Mondays from 12:00-2:00pm and Tuesdays through Fridays from 12:00-3:00pm).

We spend half of our morning indoors and half in our Outdoor Classroom. Our curriculum is developmental and play-based, assessing and building on the children's interests and talents while helping them to grow in capability, confidence and independence.

T&C provides a mid-morning snack of water, organic milk, organic fruits and vegetables and may also include other organic proteins and carbohydrates. During birthday times, children and their parents choose to bring a celebratory snack to share with children and teachers in their class. The food you bring is your choice but we encourage healthy snacks and ask that you provide small portions appropriate to children's appetite. If your child has specific allergies, we are happy to accommodate or have you bring a special snack to serve your child for daily or celebratory snacks. (See Allergies on p. 22)

## **Afternoon Program**

Town & Country has created an afternoon program that operates on Tuesdays through Fridays (4 days) for older 4 year olds. It runs from 12:00-3:00pm and these children bring their lunch from home as they join the morning children who are staying for the Lunch Bunch program. The afternoon class has the same program as in the morning, with time divided between indoor and outdoor experiences. A daily snack is provided around 2:00pm.

## **Developmental Kindergarten**

Our oldest 4 year-olds turning 5 have the option of enrolling for a 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> year at Town & Country in our Developmental Kindergarten program. Parents who observe their child, public school classes, our DK class and conference with their child's teacher, may decide that even though their child is age-appropriate for Kindergarten or public Transitional Kindergarten, they would benefit from an extra year of maturity and childhood to build confidence and competence in all areas of development.

Our DK class differs from the public school Transitional Kindergarten in significant ways. First, rather than being a Kindergarten curriculum taught at a slower pace, it is actually based on children's developmental maturity. Second, our teacher-to-child ratios remain at 1:5, allowing individualized attention to support learning for every child. Third, our DK class has the same schedule as all T&C classes with half of the morning indoors and half outdoors, providing the active learning needed. Fourth, our DK teacher assesses each student in physical, social, cognitive and emotional areas, using this information to better design curriculum for the class. Then, daily developmentally-attainable challenges are planned and adapted to bring each child to the level of competency needed for

Kindergarten success for the following year. It is a year-long process that continues education of the whole child in social, physical, emotional and cognitive learning. As Bev Bos so clearly stated, “You can’t be a 5 year-old until you have been a complete 4 year-old.”

### **Lunch Bunch**

Lunch Bunch is available as an afternoon program from 12:00-2:00pm on Mondays and from 12:00-3:00pm on Tuesdays through Fridays. Children who attend the morning program may continue their day into the afternoon. Also, children may reserve a spot for LB even on the days that they do not attend in the mornings. To reserve your spot, call the T&C office to check availability by 9:30am of the day you are requesting.

At the start of Lunch Bunch, children remain with their classmates and, as numbers decrease during the afternoon, classes are combined to continue socialization. This creates greater mixed-age play than in the mornings. Children participate by bringing their lunches from home and joining their friends to eat and socialize together until 12:30pm. Play activities, language, music & movement and nature walks are all part of the LB program. T&C provides a daily afternoon snack around 2:00pm.

Parents may choose the Lunch Bunch program whenever they wish their child to have an extended time at school. They may pick up at any time from 12:30 through 2:00 or 3:00pm, depending on their schedule and their child’s stamina. Our T&C staff will provide feedback as to how your child is doing and advocate shortening his or her day if we see a child who is feeling stressed by the length of the stay at school.

Lunch Bunch charges are assessed in two different ways: 1) Pay as you go or at the end of the month for \$12.00 per hour or 2) Purchase the Lunch Bunch Pass for \$500 and your LB usage will then be charged against this credit at \$10.00 per hour. Late fees are charged when you pick up after 3:00pm. These fees are assessed at \$15.00 every 1-15 minute period per child. When you call to let us know that you are running late, no late fees will be charged.

### **Summer Sessions**

Both Summer Sessions, in July and August, consist of a 3-day program on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays of each week. Lunch Bunch is also available every afternoon until 3:00pm. Summer programs are available to all new students who will attend in the fall as well as graduating students. After June 1<sup>st</sup> each year, if there is any space available in Summer Session classes, T&C allows children who are not registered for the fall to enroll.

Children are grouped by age as during the regular school year and the curriculum is usually thematic including such topics as: What is in the Ocean? All Kinds of Animals – Pets, Zoo, Farm and Jungle; What Do We Know about Space? Also, a Kindergarten Prep Class is offered to help prepare age-appropriate students for the transition to Kindergarten in the fall.

### **Early Birds**

Early Birds is a before-school program offered throughout the year which begins at 8:00 Monday through Friday. A Town & Country teacher provides this early care either outdoors or in one of our T&C classrooms for families who need an earlier start to the school day. Early Birds are walked to their class by the teacher at 8:50am to begin their regular school schedule. Each child is a \$10.00 charge for any portion of this hour from 8:00-8:50am. This fee is payable like Lunch Bunch and may be added to your LB account.

## **Home Visits**

Your child's teacher schedules a home play date with each student in her class. After school begins, when the child has built a comfortable relationship at T&C, the teacher will set up a convenient time to have a 45-60 minute play date to build a closer connection with each child. This is a tradition that was started by our founder, Miss Pat. She learned of its benefits when she was a student of Early Childhood Education at the Bank Street School in New York. It is an experience that encourages our home-school bond and helps your child to build a stronger friendship with his teacher and other children in the class.

## **PARENTS' PROGRAMS**

Town & Country has a variety of parent involvement activities. We endeavor to involve you in our school community and will inform you of any special events held at school as soon as possible in the school year. We also try to accommodate your busy schedules. In addition to the planned events, we encourage you to participate as Parent Aides, attend parent education sessions, build social friendships with your children's friends, plan home or park play dates and be involved in helping to build our school community.

### **Parent Aides**

Town & Country encourages parents, who have availability, to become a classroom assistant. Since we want to promote independence and capability, parent aides work in a classroom that is separate from their own child's room. Parents who are interested in participating attend a meeting in May to learn about the responsibilities of this role. PAs work a regular school morning – from 8:30am-12:30pm – once a week, alternate weeks or once a month, depending on their available time. Parents may “earn” as they “learn”. Along with better understanding children's development and T&C's philosophy in action, parents are able to deduct \$25 from their child's tuition each morning they work at school.

### **Parent Education**

In its plan to support both the child and the families in our school, Town & Country enhances the educational environment by providing parent education classes, speakers and discussions focusing on preschool through elementary-age children. Both monthly presentations and 6-week classes are offered during our school year. Monthly classes include topics of interest to the entire school community and are presented a weekday afternoon from 12:30-2:00pm in our school library. These are free and free child care is available to all T&C children. 6-week classes are offered three times per year: fall, winter and spring, focusing on the Adlerian philosophy used in our school. These are often “STEP” (Systematic Training for Effective Parenting) in the fall, “Siblings without Rivalry” in the winter and “Positive Discipline” in the spring. Classes combine reading, discussion and problem-solving skills to build your parenting abilities. An afternoon class from 12:30-2:00 and an evening class from 7:00-8:30pm are offered each season. There is a \$100 charge for the 6-week classes.

### **Parent Participation**

Parent participation at T&C is always welcomed but not required. When you have available mornings and want to make an ongoing commitment to T&C, we help you to

become a Parent Aide at school. If you have limited time, but still wish to participate in your child's life, we encourage you to speak with your child's teacher and join the class occasionally. You can provide an activity such as art, a craft or cooking, share a cultural tradition or festivity from your family, play an instrument and sing, share your occupation, read a story or just hang out and play.

### **Parent Resources**

Town & Country provides a number of support services to help parents make the transition to our school and receive guidance in the child-rearing process. These include individual parent meetings with teachers or directors that can be scheduled at your convenience, parenting books in our school library that may be checked out, referrals for therapists, private and public school evaluations, both public and private elementary school information, parenting classes and articles on a wide-range of parenting subjects. Please feel free to contact us for any of these resources. We want to support you in your parenting role.

### **Back-to-School Nights**

Our Back to School nights are held in each classroom with your child's teacher during September and October evenings. Parents get a chance to socialize with other parents in their children's class. Teachers talk about their curriculum and goals for your children in the coming school year.

### **Family Mini Days**

Every year we want our children to share the Town & Country experience with their families. This helps you to understand what we do and also promotes your child's connection at T&C. In the fall months, after your child has started school and feels comfortable, we schedule a school day and/or a Saturday morning when parents are invited to come in their play clothes and spend part of a typical day with their child, doing his or her favorite activities at school.

### **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Town & Country closes school for two days in the spring to provide a dedicated half-hour meeting time for parents and teachers to discuss the growth and development of each child in the school. Since we place a strong emphasis on home-school communications, we welcome your questions and observations at any time throughout the year, but we reserve this special block of time for an in-depth conversation. When your conference is scheduled at T&C during school hours, our staff provides free child care for your half-hour talk. Parents may schedule conferences earlier in the year, before or after school. Telephone conferences may also be arranged.

Our calendar will show that the scheduled Parent-Teacher Conference Days normally occur on the last Thursday and Friday of February or first Thursday and Friday of March. Early conferences often take place either in January or early February if you are trying to decide whether to register your child for T&C or move to a different school for the following year. Teachers of older 4's often schedule these to help parents assess your child's readiness for TK or Kindergarten. We will provide clear feedback about your child's maturity in all areas, but we understand that where your child enrolls is your decision.

### **Fall Picnic**

Our Town & Country parents have inaugurated Fall Picnic in order to promote a stronger school social community. This event can take place in late September or early October. It is a school-wide event for families and includes parents and their children. Parents plan the activities and refreshments on a Saturday to help build friendships and community throughout the school.

### **The Olympics**

Since 1983, Town & Country has celebrated the Olympics every year in June as a child-centered graduation ceremony. This event takes place separately for Rooms 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 during school hours (usually 10:00-11:30am). Children perform physical education and music activities, demonstrating the large motor skill proficiency they have learned during the school year. All families are encouraged to attend with as many guests as you desire and honor your child's culmination at T&C.

## **ENROLLMENT**

### **Admission Policy**

Town & Country Nursery School is open to all without discrimination based on race, gender, national origin or religious affiliation. All children who turn 3 years old by December 31<sup>st</sup> of the year they plan to attend, are physically able to attend and will benefit from our program are eligible for admission.

Our Registration process begins in January of the year your child turns three or older. Please plan to visit our school in January or before. We will give you information, a tour and allow you to sit and observe in any of our rooms or outside. Room 1 has the youngest and each group is approximately three to four months older as we progress to Room 6 where the 5 year-olds reside.

### **Application Process**

**When you are a new family coming to T&C** - If you decide to register your child, you will need to complete the application card, selecting a 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> choice by the day before our Lottery in early February. When we receive more cards than we have space, a card drawing or Lottery will be held in early February to place new students. The Director will assign children to appropriate classes. Following the Lottery, any applications remaining after classes are filled, will be placed on class waiting lists. These lists will be active through December.

Parents will be notified of the outcome of the Lottery and class assignments by mail within a few days. New Parent-Director Orientation meetings will be scheduled by all parents who wish to enroll their children following classroom assignments. We want to assure that all of your questions are answered and that Town & Country is the right fit for you and your child before you are asked to pay your fees.

To complete the registration process, all of the online paperwork must be completed and fees paid by the last Friday in February.

**When you are registering a returning student** - You are able to register online on the Town & Country website ([www.townandcountrynurseryschool.com](http://www.townandcountrynurseryschool.com)) from the last Monday in January through the Friday of that week. In addition to your online registration, families will need to provide fees and supplemental information by filling out

a Registration Card in the T&C office to complete the reservation of your online spot. All returning students need to be registered before the Lottery date or a spot may not be available for your child. Often parents want a specific schedule or to guarantee attending 4-days per week. Many parents of returning students try to assure these options by registering early on the very first day possible.

**When you are registering a sibling or a legacy** - You may fill out your enrollment card and pay all of your fees to hold your child's spot as we return from our Winter Break in early January through the day before our Lottery. All siblings and legacies should have enrolled before the Lottery date or a spot may not be available for your child. Siblings and legacies are often able to receive their first choice of 2- or 3-day schedules.

All online paperwork must be completed by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday in March in order to enroll your sibling or legacy for the coming school year.

### **Enrolling a Child with Special Needs**

Town & Country enrolls children with a range of developmental delays, disabilities and medical conditions. We consider each child individually and offer enrollment when we are sure we can meet the child's needs. Factors we consider include suitability with our program, philosophy, group size, teacher-child ratio, staff expertise, appropriateness for our curricular approach, and the number of other children with special needs in the group.

Some children with special needs require therapeutic companions for 1-on-1 support. While T&C cannot provide these companions, our directors and many of our teachers have experience in these situations and can help to ensure that this relationship is smoothly integrated into our classroom setting.

If you have any concerns about your child at T&C, our staff can provide private, observational feedback by conferencing after classroom hours. At a family's request, we also work with local school districts and Harbor Regional Center. We encourage observations and assessments with these professionals and are happy to work as a "normal preschool" setting in partnership with their services. Our staff is also available to participate with a child's Individualized Education Program (IEP).

### **Withdrawal from the Program**

It is important for your child to say good-bye and have a sense of closure when he or she leaves Town & Country. Please let your child and the staff know about your child's last day well in advance, so that the transition can be a positive experience for your child as well as his or her friends and teachers. In order to obtain credit for your tuition deposit, you must provide at least one month's notice of intent to leave the program before April 15<sup>th</sup> or after October 1<sup>st</sup>. No Tuition Deposit refunds will be made between these dates.

## **FINANCIAL STATUS**

### **The Cost of Excellent Early Childhood Education**

Tuition costs for child care vary widely. While Town & Country rates are higher than some schools in the area, our program provides extremely good value. Research shows that the single most significant factor in the development and well-being of children is access to responsive, loving and skilled adults. Environment is important and we support enhancing our equipment and supplies for all of our children. However, physical structures

cannot take the place of nurturing teachers. People's time and skills are expensive. T&C spends more the 85% of its total budget on salaries to pay our teaching staff.

When you find lower priced child care programs, ask yourself why. Often, low prices point to higher child-to-teacher ratios or the use of untrained or low-paid staff. By contrast, T&C child-teacher ratios exceed state requirements and our well-trained teachers are paid a competitive rate. Paying teachers well is one of the most effective ways of minimizing staff turnover, a common problem among child care programs, and one that is extremely disruptive to children. T&C values experienced, well-trained, loyal staff whose talents are visible with our children every day.

As a non-profit organization, we are committed to providing the highest quality care at the most affordable price. This is an ongoing goal.

### **Donations**

Town & Country Nursery School's Registration and Tuition fees do not fully cover the cost of educating your child. Since we wish to support your valuable time together as a family with young children, we do not require that you work at school or stage regular fund-raising activities for our operation. We do encourage a social night out at Mama D's in Redondo Beach and Rock 'n' Brews a few times per year for Town & Country families and friends, where 20% of any meal is donated back to our school. We also participate in the AmazonSmile program which will donate 5% of your eligible purchases back to T&C.

A generous donations program ensures that teacher salaries and benefits are maintained at competitive levels and professional development opportunities are offered to continue educating our high-quality staff. Additionally, your gifts to T&C provide materials and equipment to offer a rich and varied landscape for children's indoor and outdoor experiences.

Town & Country Nursery School is a private, non-profit 501(c) 3 organization. Your gifts are fully tax-deductible to the extent provided by IRS guidelines. Our tax ID number is 956134085. The Town & Country Annual Fund, Miss Pat's Scholarship Fund and the Outdoor Classroom are all specific programs which you may designate when you give. You may donate through our website at any time: <http://townandcountrynurseryschool.com>

Town & Country welcomes any size donation from families, alumni and friends. 100% of your charitable contributions goes directly to fund this exceptional level of care and benefits all children who attend our school.

## **TUITION & FEES**

### **Registration Fee**

An annual, ***nonrefundable*** Registration fee of \$150 is charged to enroll each child, each year.

### **Tuition Deposit**

Families pay a one-time Tuition Deposit of \$600 for each child at the time of enrollment. Deposits are refunded when a child leaves the program, assuming all other financial obligations have been met. Many families choose to donate their tuition deposit to one of T&C's special programs when their child leaves the program; for example, the Miss Pat Scholarship Fund, the Outdoor Classroom or the T&C Annual Fund. In order to obtain credit for your tuition deposit, you must provide at least one month's notice of

intent to leave the program and withdraw either at the time of graduation, before April 15<sup>th</sup> or after October 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Tuition Fees**

3 Year Olds:	2 days (Tuesdays & Thursdays)	\$395
	3 days (Mondays, Wednesday, Fridays)	\$585
4 Year Olds:	A variety of 3 or 4-day combinations	
	3 days	\$585
	4 days	\$775

- Payment may be submitted either by personal check, electronic check or cash. Some families arrange for an automatic payment from their bank each month. We have no facility for credit card payment.
- All payments by personal or electronic check should be made to Town & Country Nursery School. Our Tuition basket sits on the Office Manager’s counter for your checks each day.
- Full tuition is due each month for September through May, with half tuition in June.
- Summer Sessions are charged on a per session basis. July is charged as a 3-day month while August is charged as a 2-day month.
- Tuition is due by the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month in advance of service provided. A late fee of \$30 is assessed if tuition is not received by the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month.
- Balances not paid off within 40 days of the initial charge may result in termination of your child’s enrollment. If you anticipate any financial hardship, please speak with our Office Manager or Directors so we can make workable arrangements.
- Returned checks will be charged a \$25 processing fee.
- Siblings, twins or triplets will be given a 10% discount in Tuition fees.
- Daily rates for an additional day is charged at \$45 per day for 9:00-12:00pm
- To receive your \$600 Tuition Deposit upon withdrawal or graduation, you must provide 30-day notice, before April 15<sup>th</sup> or after September 30<sup>th</sup> and have met all of your financial obligations.
- Prepaid Tuition can be paid for any number of months ahead of service rendered or for the entire year.
- T&C will provide receipts necessary for child care reimbursement from your employer or tax purposes.
- Tuition is charged for all week days that your child is enrolled each month whether or not your child is in attendance. It may be helpful to think of tuition as you might rent for an apartment. It holds a place for your child in our school. Just as a landlord is unable to fill your apartment while you go on vacation, we are unable to fill your space for a brief vacation or illness while our operating expenses remain constant.
- Exchanging or “banking” unused hours/days cannot be accommodated due to the complexities of school enrollment capacity, ratios and staffing.
- Tuition adjustments for schedule changes can be made in a variety of ways including paying the supplement, crediting the next month or refunding to you. This can be arranged with our Office Manager.



- Tuition is usually increased in alternate years to cover the added cost of educating your child. These rates and their timing are determined by the Board of Trustees as part of the budgeting process.

### **Tuition Assistance**

Town & Country Nursery School maintains a tuition assistance program to help families unable to afford the full amount of tuition. Tuition assistance is usually a partial reduction in fees, given to families who are completing their time at T&C. Rarely is assistance provided to first-year families. Funding is based on need and available funds. Our funding comes from donors who designate the Miss Pat Scholarship Fund to receive their gift, from T&C fundraising (Mama D's or Donations ) and from the T&C budget. Applications for tuition assistance are available in the school office.

## **OPERATIONAL INFORMATION**

### **Hours of Operation**

T&C is open from 8:00am until 2:00pm on Mondays and from 8:00am until 3:00pm Tuesdays through Fridays. You may bring your child to Early Birds from 8:00am through 8:50am using all or any portion of this 50-minute period for an extra \$10.00 charge. For the regular morning program, all children may arrive as early as 8:50am until 9:10am each day your child attends.

At the beginning of school in September, a staggered start schedule prevails. Upstairs children will begin at 9:15am for the first two weeks of school in September while downstairs (older) students begin at the 8:50-9:10am start time. If you have siblings on both schedules, please bring both children at the regular start time.

Afternoon half-day classes run from 12:00 noon until 3:00pm. Late fees apply when you come to pick up your child later than 3:00pm.

### **T&C Calendar & Holidays**

Each family receives the T&C Calendar for the coming year via email. It is also available on our website to access at any time. Our calendar often follows the Palos Verdes, Torrance and/or Redondo Beach School District schedules.

Our school year is traditional with the first day of school scheduled for the Tuesday following Labor Day. Other holidays will be clearly marked on our calendar including Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving, Winter Break, Martin Luther King Jr.'s Day, President's Day and Spring Break. In addition, there will be a 2-week break between the end of school – often the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday in June – and the start of Summer Session. Then, following Summer Session 2, there is also a 1-1/2 to 2-week break before school begins in the fall.

During our year, there are two other unusual times when school is out of session: 1) Parent-Teacher Conferences, when school is closed for a Thursday and Friday in the Spring (See p.12) and 2) St. Francis Antique Show, closing the school for a week in late May. (See p.17)

T&C also celebrates special holidays at school with the children. On these occasions, school is open but we observe child-centered festivities that help them to understand these cultural traditions. These observations include celebrations for Halloween, Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Christmas, Valentine's Day, Children's Day, St. Patrick's Day, Easter and others based on the holidays and traditions that each family in the class celebrates. We invite all

families to bring us their special holidays and help us to understand your cultural traditions. This honors both your child and their class.

### **St. Francis Antique Show**

As part of the condition of leasing the Education Building from St. Francis Episcopal Church, we are obligated to clear all classrooms during their annual Antique Show which runs from the Friday before Memorial Day through the Monday after Memorial Day. Though this is a significant inconvenience to our end-of-the-year schedule, we must honor this commitment. Town & Country will have regular Morning Program but no Lunch Bunch on the Friday before Memorial Day. The school will be closed the week of Memorial Day and the Monday following it. T&C resumes normal scheduling on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday after Memorial Day.

We appreciate how helpful our families have been during this St. Francis tradition. We even ask you to help in our move. Children are often excited to take home baskets of toys, blocks, dress-up clothes and other materials as we truly have to “move out” of school for this 10-day period. We understand that this is an extra wrinkle to accommodate in your busy schedules. Please understand that we would change this obligation if we possibly could, but, for now, we are team players and make this work to the best of our abilities.

### **Visiting Days**

Many children are helped in adjusting to new experiences by extra visits to meet new people and experience the new environment. When your child is enrolled for the coming year, we welcome you and your child coming for 30-minute visits anytime school is in session. Come in play clothes and just drop into our office to let us know that you are on campus. Plan to visit indoors or out, coming at different times to accustom your child to the teacher, the school spaces and range of activities. Encourage your child to join into play, trying activities while you act as a resource and emotional support for their new adventure. Please stay no longer than 30 minutes or your child gets the message that you will be here with them when they begin school in the summer or fall

In addition to these spontaneous visits, each year, Town & Country schedules special Visiting Days just prior to the start of Summer Session (1 day) and September start (2 days). Your child will receive an invitation from his or her teacher and you will receive the August newsletter listing the visiting schedule for each class. These visits provide play activities and time with the new teacher to help build their personal relationship and the family connections for you in your child’s class. Please bring your child to school in play clothes ready for action.

### **Drop-Off, Pick-Up and Parking**

Designated parking for Town & Country families is *only* in the lower parking lot adjacent to Malaga Canyon at the bottom of Via Rosa. Our parking lot can be quite crowded every day and always during the start of school in July or September. Our highest priority is keeping everyone safe, especially your children. We have designed the flow of traffic for drop off with this in mind.

As you turn onto Via Rosa from Palos Verdes Boulevard, please drive at 20 miles per hour or slower. As a T&C family, proceed all the way down to the lower parking lot adjacent to Malaga Canyon. Our parking lot has two lanes of approach: 1) the left lane for parking and exiting (accessed only after the circular exit lane) and, 2) the right lane for

drop off. There is also a crosswalk to transition from the center parking zone to the classroom or playground.

When you are parking, please choose any spot that is available as you approach in the left-hand lane. At peak times, you may find it challenging to find a parking spot. This may necessitate both patience and driving around the lot 2 or 3 times until a space opens for you. *This lot is the ONLY area where T&C families may park.*

When your child starts school in the summer or fall, we expect that you will park and walk your child into his or her class, signing in at the office before delivering her or him to class. Many first-year children will walk into school with parent or caregiver all year long. To facilitate the extra parking during the school start in September, our T&C staff will park offsite for the first three weeks of school.

As your new student becomes more comfortable at T&C, or you have a returning student, we encourage you to try the “blue footsteps”. This is an independence-building experience that allows your child to be “dropped-off” from your car with the assistance of our staff unbuckling your child’s seatbelt, while you sign-in at the car. Your child will then independently walk to the playground or classroom being greeted and supervised by our staff along the way. For the footsteps experience, we ask that you take your cue from your child when he or she is ready. When your child is interested in starting the footsteps drop-off, there are ways to help him and you understand how it works. You can sit on the brick wall with your child to watch the process, set up a plan with your child’s teacher to meet him at your car and/or plan to meet a friend from your child’s class to walk with into school.

When you plan to use footsteps drop off, stay in the right-hand lane from the time you enter the lower parking lot. There are only 3 car spaces for footsteps drop off in the upper part of the lot. Please proceed to the STOP placard in the bottom area of the parking lot to wait for available spaces in the footsteps area above. When the upper spots are free, proceed to the drop off. Miss Toni will guide you in filling all three spots. If you are next (the 4<sup>th</sup> car) in line for drop off, wait at the STOP placard until all three spots are vacated and Miss Toni directs you to the drop off area.

### **Sign-In and Sign-Out**

It is the legal state requirement that you or your designated caregiver sign your child into and out of school each day he or she comes. This is our attendance record. Each parent or caregiver must sign on their teacher’s sheet including the *child’s full name, parent or caregiver’s full signature and time of arrival*. When you come to pick up your child, sign out with full signature and departure time on the same line where you put your arrival information. If your child did footsteps drop-off, you will sign them in at the car and then sign them out on the footsteps page when you sign out.

Any adult listed on your child’s Emergency Form is cleared for drop off and pick up. Please be aware that if any of these people are unfamiliar to us, we will ask them for a photo ID and may call you if they are not authorized on your Emergency Form. If you wish a new person to pick up your child from school, please provide a written release and a call to our office to alert us to this change, and add them to your child’s Emergency Form.

### **Arrival Time**

Children may arrive or depart at any time on the days they are enrolled. However, we value our program and encourage you to be on time each day so your child will be able

to participate in the full spectrum of activities. Also, children tend to prefer a predictable schedule and it is often much easier for children to enter their class when early or on time, with fewer children already engaged in socializing and activities. Please help your child to be on time and understand the importance of being at school for the entire program.

### **Prompt Pick-ups**

Whether you are picking your child up at the end of the morning program at 12:00pm or the end of Lunch Bunch or the afternoon program at 3:00pm, please be on time for your child. We are happy to care for your child until you arrive. However, when a child is the last to be picked up, it may be emotionally hard for him. Also, our staff has appointments, meetings and families of their own waiting for them, so please do your best to be on time.

If you have an unforeseen delay and will be late to pick, please call our office at 310-375-2829 to let us know your arrival time. When you communicate with us, you will not be charged a late fee. If you forget to call, T&C reserves the right to impose a fee for after-hours pick up. The charge is \$15 for each 1-15 minute period you are late, per child.

### **Schedule Changes**

When registering, parents make specific requests for their child's school schedule. Our administration does their best to accommodate everyone's requests, but it is often impossible to honor every family's 1<sup>st</sup> choice of schedule. When your first choice is unavailable, your scheduling requests are put on each child's classroom waiting lists in order of registration number and when the request was made. Throughout the school year, schedule changes are accommodated on a first-come, first-serve basis.

### **Extra Days, Extra Hours**

Town & Country Nursery School is fully enrolled to capacity. The only time that extra hours or days are possible is during the afternoon Lunch Bunch from 12:00-3:00pm, when a reservation has been made with the office by 9:30am of the day your child will attend and there is available space in the school.

### **Visiting Town & Country**

Our parents are welcome to visit school at any time during our normal operating hours. For new parents, tours may be scheduled on Wednesday mornings to observe and learn more about our programs. Informal observations may also be scheduled to just observe our activities and philosophy in action. Please call 310-375-2829 to schedule an appointment and check into our office when you arrive on campus.

Parents of currently-enrolled children may also visit their child's classroom or outdoors whenever they choose. We do ask that every parent check into the T&C office to let us know when and where you will be on campus. Also, since our program is designed to help your child build independence and capability, we expect that your child will attend school independently most of the time.

### **Technology Use**

Our staff is committed to building strong relationships with your children and you. Our primary method to do this is with face-to-face contact. For this reason, we have made the T&C campus cell-phone free except in cases of emergency. When you arrive with or

pick up your children, please give them 100% of your attention as we will also do. This is a tremendous dose of unconditional love that puts your child's need ahead of everything else in your life.

We do not use computers in our classrooms for same the reason. There will be plenty of time for your children to gain technological skills as they mature. For now, their social, emotional, cognitive and physical skills will be nourished here through play and exposure to developmentally-appropriate experiences with peers and caring teachers.

During our school year, we will have a pajama day for each class where a children's movie will be shown. It is a special occasion for all and a major exception to our regular schedule.

### **Objects of Great Affection**

Many children like to have a blanket, a special toy or a lovey of some kind with them at all times, as it provides a sense of security. Since we want to help a child transition to our school with as much comfort as possible, we welcome these objects of great affection. Other children use their thumbs, chew on their clothes or even bite fingernails to self-soothe and provide the level of coping they need to feel comfortable. All of these techniques are totally normal for preschool-age children. As your child matures and develops a more internal sense of security, these comfort objects may not be as necessary. We do caution you that these objects can be lost or forgotten at school – a possible source of stress for you and your child. We always encourage children to be responsible for their own things, so we will do our very best to make sure these objects go home with your child.

### **Sharing Treasures from Home**

Many children wish to bring special toys to school to show, even share with their friends at T&C. We are perfectly comfortable with toys brought from home and will help your child in deciding whether he or she wishes to share or not. Though these toys can create conflict, we welcome these moments as opportunities to problem solve, knowing that they are fine learning opportunities for all children.

Some teachers have organized programs which help children to build language skills, talking about his or her toys in front of the class. We always give each child the choice to share or not to share. In the latter case, the child would choose to put a toy in this or her cubby or bag for taking home.

### **Lost and Found**

Each year, many clothing items and toys are brought to school and then forgotten here by your children. We help your child build a sense of responsibility by allowing each one to decide where they will put their possessions and keep track of them here at T&C. Children are encouraged to put items in cubbies and their bags. However, jackets, shoes and socks are removed, toys are put in a classroom basket and lunch boxes can be forgotten in cubbies. All of these experiences are learning opportunities for your child although they take more time than you planned. When you arrive for pick up and your child is missing an item he brought, we encourage you to involve your child in the finding process. Please walk with them in the search, asking open-ended questions to support the process and helping them to retrace their steps and locate the item. If an item seems lost on this first day, we encourage you to look through our office Lost and Found cabinet in the front desk.

## **HEALTH, NUTRITION & EMERGENCIES**

### **When Your Child Should Stay at Home**

By California State health laws, we must exclude any child from the school who displays symptoms of illness. Symptoms that cause exclusion include fever, vomiting, diarrhea, contagious rashes, ill or unusual behavior. We ask parents to exercise good judgment in keeping children at home when they are ill, and to seek medical attention as appropriate. Children may return to our program once they have been symptom free for at least 24 hours and exhibit the strength and well-being to thrive in a group environment.

### **Childhood Vaccinations**

For the health of all of our children, Town & Country Nursery School is required to follow California State regulations. These necessitate all students provide immunization records to their school before entry. Your Physician's Form must be fully completed and show the necessary vaccines that are required. T&C must have this medical documentation to allow your child to attend school.

### **Communication Regarding Illness**

When your child shows illness symptoms while at T&C, we will take your child to the office, isolate them from others, care for them and call you to pick up your child as soon as possible. We will provide care until you or your designated caregiver arrives.

There are a number of common childhood illnesses or contagious conditions that your child may be exposed to during his or her time at nursery school. These include Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease, Fifth Disease and Head Lice. These may be frustrating inconveniences, but they are a normal part of children building immunity. This process is most helpful as they move into elementary school with a well-developed immune system.

Please communicate with Town & Country immediately if you become aware that your child has a contagious disease or condition by calling our office and speaking with one of the Directors at 310-375-2829. It is our responsibility to communicate your child's illness to the rest of his or her classmates and to provide descriptions of these infectious conditions to each family. You may seek further medical information from your own pediatrician.

Regarding head lice, T&C maintains a nit-free policy to avoid potential spread among children. If a child is found to have head lice, we will ask that a parent pick up the child immediately. Upon treatment and return, we check children to make sure they are free of lice and nits. We are happy to provide you with reliable information and resources for lice treatment. Please make sure to notify us if your child has contracted head lice.

### **Allergies**

A number of children attending Town & Country have mild to severe food, airborne and nature-based allergies. It is our desire to accommodate each child's allergy so both your child and his classmates become aware, respectful, practice empathy and strategies to manage the allergy. In severe cases, our school will create a nut-free or other allergy substance-free classroom for the protection of your child. Each case is evaluated individually.

When you have a child with any allergies, T&C needs a written medical verification and explanation from the attending physician and clarification from the parent on how to best serve your child. T&C maintains a full allergy list that is posted in every classroom to keep all teachers informed and responsive to children's allergies.

Sometimes, children can be diagnosed with "sensitivities" which are potential allergies. These are not considered medical conditions and do not need the verification by your pediatrician. However, T&C will also post these sensitivities so that we can honor your wishes and accommodate certain food or plant-based issues.

### **Administering Medication**

Town & Country Nursery School prefers that parents administer all medication to their children. However, if a child's medical condition requires that medication be administered while at Town & Country, we will do so respecting specific guidelines. Parents must complete a Medication Consent Form, available on our website: [townandcountrynurseryschool.com](http://townandcountrynurseryschool.com). Any prescription med must be in its original packaging, labeled with your child's name, age and dosage instructions. Please note that all medications are kept in the Director's cabinet and may not be placed in cubbies or lunch boxes.

Our school does accommodate children with anaphylaxis (severe, potentially life-threatening allergies), asthma (chronic lung disease that impairs breathing), seizure disorders (febrile seizures), or sleep/breathing disorders (sleep apnea). Community Care Licensing requires an "Incidental Medical Service" (IMS) plan to be agreed upon and completed by the parent, physician and the Director. If you have a child with any of these conditions, please contact one of the Directors for additional information and to formulate your IMS plan.

T&C reserves the right to decline or terminate enrollment of a child with any of these above conditions if we believe the condition or treatment plan are beyond the scope of our staff's training and ability to perform in the context of a group setting. In addition, enrollment may be suspended or terminated if communication with the parent does not support full understanding of treatment needs, or if parents fail to provide medication/supplies, instructions, or any required documentation.

### **Sleeping at School**

Since the Town & Country program lasts a maximum of six hours each day, we do not have a formal naptime at school. Occasionally, children run out of energy in our busy day or are perhaps getting sick, and may fall asleep at school. If this occurs, we will call you and keep your child comfortable until you or another designated person on your Emergency List can come to pick up your child.

### **When a Child is Hurt**

Our program supports the kind of involvement and active learning that we know is best for young children. Our environment and curriculum incorporates risk because we believe that children must be able to attempt new challenges, test and expand their skills to develop their learning, self-awareness and judgment. In our activities, children can get hurt and experience the normal bumps and bruises of childhood in their play.

When an injury occurs, whether it be an accident or intentional, we want to involve the children who were part of the experience in building caregiving skills. If a child falls

and skins a knee, the child caregiver for the day assists the teacher and helps to provide what the injured child needs to feel better, be it ice, a bandaid or maybe just a hug. This helps build empathy and allow the injured child to know that his friends care about him.

In the case of a minor injury to your child, we will complete an “Ouch Report” which explains the circumstances, details the injury, provides information on what kind of care was provided and if any medical follow-up is needed by the parent. This report will be given to you on the day of the injury when you pick up your child and a teacher will also communicate directly to answer any immediate questions you may have.

If any serious injury or one to the child’s head should occur, we will call you immediately to provide information and counsel on medical treatment needed. In the event of a severe illness or injury, T&C will first contact emergency medical services, then contact a parent. In the latter case, we will also file an “Unusual Incident/Injury Report” (LIC624), required by Community Care Licensing.

Town & Country Nursery School staff is certified in First Aid and CPR biennially and is required to keep their certification current.

### **When a Child Bites**

Young children are developing words and language skills as they begin school, some as young as two and a half years old here at Town & Country. When conflict over toys or space occurs, a child may choose to bite another child rather than solving the problem with his or her words. Though we understand the reason why this happens, we do not condone it. We will counsel both the biter and the child who was bitten on using his or her words, what each could say, reminding them that it is never okay to bite another person and that the biter will be sent home if he chooses to bite again.

### **When a Child is Learning to Use the Toilet**

Town & Country expects that children who attend our school will be potty trained. To us, this means that they have used the toilet multiple times, wear big girl or boy underwear to school and will be willing to use our child-sized toilets in our bathrooms. We do not expect perfection. There will be accidents for many reasons – engagement in play, forgetfulness, time getting to the bathroom from the playground, a new baby in the family, illness, etc. All of these are a normal part of learning how his or her body works and developing independence. Our staff supports this learning process and encourages each child to tell us when he needs to use the toilet and we also recognize the physical signs during play. We help children to build their capability with life skills such as toileting or changing clothes, asking that you provide your child with a change of clothes at school so she can have her own clothes when she needs extra. We help train children to pull their pants down and up, learn how to wipe their own bottoms and change their clothes when they have gotten wet or dirty in play or for any other reason. This is a gradual learning process which we understand takes varying amounts of time depending on the readiness of the child.

### **Nourishing Young Minds and Bodies**

A healthy diet supports optimal mental, emotional and physical functioning. Nourishing foods that Town & Country provides for your children include organic milk, water, fresh organic fruits, vegetables and proteins along with whole grain products. Our



snacks are served twice daily, at about 10:30 in the morning and close to 2:00pm in the afternoon.

Parents provide children's lunches when they stay for our Lunch Bunch program. We encourage you to prepare a healthy lunch with your child, involving them in the process of learning what is good for their bodies. We recommend small portions with 2-3 food choices that might include protein, fruits, vegetables, whole grains and a drink. We suggest that you limit sugar, additives and extra salt. Our staff makes sure that your child eats his or her own lunch and monitors consumption. We try to make sure that any uneaten foods return to your child's lunch box rather than get thrown in the trash. Many children can be distracted while socializing at lunch with friends. However, when the uneaten food comes home, he can finish what was left and you can know if portion size fits your child's appetite.

### **Fire and Emergency Drills & Evacuation**

Though we hope that we will never need to use our emergency procedures, we practice them monthly and have preparations in place for your children's safety.

Each family is asked to provide an Emergency Kit at the beginning of every school year with extra clothes, snacks, supplies and a letter from you. Detailed information regarding the contents of this kit is available on our website. We keep these packages in our Emergency Preparations shed on the playground along with first aid, toileting supplies and the 110 gallons of water for needed drinking and washing. In case of any emergency, our T&C staff is prepared to stay with your children until you or a caregiver on your Emergency Contact list is able to pick them up. However, our employees are also eager to look after their own families and homes. T&C also encourages our families to maintain their own supplies of food, water and clothing in case of any emergency. Practicing your emergency plans with your children at home will help insure that everyone will work together to stay as safe as necessary.

At T&C, we practice and ring the fire bell twice a month. Children walk with their classmates and teachers to the St. Francis Episcopal Church to practice the fire drill and be counted. The PV Fire Department recommended this location as the safest for possible fire in our canyons and also the best for easy parent pick up and exit. If your child comes home saying that he or she went to church today, this is what happened.

Earthquake drills are also performed twice a month both indoors and out so children get used to the teacher saying "shake" and knowing how to get into a safe body position. The language we use for this drill is "turtles in a shell" to best protect themselves.

After school begins in the fall, we conduct a test of our emergency communication system, verifying the accuracy and function of the contact information and numbers you have provided. Our communication provider is Call Multiplier and their contact phone number is (405) 548-2251 and their emergency text number is (424) 322-4149. We recommend that you enter both of these numbers in your phones so you will recognize when our call comes to you.

Annually in the spring, Town & Country staff and children perform a school-wide evacuation from classrooms to playground so children have had practice in this procedure. We gather by class under canopies, take attendance, play games and read a book, serve snacks and water. At the end of the drill, we release your children to you at the playground, (if they are not staying for Lunch Bunch), using our emergency release procedures for everyone's practice.

Finally, our staff has walked and is familiar with all of the nature evacuation trails that surround our campus. We have worked with the PV Police Department and planned the best routes of relocation in case of any emergency. If it ever becomes necessary to evacuate our school, parents will be notified by our Call Multiplier contact system about any relocation details and pick up procedures.

**Town & Country Nursery School**  
**Parent Handbook**  
**Signature Page**

I \_\_\_\_\_,  
the parent of \_\_\_\_\_,  
who will be or is currently a student at Town & Country Nursery  
School, have read and understand this Town & Country Parent  
Handbook. I am familiar and comfortable with the guidelines and  
philosophy as explained and used at Town & Country.

If any questions or concerns arise during our time attending  
T&C, we understand that we may always speak with the Director,  
Assistant Director or our child's Teacher, to get these answered.

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**(Parent's Signature)**

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**(Date)**