



PARENT  
HELPER  
HANDBOOK

# Table of Contents

<b>GCNS PARENT HELPER HANDBOOK.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>PREFACE.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>OVERVIEW OF PARENT HELPER RESPONSIBILITIES.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>DAILY SCHEDULE.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>THE PARENT HELPER’S ARRIVAL: .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>CHILDREN ARRIVE: .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>CIRCLE TIME (MORNING MEETING):.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>SNACK TIME: .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>SUGGESTIONS FOR APPROVED PEANUT/TREE NUT FREE SNACKS:.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>ACTIVITY TIME (CENTERS):.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>CIRCLE TIME:.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>DISMISSAL /FINAL CLEAN-UP: .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>SUPERVISION GUIDELINES.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>BLOCK PLAY .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>ART AREA .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>WATER/ RICE TABLE .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>BOOKS .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>OUTDOOR PLAY .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>LIMITS.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>EMERGENCY INFORMATION .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>FINAL NOTES .....</b>	<b>5</b>

# **GCNS PARENT HELPER HANDBOOK**

## **Preface**

The purpose of the Grayslake Cooperative Nursery School is to provide a creative atmosphere to aid in the growth and development of the preschool child physically, mentally, visually and socially; and to promote his or her general welfare as a well-integrated personality.

The curriculum follows a thematic approach to the learning experience. The themes are coordinated between the two and three day programs so that the children experience a wide variety of themes.

The ongoing success of the Grayslake Cooperative Nursery School is a direct result of your parental involvement.

Accordingly, this handbook has been prepared as a detailed “job description” to assist the Co-op parents on their parent helper days.

## **Overview of Parent Helper Responsibilities**

- Arrive one half hour before class start time
- Assist teachers with pre-class preparations
- Supervise Free Play time
- Participate in Circle time
- Prepare, serve and clean up after snack
- Supervise activity and playtime
- Clean and straighten classroom and bathrooms

## **DAILY SCHEDULE**

The schedule listed below is general and may vary with the curriculum.

### **The Parent Helper's Arrival:**

**8:45 am (3/4 and 4/5 am Classes)**

**9:00 am (2/3 Class)**

**12:00 pm (4/5 pm Classes)**

Please arrive on time as the teachers count on your help in getting ready for the day.

Parent helpers must supply a healthy nutritious snack to eat as well as either Vitamin D Milk or 100% fruit juice. Please bring paper goods you may need such as cups, plate, utensils and napkins.

### **Please bring a new roll of paper towels.**

Assist the teachers in preparing for the school day. This may include anything from moving around toys to cutting out materials for an art project.

### **Children Arrive:**

**9:15 am ( 3 /4 and 4/5 am Classes)**

**9:30 am (2/3 Class)**

**12:30 (4/5 pm Classes)**

The teachers greet the children at the start of class time. In the event that they are tied up with a parent, a child or the phone, please take over greeting the children.

Assist the children in removing any outdoor clothing if they need help. Encourage them to do as much as possible.

Direct them to table activities or group circle time.

### **Circle Time (Morning Meeting):**

The teachers talk about the day's activities; the calendar, the weather etc. Feel free to get involved with these activities. Sit in the circle, and if you see that a child is having a difficult time, either stand or sit beside them and encourage them to participate. Separate talkers by sitting between them. Circle time is a big adjustment for some preschoolers, so focus your attention on those who are having trouble.

### **Snack Time:**

You and your child should quickly disinfect the tables and set the table for snack when the teacher indicates. If food needs to cut, please do so at this time (never bring items you cut at home i.e. fruit or cheese)

Sit with the children. Encourage them to taste the snack. Engage them in table conversations. If you have enough, offer them seconds.

After snack, wipe down the tables and sweep-up and crumbs from the floor.

## **Suggestions for approved peanut/tree nut free snacks:**

All foods must be store bought and in unopened packages. No products prepared or baked at home may be served in the school. Please make an effort to choose from this list.

**IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING THE SAFETY OF A SNACK PLEASE CONTACT THE VICE PRESIDENT [vicepres@grayslake-coop.com](mailto:vicepres@grayslake-coop.com)**

### Fruits/Vegetables

- Any fresh fruit. Must be cut or segmented at the school
- Any fresh vegetable. Must be cut or segmented at school

### Cheese/ Dairy

- Yogurt
- String cheese, sliced or cubed cheeses
- Block cheese. Must be cut or segmented at school
- Drinkable yogurt or smoothies
- Cottage cheese

### Crackers

- Triscuits
- Wheat Thins
- Vegetable Thins
- Ritz Crackers (NOT Ritz bits or sandwiches)
- Townhouse, Club Toasteds crackers
- Saltines, Oyster crackers
- Wheatables
- Air Crisps
- Pepperidge Farm Goldfish Crackers
- Cheese Nips
- Teddy Grahams
- Graham crackers
- Nilla Wafers
- Fig Newtons
- Barnum's Animal Crackers

### Safe Special Event Snack (i.e. birthday celebration)

*Popsicles*

*Italian Ice*

*Entenmann's Donuts*

*Oreos*

*Original Chips Ahoy*

### **Unsafe Snacks:**

- Bakery items – all
- Granola Bars
- Bakery bagels (Panera, Einsteins, etc.)
- Donuts (with the exception of Entenmanns)
- Earth's Best Organic boxed treats
- Honey Nut Cheerios
- Cracker Sandwiches
- Chex Mixes
- Ice Cream bars/ cones
- Trail mixes

Any food made with, processed in a facility with, or may contain traces of tree nuts or peanuts

### **Activity Time (Centers):**

Supervise designated center table activity as indicated by the teachers.

This is your time to have FUN and, above all, interact with the children. Sometimes children will get involved if YOU begin doing something all by yourself. Seek out shy children and help them find an activity that they want to do. Encourage the children to negotiate any problems that arise.

### **Circle Time:**

This circle time is for stories, finger plays, music, etc.

Participate and interact with the children.

Help the children with the transition to the next activity. If it is outdoor play, help them to get their outer clothing on.

**Outdoor Play:** Supervise as teacher indicates.

### **Dismissal /Final Clean-up:**

**11:45 am/ 3:00 pm (3 /4 and 4/5 Classes)**

**11:30 am (2/3 Class)**

After the children have been dismissed, finish the remaining clean-up.

Clean-up includes washing down all the tables, sweeping and vacuuming the floors, disinfecting the washrooms and removing the trash and recycling. Please refer to the checklist in each room for specific procedures.

The parent helper is free to leave after clean-up has been completed.

## **SUPERVISION GUIDELINES**

### **Block Play**

Buildings may be built as high as the child's shoulder.

Children may not throw blocks.

Any structures must be disassembled block by block.

### **Art area**

Put the child's name in lower case letter in the top left hand corner of the paper. If the child can write his/her own name, encourage this.

Hang the painting in the drying area to dry.

The process is more important than the product. Do not ask, "What is it?". Instead say, "Tell me about your drawing." (You may wish to write his/her exact words on the picture.)

Help the children put back all supplies they took out.

### **Water/ Rice Table**

There should be no more than four children at the water/rice table at one time.

Throwing rice or splashing with water is not permitted.

### **Books**

Children should be encouraged to handle the books with respect, including having clean hands.

Feel free to read a story to a small group of children during self-directed activity time

### **Outdoor Play**

Children must stay within the fenced in area.

Throwing sand or wood chips is not permitted.

If necessary, the teacher or aide takes the children inside (potty break etc.). One teacher and the parent helper will stay with the class.

### **Limits**

**No Running in the classroom or on the sidewalk outside.**

No climbing on cabinets, tables, chairs or shelves.

Children are not allowed to hurt one another or destroy property.

There is to be NO SMOKING by parent helpers or staff in the classroom, on the playground, or on field trips.

### **Emergency Information**

911 is called during any medical emergency that occurs at school or on a field trip. The parent or emergency contact person (designated by the parent) will be contacted. If needed, the child will be transported to Condell Hospital by EMS.

There is a fire extinguisher located in each of the classrooms.

Fire drills and tornado drills will be held throughout the year.

### **FINAL NOTES**

Always step in if you feel a child is about to get hurt.

State your directions and suggestions in a positive way.

(Tell the child what to do rather than what not to do.)

Give a child a choice, only when there is really a choice.

(Say, "It's time to go home now," rather than "Do you want to go home now?")

Reflect childrens' feelings; do not deny them their feelings.

(Say "I know that makes you feel sad" rather than "You aren't sad about that.")

Avoid motivating a children to make comparisons between two children. Their self-concepts aren't strong enough for competition.

Give the child the help he/she needs—but the minimum of help so he/she can grow in independence.

(e.g., start a zipper for him/her, but let him/her pull it up).

Never turn your back on the activity that you are assigned to watch.

Don't worry if you are nervous at first. We all were! Be sure to ask the teachers if you have any questions or concerns. They'll be happy to help.

**Thank you! Enjoy your parent helping experience**