Support Staff Handbook
2019/20

MMC 17 Carnegie Mellon University
Pittsburgh, PA 15213

Miss Drash (adrash@andrew.cmu.edu)
Miss Hancock (lh37@andrew.cmu.edu)
Mrs. Rosenblum (rosenblu@andrew.cmu.edu)

(412) 268-2199
www.cmu.edu/dietrich/psychology/cs
Greetings,
Welcome to the Children’s School! We are excited to have you working in our children’s programs and office. As a volunteer, undergraduate, student teacher, intern, or itinerant therapist, you are about to become an important part of this school.

The orientation material in this handbook has been developed to help you meet the challenges and enjoy the rewards of your experience here. We hope that this handbook will answer some fundamental questions about the significance of your position on the Children’s School team. If you have a question that is not answered in the following pages, please feel free to ask a teacher or educational administrator.

Your success will depend primarily on three factors:
- your desire to develop a positive working relationship with your cooperating teachers and educational administrators,
- your eagerness to learn the school routine and help it run smoothly, and
- your willingness to ask questions when you have them and pattern your interactions after the educators around you.

Your effort in these areas, along with a friendly and willing spirit, will bring you a priceless reward – the opportunity to help in the education of young children.

Everyone at the Children’s School is working for the betterment of education for young children and you have chosen to become part of the excitement. We look forward to having you as part of the team!

Sincerely,

Maggie Rosenblum
Educational Administrator
(412) 268-2199
rosenblu@andrew.cmu.edu

"The most precious thing a person can touch is the mind of a child...be cautious."
Michael Giammatteo
QUICK REFERENCE re: Top Twelve Things that You Need to Know About Working at the Children’s School

1. Speak and behave in a **professional manner** with staff, children, parents, visitors, service people, et cetera, at all times.

2. Orient yourself to follow the **policies and procedures** of the school.

3. Take direction from your assigned supervising teacher (although taking initiative to complete routine tasks without being asked and offering to play additional roles are highly valued).

4. Never discuss students with parents or in any situation other than with that child’s teacher. **Please remember that you have signed a confidentiality agreement that is kept on file at the Children’s School.**

5. Be responsible. Sign the log in the school office each day upon arrival; arrive and leave the school promptly as scheduled; Call the office at 412-268-2199 and leave a message before 8 AM if you will be late or absent. Remember to sign out at the end of your shift.

6. Model dress after staff members. **AVOID REVEALING CLOTHING.** See attached Dress Guidelines for Support Staff.

7. Turn off your cell phone when you arrive. If you need to make/receive an important call, let your supervising teacher know and come to the office for the call.

8. **Be a model.** You are an adult model not a playmate. Behave calmly and keep your voice quiet and pleasant.

9. Avoid engaging in conversation with other assistants, observers, teachers, or parents while supervising children. If you are assigned to watch an activity, NEVER turn your back on it.

10. Refrain from eating and drinking in the classroom, other than at snack or lunch times with the children and after receiving permission from your cooperating teacher.

11. Refrain from commenting on children's clothing, accessories, etc. Even a comment such as “What a pretty dress” is unnecessary and can be considered gender biased.

12. Do not hesitate to ask questions. Better to get direction than to do something incorrectly.

**Learn lots and have fun!**

All undergraduates working regularly with children MUST obtain criminal record and child abuse clearances, as well as an FBI background check, per Act 153. Please e-mail act153@andrew.cmu.edu for instructions on obtaining Act 153 background certifications through CMU’s Human Resources Service. Inform them that you will be working at the Children’s School.
Dress Guidelines for Support Staff

1. Choose clothes that are professional and practical. Working with young children may mean stains, running, stretching, and bending, so clothes should be comfortable, modest and easily washable.
2. Closed-toed comfortable shoes are recommended. You may be on the playground or in the gym.
3. Bring seasonal appropriate clothing and outerwear. In the winter, it is cold and you may be outside.
4. No clothing with logos, advertisements (This includes Star Wars and Disney characters), or questionable quotations.
5. Jeans are fine – but no cuts or holes.
6. Long dresses can be hazardous when running, etc.
7. Wear jewelry at your own risk.
8. If you are a smoker or live with one, please make sure you do not smell like smoke when coming to work.
9. Your supervisor may request that you change clothing if you are not dressed appropriately.
10. You may leave extra clothing and gym shoes, etc. at school if you wish to change. Label them please!

REMEMBER: IF YOU ARE IN DOUBT ABOUT SOMETHING THAT YOU PLAN TO WEAR, IT IS PROBABLY NOT APPROPRIATE!
Carnegie Mellon University Children’s School
Job Description for the Undergraduates
August 2019

Students working at The Children’s School will be extra hands for the teachers in exchange for pay (student employees) and/or experience relevant to the students’ program of study (typically psychology for interns and education for student teachers) or future career plans.

**Speak and behave in a professional manner at all times with staff, children, parents, undergraduates, university partners, visitors, service people, etc.**

Model dress after staff members. Choose clothes that are professional and practical. Working with young children may mean stains, running, stretching, and bending, so clothes should be comfortable, modest and easily washable. Closed-toe shoes are highly recommended. **Please refrain from eating and drinking in the classroom, other than at snack or lunch times with the children. Never use cell phones while on duty.**

**Strive to be a team player, fulfilling individual responsibilities based on job description, taking initiative to help with tasks, sharing space and materials, offering support, communicating and reflecting constructively, etc., for the benefit of the whole staff.**

**Follow the school and university policies and procedures carefully and with attention to timeliness.**

**Be prepared to flexibly adapt to the diverse situations that arise in early childhood education, particularly in a university laboratory school.**

**Take direction from the supervising teacher (though taking initiative to complete routine tasks without being asked and offering to play additional roles are highly valued). Be sure to ask questions if you are uncertain what to do.**

[Interns - observed & evaluated by the class instructor, with input from the teachers]
[Student Employees - observed & evaluated by the Educational Administrative Team, with input from the teachers]
[Student Teachers - observed & evaluated by the Supervising Teacher, with input from the other teachers and the Director]

Teachers provide input about the support staff in their classrooms via the attached form.

**Task Categories** (** indicates highest priority)**

**Teachers/Associate Teachers**
serve as assistant as described above

**Children**
know and be known
treat children in developmentally appropriate ways
serve all children without bias or favoritism
greet children within the school
monitor children already greeted or waiting for dismissal
address children as “friends” rather than by “boys and girls”
focus comments on children’s actions and interactions rather than appearance, clothing, or accessories
help with dressing, toileting, diaper changing, etc.
help set up and distribute snack
monitor children on playground, while taking walks, etc.
Since the goal is to foster children’s independence and to facilitate their engagement in activities, adults at the Children’s School refrain from having children sit in our laps, from playing with hair, clothing, or jewelry, and any other behaviors that encourage them to focus an inappropriate amount of attention on us.

Families
know and be known
To protect both the undergraduate and the school, please refer ALL questions regarding individual children, school policies, etc. to a teacher or administrator. Feel free to answer simple procedural questions (e.g., where should I put x, etc.). Also, for the same reasons, do not accept babysitting jobs with Children’s School families.

Program
prepare materials for bulletin boards and activities (indoor and outdoor)
set up bulletin boards and classroom activities
do simple computer work, such as preparing nametags, printing photos, etc.
lead activities with individual children, small groups, and/or large groups as appropriate and under the supervision of a teacher (i.e., student teachers typically do more than student employees)
read stories to children
clean up from activities (indoor and outdoor)

Special Events
set up and clean up (decoration hanging, table covering, furniture moving, etc.)
set up and clean up food
supervise activities and/or playground

**Educational Administrator/Administrative Coordinator
sign in and out / make timely WorkDay entries
notify in case of absence / schedule change in a timely manner
carry messages / distribute mail to student lockers

Office Suite
type, copy, laminate, bind, etc. and other tasks as requested

Public Relations
model school philosophy (every staff member is an advertisement)

Space
light cleaning (e.g., tables, paintbrushes, sinks, etc.)
student employees may be asked to do heavier cleaning, including pet cages

Disciplinary Action: If a student employee / intern / student teacher or other undergraduate is witnessed being involved in an incident in violation of school policies or rules, a staff member may complete a Disciplinary Action Incident Report. This report will be reviewed by a member of the school administration and discussed with the student. Please see the attached Performance Evaluation Form.
Children’s School Standards (10E.2)

There are many responsibilities related to being involved in the educational process. What follows are essential guidelines to help you meet them.

Be Professional.

Keep confidential any discussions concerning the case of a specific child. The school staff trusts you to use such information and observations only to work more effectively with that child. Never discuss students with parents or in any situation other than with that child’s teacher. Please remember that you have signed a confidentiality agreement that is kept on file at the Children’s School.

Choose clothes that are professional and practical. Working with young children may mean stains, running, stretching, and bending, so clothes should be comfortable, modest and easily washable. Shoes should be close-toed and appropriate for outdoor activities.

Refrain from drinking or eating in the classroom except with a teacher’s permission during the children’s designated snack or lunch times. Please leave coffee cups and other drink containers in the office.

Cell phones should not be used during classroom time. If there is a situation where you need to use your cell phone, please let the teacher know and leave the classroom.

Leave all bags/book bags in the main office when you sign in.

Be a Model.

You are in our school as an adult model, not a playmate. If your behavior is calm and controlled and your tone of voice quiet and pleasant, the children’s will be too. Provide a consistent, fair model of behavior for children, even when they are moody. A pleasant word from you may often change the direction of a situation. Children depend on you to be helpful, courteous and sincere.

Be Responsible.

Sign the log book in the school office each day; arrive and leave the school promptly as scheduled; call the office at 412-268-2199 before classes begin and leave a message if you will be absent. Remember to sign out when you leave.

Be Aware.

Orient yourself to follow the policies and procedures of the school.

- Basic Behavior Expectations at the Children’s School

Knowing and meeting expectations encourages independent action and fosters self-esteem.
Signals:
Lights Off means Stop, Look and Listen
Bell means Clean Up and Find the Teacher

School Rules:
Be a kind friend.
Listen the first time.
Stay in your own space.
Use your words.
Use inside voices.
Use walking feet.
Use things appropriately.
Follow the routine.
Put everything in its place.

The teachers and students in each class will discuss behavior expectations throughout the year. As appropriate, each class will add specific examples relating to each of the items listed above. For example, for “Be a kind friend,” one year a 4’s class added “share”, the Kindergartners added “respect the rights of others,” and the 3’s specified “if you put down your toy and move on to something else, another friend can use it.”

• Boundaries Around and Within the School
  1. The office and main hallway are not play areas.
  2. The observation booth is only for adult usage.
  3. The office and kitchen are adult supervised areas only.
  4. Children must stay within sight of adults.
  5. Children must be accompanied by a teacher to leave the school and playground.

Recognize that teachers have a variety of teaching styles and work successfully in different ways. In the beginning, you may be very apprehensive about working with children (and teachers); but as you have new experiences with the children, your confidence will grow.

Be Open.

Take your direction from the teachers. Accept criticism as constructive, realizing that the teacher is trying to assist you in developing procedures and techniques for working with children.

Develop a willing attitude as you assume new and greater responsibilities. Dealing with human beings, you will encounter unforeseen situations and problems that may call for great effort on your part to find solutions.

As you gain experience and become confident of the classroom routines, teachers are open to students taking initiative in certain activities. Be proactive with daily tasks and activities within the classroom, while remaining conscious of the teacher’s authority.
Working With Young Children

Ways With Children* - In Speech

1. Use your voice as a teaching tool (calm, moderate tones).

2. Use a tone of voice that will help the child feel confident and reassured, not afraid or guilty or ashamed.

3. Speak in a very matter of fact manner and avoid baby talk with children.

4. Make an effort to speak in simple sentences but in a regular tone of voice.

5. Make suggestions or state directions in a positive rather than a negative form. Example: "Park your tricycle here." - rather than "No, don't do it that way."

6. Give children a choice only when you intend to leave the decision to them; do not offer the child a choice when there is none. For example: "It's your turn to play this game" instead of "Do you want to play this game?" “You may choose to do xxx or yyy.”

7. Redirecting the child is likely to be most effective when it is consistent with the child's own motives or interests.

8. When young children are drawing, it is better to ask "Would you like to tell me something about your drawing?" than "What is it?" since children may not always know what it is themselves.

9. Avoid trying to motivate a child by making comparisons between the child and another or by encouraging competition.

10. If a child is tattling on another, respond with, “Thank you for telling me” and then deal with the situation as appropriate. That phrase is also helpful when a child is relating a story to you but you aren’t sure you understand.

Ways With Children* - In Action

1. Be alert to the total situation in the classroom.

2. Be calm, not impulsive. Do not roughhouse with the children.

3. Encourage children to handle all materials with care, and stress the importance of completing tasks.

4. Give the child the minimum of help in order that he/she may have the maximum chance to grow in independence.

5. Make your suggestions effective by reinforcing them when necessary.

6. When limits are necessary, clearly define and consistently maintain them.

Guidelines for Supervising Play (10E.2)

• When supervising all types of play, be aware of what every child is doing each minute. Watch the quality of play, and do not let it disintegrate. Sometimes a suggestion at just the right time to redirect the play can prevent the situation from getting out of control. When problems do arise, try not to become tense or worried. The children will relate to you better if you are relaxed and good-natured, but firm in your requests.

• Avoid engaging in conversation with other assistants, therapists, observers, teachers, or parents while supervising children. If you are assigned to watch an activity, never turn your back on it.

• Keep the group small. If too many children gather in one spot or if they crowd the easels or clay tables, interest some of them in another activity. You might say, "You may have a turn with the clay later. I'll call you when it's your turn. Why don't you use the easel now?" Be sure you keep this promise.

• Children can learn to observe simple rules. Be sure you know the rules your teacher has for indoor and outdoor play and equipment.

• A child does not need to monopolize one piece of equipment indefinitely. Give him/her time to think about relinquishing a piece of equipment by indicating ahead of time that he/she must give it to someone else. You might say, "You may ride the tricycle to the gate and back again, and then it'll be another child's turn, and it will be your turn to play in the sandbox."
Specific Rules for Play Areas (10E.2)

A. Whole School Rules
   1. Lights Out and/or the Quiet Sign means “Stop, Look, and Listen.”
   2. A Closed Sign means that those materials are not available for
      children’s use.

B. Safety
   1. With heavy blocks, children may build only as high as they are tall.
   2. Chairs are for sitting only; tables are not for sitting.

C. Art
   1. Return all art materials and tools to proper places.
   2. Put the child’s name and date on the back of paper and articles, if he/she
      cannot print his/her own name. Please check class lists for proper spelling and
      print the name and date rather than using cursive.
   3. Cover workspace with newspaper.
   4. Encourage children to wear smocks when painting or doing other messy work,
      but it is not required.

D. Water Play
   1. Encourage children to wear smocks when using water, but it is not required.
   2. Keep water in the table.
   3. Only four children may use the water table at any one time.
   4. Hands must be washed before and after using the water tables.

E. Sand Table
   1. Keep the sand in the table.
   2. Do not throw sand.
   3. Only six children may use the sand table at one time.

F. Clean Up Time
   1. All children participate in clean up, with adult facilitation as needed.
   2. Children remain in the area where they were playing until the clean up
      is completely finished before moving to their next activity.
   3. The water fountain is closed during clean up time.

G. Outdoors
   1. Adults should remain alert to the events going on around them, even while they
      are facilitating the children’s play.
   2. Adults should refrain from conversation with other adults so their full
      attention is on the children.
   3. Children ride tricycles only on the path.
   4. Children can go down the slides feet first and when the other child is completely
      off the slide. Climbing up the slides is the teacher’s discretion.
   5. The playground equipment is put away at end of the day and the playground is
      locked.
Strategies for Handling Aggression

1. **Hurdle-Help.** Help the child make transitions from one activity to another. We sometimes get aggression because the child has been too long at one activity. Say, "I have these puzzles at the table" or "Have you seen this book?"

2. **Touch control.** Sometimes a gentle pat or light touch on the shoulder will serve as a reminder to control behavior. If properly timed, this may prevent unmanageable aggression.

3. **Friendly interest.** Try liberally using names, acknowledging activities, and commenting on interactions and achievements, such as saying, "You're doing very well in asking for a turn. That was great the way you worked it out with Johnny."

4. **Omit all moralizing** such as "Now, was that a nice thing to do?" Avoid long explanations concerning cause and effect behavior. Use short phrases such as "Use your words.", "Tell your friend what you want.", or "I can't understand you." Long periods of talking it out are seldom productive. You can support the child’s understanding by saying, “Look at your friend’s face. How do you think your friend feels?”

5. **Signal control.** A verbal reminder or a nod that the behavior is not acceptable may work. Timing is important here. This is a good technique if the child is looking for the limit, but it works only if the child can muster some internal restraint, and if you and he/she have a relationship established.

6. **Planned ignoring.** Here you let the behavior die under its own steam. Use this strategy only if a dangerous situation is not involved.

7. **Positive Reinforcement.** A friendly comment may circumvent a disciplinary crisis.

8. **Timing and pace.** Not every infringement has to be dealt with. The child may be deaf to your pleas when wearing emotions on his/her sleeve. Pick moments when feelings are fairly well intact. You may leave him/her alone during a temper tantrum once you are sure the child is in a safe place.

9. **Face saving.** Don't put either yourself or the child in an impossible situation. Leave the child and yourself a gracious way out; e.g., don't make threats that you can't carry out; extract promises that he/she isn't likely to remember; nor expect things he/she isn't likely to do except by persuasion.

10. **De-fuse your "No."** See that children hear as little anger as possible in your verbal restraint. Don't be confused on this. We expect, even hope, that you will express anger when it's called for and when you feel angry; but if your restraints are always angry ones, you become ineffective. Remember, a simple "no" is more effective than a blast of verbiage.

*Permission requested 7/6/76 from Pacific Oaks College, 714 W. California Blvd., Pasadena, California 91105. Changes made for the Children’s School.*
Child Abuse and Neglect Policy (6A.10)

Prohibited Practices (Child Abuse 1B.4,8-10, 6A.10, 10D.5)

If any staff member, family member, volunteer, or other person, while in the vicinity of the Children’s School, engages in a practice prohibited by the program, the Director and/or Educational Administrator will take necessary steps to assure that there is no reoccurrence of the practice.

- Corporal or any type of physical punishment is not permitted. This includes hitting, spanking, beating, shaking, pinching, or other measures that produce physical pain. (1B.4&8)
- Any form of emotional abuse, including rejecting, terrorizing, isolating, or corrupting a child is not permitted. (1B.4&8)
- Any form of public or private humiliation, including threats of physical punishment, is not permitted. (1B.4&8)
- Withdrawal or the threat of withdrawal of food, rest, or bathroom opportunities is not permitted. (1B.4&8)
- Abusive, profane or derogatory language, including yelling and belittling, is not permitted. (1B.4&8)

Reporting Child Abuse (6A.10)

All observations or suspicions of child abuse or neglect will be immediately reported to the child protective services agency no matter where the abuse might have occurred. The Director or an Educational Administrator will call ChildLine at 1-800-932-0313 and/or the Allegheny County CYS at (412) 473-2000 to report suspected abuse or neglect. The Director or an Educational Administrator will follow the direction of the child protective services agency regarding completion of written reports. If the parent or legal guardian of the child is suspected of abuse, the Director or an Educational Administrator will follow the guidance of the child protective agency regarding notification of the parent or legal guardian. Staff who report suspicions of child abuse or neglect are immune from discharge, retaliation, or other disciplinary action for that reason alone, unless there is proof that the report is malicious (10D.5).

In the case of a staff member who is accused of child abuse (6A.10), the Director or an Educational Administrator will work directly with the CMU Human Resources Liaison and Legal Consultant to ensure due process and confidentiality for the staff member. A staff member who is accused of child abuse may be suspended or given leave without pay pending investigation of the accusation. Such caregivers may also be removed from the classroom and given a job that does not require interaction with children. The Director or an Educational Administrator will follow the guidance of the University officials regarding notification of the parent or legal guardian of the suspected abused child, as well as communication with parents or legal guardians of other children so that they may share any concerns they have had. However, no accusation or affirmation of guilt will be made until the investigation is complete. Caregivers found guilty of child abuse will be summarily dismissed or relieved of their duties.
Department: Carnegie Mellon University Children’s School / Psychology

Supervising Teacher: ____________________________

Student: ____________________________ Position: ____________________________

Date: ____________________________

Please indicate the activities in which the student has been engaged during this week. Check all those items that apply.

- Lead activities with individual children
- Lead activities with small groups
- Help children with dressing, toileting, etc.
- Playground duty
- Office work (type, copy, laminate materials)
- Prepare materials for bulletin boards and activities
- Cleanup activities
- Other ____________________________________________

Please rate the student’s performance on the following items where appropriate:

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Item</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>n/a</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Attendance</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Punctuality</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Performs Duties as Requested</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>4. Initiative / Motivation</td>
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<td>n/a</td>
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<td>5. Ability to Relate to Students</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>6. Appropriate Interaction with Children</td>
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<td>7. Flexibility</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>n/a</td>
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Please add comments and corrective actions recommended to the back of this sheet.
Comments:

Is the issue an actual Rule Infraction / Policy Violation?

___ Level 1 – Tardiness / Smoking / Disregard of Safety Regulations / Carelessness resulting in waste or delay / Wasting Time / Contributing to Unsanitary Conditions / Excessive Socializing / Insolence

___ Level 2 – Unexcused Absences / Leaving Work Without Permission / Refusal to Perform Work Assigned / Unauthorized Use of Institutional Property / Sleeping During Work Hours / Abusive or Inappropriate Language / Insubordination / Unsatisfactory Work Performance / Sexual Harassment

Corrective Actions Recommended/Taken:

___ 1 Verbal or Written Reprimand  ___ 2 Written Reprimand
___ 3 Suspension  ___ 4 Discharge

Follow-up / Next Steps:

________________________________________________________
Date                                Signature of Supervising Teacher
________________________________________________________
Date                                Signature of Administrator
________________________________________________________
Date                                Signature of Employee
Carnegie Mellon University

STUDENT EMPLOYMENT FEEDBACK FORM
2019/20
Please return to Mrs. Rosenblum

Student’s Name (optional) __________________________________________

Term: ______ Summer
      ______ Fall
      ______ Spring

Position Title (optional) ________________ Year: ________________
Department Name: ______________________

STUDENT SECTION (to be completed by the student worker named above)

How satisfied are you with this job?

Very satisfied    Satisfied    Dissatisfied

Comments:

How would you rate the work? (i.e., supervisor, coworkers, equipment, facilities)

Very satisfied    Satisfied    Dissatisfied

Comments:

What are your responsibilities in this job?

What skill(s) did you use most in this job?

What skill(s) did you develop through this job?

Would you make any changes to improve the work experience?

______ Yes    ______ No

If so, what?
MISSION STATEMENT (10B.17)

Children’s School staff members work as a team, in partnership with the department, college, and university, to accomplish all aspects of the school’s mission. Utilizing annual evaluation input from all constituents, the Director prepares an annual report documenting our impact related to each aspect of our mission and setting objectives for advancement in the coming year. The report is shared in a variety of venues and formats with staff, families, and the university (10F.2).

The Children's School
Department of Psychology
Dietrich College of Humanities and Social Sciences
Carnegie Mellon University
Mission Statement
(Adopted January 1995, Revised July 2012)

As a university laboratory school, we aim to lead through excellence and innovation as we:

1. facilitate interdisciplinary research in developmental psychology and related fields,
2. support undergraduate and graduate students studying child development theory, research, and applications,
3. create and implement developmentally appropriate, inclusive half-day preschool, full-day kindergarten, and camp programs for children ages 3-6,
4. collaborate with families in nurturing and educating their children, particularly as family challenges arise and developmental difficulties emerge,
5. organize professional development experiences and provide resources for practicing educators locally, nationally, and internationally, and
6. mentor students exploring careers in early childhood, elementary education, and related fields.

To model best practices that promote positive and productive learning for all members of our learning community, we foster a professional climate of hospitality, communication, trust, teamwork, and flexible problem solving. We strive to recruit a diverse staff and student population to provide a diverse subject pool for research, broad experiences for university students, and an enriched learning environment for our children and their families. By continually striving for quality improvement in all aspects of our mission, including the foundational finances and facilities, our laboratory school exemplifies progressive design in education and the learning sciences that can be utilized by professionals in various disciplines to meet the changing needs of society.
EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY (10B.17)

The Children’s School’s approach to preschool and kindergarten education is based on theories and research in Developmental Psychology, together with years of educational practice. Our approach is also aligned with the guidelines set by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) for developmentally appropriate practice and with the Pennsylvania Early Learning Standards.

Goals -> Program -> Assessment

We use our developmental goals as a systematic framework for focusing our program and assessment design. Our teachers are well versed in a wide variety of educational approaches, and we choose teaching strategies, daily routines, classroom arrangements, and curriculum structure that will encourage each child’s development in all domains. Teacher observations and documentation of individual development are used to adjust the program to better promote individual growth, as well as to conference with parents/guardians about ways we can work as a team to support each child (4A.1).

LABORATORY SCHOOL

As part of the Psychology Department (10A), we serve as a laboratory for research in child development and related fields. Our Director and educators interact with researchers to strengthen studies so that our children eagerly participate in their "special games" and the resulting data meet scientific standards. Parents receive brief descriptions of ongoing studies and summary results of completed research. Please refer to the Research section of our web site for further information.

Undergraduates taking the introductory child development course, and other related courses, make detailed observations during our program hours in order to gather data for course projects. Many of them return as undergraduate interns and student employees who enhance our children’s experiences while their involvement here strengthens their connections between theory, research, and practice.

To support the professional development of both pre-service and practicing educators, the Children’s School staff models and shares the educational approaches that we develop. We offer workshops, consultation and seminars in a wide range of local and national venues, and we provide related resources on our web site.

Our program is strengthened by our relationship with Carnegie Mellon (8B.2). As part of the University community, our classes have access to facilities such as the gym and track, can schedule walking field trips to interesting places such as the campus post office, food services, robotics lab, and the Purnell Center for the Arts, and have visits from university musicians, security officers, construction workers, etc. (8B.4,5). The Psychology Department provides funding for computing services and part of our administrative costs, and the University provides facilities management, accounting,
human resources, legal, and security services, as well as managing environmental health and safety for the entire campus.

**NAEYC ACCREDITATION**

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) has created 10 standards that measure the quality of early childhood programs. The standards were created by a blue-ribbon panel of early childhood experts and are based on the latest early childhood research.

As a NAEYC-accredited program, the Children’s School meets a high-quality standard by:

1) Promoting **positive relationships** for all children and adults to encourage each child's sense of individual worth.
2) Implementing a **curriculum** that fosters all areas of child development: cognitive, emotional, language, physical, and social.
3) Using developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate **effective teaching approaches**.
4) Providing **ongoing assessments** of a child's learning and development and communicating the child's progress to the family.
5) Promoting the **nutrition and health** of children and protecting children and staff from injury and illness.
6) Employing a **teaching staff** that has the educational qualifications, knowledge, and professional commitment necessary to promote children's learning and development and to support families' diverse needs and interests.
7) Establishing and maintaining collaborative relationships with each child's **family**.
8) Establishing relationships with and using the resources of the **community** to support the achievement of program goals.
9) Providing a safe and healthy **physical environment**.
10) Implementing effective **leadership** to support stable staff and strong personnel, fiscal, and program **management** so that all children, families, and staff have high-quality experiences.

Each staff member is responsible for engaging fully in all professional practices related to maintaining the Children’s School’s status as a high-quality NAEYC Accredited program, as well as the NAEYC self-assessment process leading to renewal every 5 years. Our current accreditation is valid from 7/1/18 through 7/1/23, and we complete annual reports each spring to document our continuous quality improvement. The programs offered by the Children’s School also fall under the regulatory jurisdiction of the Pennsylvania’s Board of Private Academic Schools, so we are licensed as a Private Academic School (10B.16). The Administrative Team collaborates to guide the documentation procedures and complete the required paperwork for our NAEYC annual reporting and renewal, as well as the annual PA licensing renewal.
DEVELOPMENTAL OBJECTIVES (2A.4)

Since 1968, the highly skilled Early Childhood Educators at the Children's School have nurtured young children's social, cognitive, and physical development. We have specified learning goals for 3, 4, and 5-year olds in each of the following domains.

1. **Self-Esteem & Independence** - encouraging each child's growing self concept and confidence, as well as increasingly independent self regulation and self care.

2. **Interaction & Cooperation** - promoting children's social skills for effective adjustment to school, group participation, classroom citizenship, and peer interactions.

3. **Communication** - facilitating comprehension and expression skills beginning with oral language (listening & speaking) and progressing to written language (reading & writing).

4. **Discovery & Exploration** - fostering a positive attitude toward learning through scientific and mathematical inquiry with varied materials to build strong concepts related to diverse themes.

5. **Physical Capabilities / Health & Safety** - giving children opportunities to develop small and large motor skills, healthy living habits, and essential safety practices.

6. **Artistic Expression & Appreciation** - cultivating each child's ability to express ideas and emotions through art, drama, and music and movement, as well as to appreciate the artistic expressions of others.

STAFF TEAMS (6A.6)

The Children’s School is staffed by five teams of educators – an Administrative Team, an AM Preschool 3’s Team, an AM Preschool 4’s Team, a PM Mixed-Age Preschool Team, and a Kindergarten Team – plus an educational “floater” who can substitute on any teaching team. All educators and administrators have many years of experience in education, as well as a bachelor’s degree and often an advanced degree in early childhood education, psychology, or a related field (see Staff Team Biographies, 6C.1-4). Undergraduate interns and student employees complement each team, and pre-service teachers from local colleges do field placements or student teaching here.

INTERACTION GUIDELINES (7A, 3A.3)

Regardless of position, each staff member’s job description includes the following priorities for action and interaction: “Speak and behave in a professional manner at all times with staff, children, parents, undergraduates, university partners, visitors, service people, etc. Follow the school and university policies and procedures carefully and with attention to timeliness. Be prepared to flexibly adapt to the diverse situations that arise in early childhood education, particularly in a university laboratory school.
Children’s School staff members also share the following core values as guides for interactions among staff members, between staff and children, between staff and parents, between staff and undergraduates, researchers, university employees, etc. (1A, 1B).

• We use direct eye contact, smiles, warm tones of voice, positive touch, social conversations, and joint laughter to support the development of effective working relationships.
• Our partnership in learning is supported by regular, reciprocal communication, affirming recognition of effort and accomplishment, predictable, developmentally appropriate responsiveness to initiative, emotion, and concerns, and proactive conflict resolution.
• We strive to respect each individual and work to create a positive emotional climate for all learners, with sensitivity to differences in age, ability, background, language, culture, religion, and family structure.
• We aim to eliminate gender bias by using gender-neutral terminology, such as “friends” instead of “boys and girls” or “firefighter” instead of “fireman”, encouraging learners of all genders to explore the activities we offer, and focusing our affirmation on approach, effort, and accomplishment rather than appearance.
• We are committed to reaching out to people of different races, genders, ethnicity, and ability, and we strive to create an environment of inclusion that celebrates our differences and highlights our commonalities. Our program accepts children with special needs as long as a safe, supportive environment can be provided for the child consistent with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. For a complete description of Carnegie Mellon’s Commitment to Diversity, please see http://www.cmu.edu/diversity/.

Because our mission is multifaceted, we aim to build positive relationships with all learning partners by appropriately balancing equity of care for the group with services tailored to individual needs. Our goal is to develop the school's caring community for learning through broad participation and involvement in program improvement for all of our staff, families, and university partners.

Staff-Child Interactions (1B-1D)

We make every effort for all children to know and be known by all adults in our open school environment so that they are comfortable interacting with and seeking assistance from any adult. Each child is assigned to a primary teacher by age, but each team member works with all groups at a particular age level so that he or she is familiar with the children and routines for each group and can effectively substitute when a teacher is absent (6D.4). Our greeting and dismissal rotations and mixed-age activities (e.g., outdoor classroom time for preschoolers) help familiarize the whole staff with children in all groups. Interactions in the school’s open spaces and shared facilities (e.g., kitchen, make shop, outdoor classroom, and discovery area) encourage continuity of relationships between all staff and children, as well as among groups of children, so that they are comfortable learning in any of our indoor or outdoor spaces.
Because we strive to encourage diverse interactions and not gender stereotypes, we address children as frequently as possible by their individual names or we refer to groups of children as “friends” (i.e., as opposed to “boys and girls”). For example, a teacher might begin a sentence with, “Friends, it’s time for us to…” or indicate a subgroup of children as the “friends in the block area”, etc. Similarly, we refrain from commenting on children’s appearance and possessions rather than their actions or interactions. Even a friendly “What a pretty dress you’re wearing” focuses the child’s attention on his or her clothing, which is often gender stereotyped, rather than on learning.

All staff members, students, researchers, observers, interns, student teachers, student employees and volunteers must sign a Statement of Commitment to Confidentiality before entering our classrooms (see page 14). According to the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct:

“We shall not engage in or support exploitation of families. We shall not use our relationship with a family for private advantage or personal gain, or enter into relationships with family members that might impair our effectiveness working with their children.”

Accordingly, no private arrangement for childcare shall be made during the Children’s School hours of operation as this may interfere with a staff member’s job responsibilities, performance or ability to abide by the Statement of Commitment to Confidentiality. We strongly discourage our undergraduate staff members, volunteers or others actively involved in the classrooms at the Children’s School from babysitting or providing childcare for children and their families who are currently enrolled at the school. For that reason, we do not recommend staff members to families or distribute advertisements for childcare to our staff members.

**Staff-Family Interactions (1A & 7A)**

As undergraduates and/or support staff, please refer any parent questions or concerns to the child’s primary teacher. When parents have questions or have experienced a problem at home or school, they should approach the child’s primary teacher or one of the administrators directly. Recent potty-training efforts, changes in care-giving arrangements, the death of a pet, an extended absence of a parent, etc. can all cause changes in a child’s demeanor and behavior at school, so timely communication helps the staff respond most effectively to the child. Teachers and Administrators make every effort to dialogue with children and families in a positive manner to plan strategies, resolve issues, and provide assistance in a timely and effective manner.
SCHOOL HOURS

AM Three Year Olds (Monday through Thursday)
8:30 AM - 11:30 AM or 8:30 AM – 1:00 PM

AM Four Year Olds (Monday through Friday)
8:30 AM - 11:30 AM or 8:30 AM – 1:00 PM (M-Th)
All Four Year Olds: 8:30 AM – 11:30 AM (F)

PM Mixed Age (3’s and 4’s) Preschool
12:30 PM – 3:15 PM (M – Th)
Four Year Olds Only: 8:30 AM – 11:30 AM (F)

Kindergarten (Monday through Friday)
8:30 AM - 2:30 PM (M-Th)
8:30 AM - 12:00 PM (F)

ROUTINES AND TRANSITIONS (3D.2)

The AM Preschool 3’s

Greeting: Teachers greet children at their cars and escort them into the school.

Free Choice: After following the arrival routine, children choose from a variety of activity centers and play areas in their classrooms.

Group Time: Children meet as a classroom community with their teacher to discuss the school day and learn about key concepts related to the monthly theme. Each teacher also plans music, movement, and other skill building activities to target specific developmental needs of the group.

Activity Time: Children choose from a range of independent and/or teacher-directed activities from a variety of areas such as arts, blocks, technology, cooking, dramatic play, games, writing center, library, science center, puzzles, and sensory tables.

Snack Time: Children meet with their teachers for bathroom time, snack time and story time.

Outdoor Time/Campus Exploration Time: Children go outside every day except in extreme cold or pouring rain. Children choose from a wide variety of activities including sand play, mud kitchen, tricycle riding, dramatic play, nature exploration, water play, block building, climbing, sliding, and other large motor games. Depending on the weather, outdoor time may also be used for campus explorations.

First Dismissal (11:30 AM): Teachers escort the children to the dismissal area and help them into their cars.
Lunch: Children share a brown bag lunch together.

Closing Circle: Children meet as a classroom community with their teacher to close the school day.

Second Dismissal (1:00 PM): Teachers escort the children to the dismissal areas and help them into their cars.

The AM Preschool 4’s

Greeting: Teachers greet children at their cars and escort them into the school.

Free Choice and Activity Time: After following the arrival routine, children choose from a variety of activity centers and play areas in their classrooms. Activities can be independent and/or teacher-directed and include a variety of areas such as arts, clocks, technology, cooking, dramatic play, games, writing center, library, science center, puzzles and sensory tables.

Group Time: Children meet as a classroom community with their teacher to discuss the school day and learn about key concepts related to the monthly theme. Each teacher also plans music, movement, and other skill building activities to target specific developmental needs of the group.

Snack Time: Children meet with their teachers for bathroom time, snack time and story time.

Outdoor Time/Campus Exploration Time: Children go outside every day except in extreme cold or pouring rain. Children choose from a wide variety of activities including sand play, mud kitchen, tricycle riding, dramatic play, nature exploration, water play, block building, climbing, sliding, and other large motor games. Depending on the weather, outdoor time may also be used for campus explorations.

First Dismissal (11:30 AM): Teachers escort the children to the dismissal area and help them into their cars.

Lunch: Children share a brown bag lunch together.

Closing Circle: Children meet as a classroom community with their teacher to close the school day.

Second Dismissal (1:00 PM): Teachers escort the children to the dismissal areas and help them into their cars.
PM Mixed Age (3’s and 4’s) Preschool

Greeting: Teachers greet children at their cars and escort them into the school.

Free Choice and Activity Time: After following the arrival routine, children choose from a variety of activity centers and play areas in their classrooms. Activities can be independent and/or teacher-directed and include a variety of areas such as arts, clocks, technology, cooking, dramatic play, games, writing center, library, science center, puzzles and sensory tables.

Group Time: Children meet as a classroom community with their teacher to discuss the school day and learn about key concepts related to the monthly theme. Each teacher also plans music, movement, and other skill building activities to target specific developmental needs of the group.

Snack Time: Children meet with their teachers for bathroom time, snack time and story time.

Outdoor Time/Campus Exploration Time: Children go outside every day except in extreme cold or pouring rain. Children choose from a wide variety of activities including sand play, mud kitchen, tricycle riding, dramatic play, nature exploration, water play, block building, climbing, sliding, and other large motor games. Depending on the weather, outdoor time may also be used for campus explorations.

Dismissal: Teachers escort the children to the dismissal area and help them into their cars.

The Kindergarten Day

Greeting: Teachers greet children at their cars or buses and escort them into the school.

Free Choice: After following the arrival routine, children choose from a variety of activity centers and play areas in their classroom.

Group Time: Children meet with one of the teachers in the group area to discuss the daily news, calendar, weather, and have an introduction to the key concepts related to the current curriculum theme.

Activity Time: Children move among different centers to complete specific language arts, math, science, art, technology, and other theme-related activities.

Lunch/Outdoor Time: Children bring their own lunch and sit at different tables, which change monthly. Then, the children go outside to play except in extreme cold or pouring rain. Children choose from a wide variety of activities including sand play, mud kitchen, water play, block building, tricycle riding, dramatic play, nature exploration, and large motor experiences. In case of inclement weather, appropriate gross motor activities are provided with supervision for the children indoors.
**Group Time:** Children meet with one of the teachers in the group area to play a group game, sing songs, share experiences and read a story.

**Journal Time:** Children make a daily entry in their personal journal. Depending on their skill level, children may draw, copy words, dictate a story, or use invented spelling to express their ideas.

**Activity Time:** Children move among activity centers, work on extended projects related to the theme, and play in the block area, housekeeping area, or sand table.

**Dismissal:** Teachers escort the children to the dismissal area and help them into their cars or buses.

NOTE: Teachers will provide specific schedules prior to the start of school each fall.
HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDELINES (3A.1, 9C)

At all times, health and safety are top priorities at the Children’s School. Each individual’s vigilance regarding health and safety issues contributes significantly to our effectiveness. Keep your eyes up, survey the whole scene around you and be aware of what’s happening beyond your immediate activity. Always assume that you are the only one who notices a problem or potential problem and handle it to the best of your ability.

Preparing Yourself
The guidelines for exclusion of children who have infections that pose a risk to others apply equally to staff members (6A.8). When you are sick, seek treatment and take steps to recover as quickly as possible. Discharging or infected wounds on exposed parts of the body are also cause for exclusion from the care of children. If you have a temperature, do not return to work until you have been fever free for 24 hours.

Hand washing is the #1 preventive measure to avoid the spread of disease (5A). Use the posted hand washing procedure and then turn off the faucet with your paper towel in all of the following circumstances: upon arrival at work and re-entry from the outdoor classroom, before and after eating or handling food, prior to serving food to children, after using the restroom, changing a diaper, assisting with toileting, treating a child’s injury, handling bodily fluids, touching the pets, playing in the water table (5A.19) or with infants and toddlers, handling garbage or cleaning, and before and after preparing food, feeding a child or administering medication. Non-porous gloves are provided for use when diapering, cleaning, preparing and serving food, etc.

Hand-washing Technique (5A.9)
The following is the hand-washing procedure recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children: Rub hands vigorously for at least 20 seconds, including back of hands, wrists, areas between fingers, around nail beds, under fingernails and jewelry. The children are taught the much more detailed version below, along with the accompanying song composed by the Children’s School minstrels.

**Step 1:** Put your hands together. Slide the tips of the fingers of the right hand to the left hand’s wrist and then slide hands together in a wave-like motion until the left hand’s fingertips are now touching the right wrist. Gently create a wave back and forth to wash the palms of your hands. (If you hold up your hands palms together and look, you can actually see a pocket between your hands. This is why the wave motion is effective in reaching the palms, which is a place germs hide.)

**Step 2:** Build a bridge by placing right hand on top of the left hand. Interlock the fingers and gently move the right hand over the left hand several times. Switch hands and repeat.

**Step 3:** Create a bracelet with the fingers of your right hand over the wrist of your left hand. Slide the fingers of your right hand around and around your left wrist. Now slide your finger bracelet off and on your left hand several times. Switch hands and repeat. (This cleans the outside of the hands, paying special attention to the thumbs and little fingers).
Step 4: Pinch fingers together, place finger tips in the palm of the opposite hand and twist, twist, twist in a circle to gently clean your nails. Switch hands and repeat. (Jeannie Simms, American Respiratory Alliance of Western Pennsylvania, November 2, 2009).

Preparing the Environment

Each staff member is responsible for daily checks of the following items.
• Classroom Walkie Talkie is charged, on, and operational.
• Safety covers are on all electrical outlets.
• Electrical cords are appropriately placed and secure.
• Adults’ personal belongings (handbags, backpacks, etc.) are stored out of children’s reach.
• All poisonous substances are stored in high, locked cabinets and the lock is engaged (kitchen, art closet, slop sink closet, classroom cupboards, etc.).
• All exits and hallways are free from obstruction.

In addition, every staff member is responsible for responding immediately when encountering the following items, either by handling the problem personally or notifying a member of the Administrative Team.
• Tripping, slipping, choking, pinching hazards
• Elevated water temperature
• Physical plant problems (breaks, leaks, pests, etc.)
• Violations of Carnegie Mellon’s policy re: animals, no smoking / drugs / firearms (see www.cmu.edu/policies/)
• Improper functioning of the outdoor classroom gates

Use procedures for standard precautions at all times (5A.21). Wear gloves when contamination with bodily fluids may occur. Do not use hand-washing sinks for bathing children or for removing smeared fecal material, and do not use kitchen sinks for cleaning anything besides food or kitchen equipment. In addition, immediately sanitize surfaces that come in contact with body fluids, use barriers and techniques that minimize contact with mucous membranes or with openings in the skin, clean and sanitize according to the established procedures or alert cleaning staff to do so, and dispose of contaminated materials and diapers in a plastic bag with a secure tie placed in a closed container.

Surface Cleaning
1. Wipe surface for debris.
2. Spray surface until it is thoroughly wet with Clorox Anywhere following the manufacturer’s instructions. Do not re-wipe yet.
3. Walk away and let surface air dry at least 2 minutes. This is to sanitize the surface. After 2 minutes, wipe the surface again.

For the changing table, use Clorox Hydrogen Peroxide Disinfecting Wipes or mix a bleach solution of 1 tablespoon bleach to 1 quart of water each day so you can disinfect the changing table following each use.
NOTE: The following policies and procedures are included in the Undergraduate Handbook so that all adults interacting with children are aware of them and help ensure that everyone follows them. In most cases, a teacher or administrator is responsible for ensuring compliance. Nonetheless, undergraduates should feel free to raise questions or seek administrative support if policies and procedures are not being followed.

Operating the Security System

Given the large number of individuals continually entering and leaving our laboratory school context for varied purposes, our security depends on everyone being aware of potential hazards and taking responsibility for monitoring entries and exits. All staff members are responsible for knowing and following the security system procedure. No undergraduates or families should be given staff codes for bypassing doors; they use entry and exit codes only.

Responding to Environmental Conditions

All staff members are responsible for knowing health & safety hazards and protecting children from harm.

Heat and Cold: Use the Child Care Weather Watch chart to determine whether the heat index or wind-chill factor are within range for safe outdoor play and ensure that children wear clothing that is dry and layered for warmth in cold weather. Generally speaking, under 80°F is safe with any level of humidity, and under 90° is safe with relative humidity less than 50%. In similarly general terms, air temperatures above 10° are safe on calm days, but winds above 10 miles per hour make even a 30° day feel like it's below 10°. Contact an Educational Administrator with questions.

Air Pollution: An Educational Administrator subscribes to an air quality alert system that provides notice of hazards in our area. The Educational Administrator will notify teaching staff if conditions prohibit outdoor education.

Sun and Insects: Our outdoor classroom is sunny for most of the day. However, there is always some shade available in the pavilions, under the climber, under the umbrellas, and in the sandbox. Families may apply sunscreen to the child prior to arrival at school. If families request a second application prior to the 30-minute playground time, they must provide the sunscreen and written permission for staff to apply it. During camp, when children are outside for a longer time and wearing bathing suits, teachers apply sun block with a minimum UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15 if it is authorized in writing and provided by the family (5A.16). At this time, our area is not designated by health authorities as high-risk of insect-borne disease; but if that changes, we will use daily application of repellent containing DEET when parents provide written authorization and appropriate repellent.
Supervising Children

- Maintain appropriate staff – child ratios at all times (10B.3&4).
  Minimum of 1:8 for 3’s & Afternoon Mixed Age Class
  (though we aim for 1:6 with undergraduate support)
  Minimum of 1:10 for 4’s Programs
  (though we aim for 1:6 with undergraduate support)
  Minimum of 1:12 for Kindergarten
  (though we aim for 1:8 with staff and undergraduate support)

These ratios are applicable both indoors and outdoors. Off campus field trip ratios are 1:3 for preschool and 1:4 for kindergarten. Wading pool ratios are 1:5 for both preschool and kindergarten.

- Staff members, as a group, must supervise preschool children primarily by sight (3C.5-7). Classroom space must be designed so that there are no areas of the room where children can hide. Supervision by sound is permissible for short intervals, such as when children go to the children’s or private bathroom from the classroom. For children new to the school, an adult should accompany the child to the bathroom. Once children are capable and comfortable toileting independently, they should signal an adult that they are going to the bathroom, and that adult should check frequently to ensure that the child is safe. Once kindergarten children are comfortable with the spatial layout of the school, they are permitted after notifying a teacher to go to the restroom, run errands to the office, or go check on a younger sibling independently (i.e., out of sight and sound supervision of the kindergarten staff but within the security system area 3C.8). Other adults in the school will provide support as necessary (e.g., a preschool staff member could help a child in the restroom or an Administrative Team member could help a child in the hallway), and the kindergarten team will monitor the time a child is gone and check on the child if he or she does not return to the classroom promptly. All children must be accompanied by a permanent staff member when leaving the playground to use the university or preschool bathroom.

- Staff and support staff members responsible for supervising children during program hours (i.e., as part of the above ratio) should not make calls or text on the school or personal phones, except in cases of emergency. Personal cell phones should be kept on silent during work hours, and family members should be instructed to call the office in case of emergency. Use of personal email, Internet, or social networking is not permitted while supervising children.

- Staff members may not leave children alone nor may they leave an undergraduate in charge.
• Use the classroom walkie-talkie to call the office for help if needed. Be sure to take it with you to the outdoor classroom and on campus outings.

• Intentionally account for each child in your group at every transition.

• All staff members are responsible for knowing and consistently following the school’s behavior expectations and management guidelines, outdoor classroom policies, parent handbook policies, and field trip procedures.

• When on the stairs, use the right handrail when available, take one step at a time, typically single file. During greeting and dismissal of preschoolers, an adult may hold the child’s hand on the stairs if needed. Children are monitored by an adult while walking on the stairs at all times.

• Ensure that the children wash their hands upon arrival at school, before and after eating, after toileting (or being changed), after working with the pets, before and after using the water table, and after coming into the school from the outdoor classroom (5A.19).

• For hand washing, help children line up at the sink and use proper hand washing and drying procedures (1 squirt of soap, vigorous and thorough hand rubbing for 20 seconds, pulling a paper towel from the dispenser, and turning off the faucet with the paper towel if using one that is not automatic 5A.9). Doors to the bathroom must remain open. Be sure to monitor the cleanliness of the bathroom, correct any problems, and stock supplies as needed.

• Only use disposable diapers or pull-ups. When changing a child on the changing table, never leave the child unattended, always wear gloves, and be sure to sanitize the pad and wash your hands afterwards. (See the diapering procedure in the Health & Safety Appendix.) Also, always leave the changing table free of objects and ready for the next use.

• When a child has a bathroom accident, help the child get changed into extra clothes at the changing table or in the children's or private bathroom. Place wet clothes in a plastic bag in the child’s backpack.

• When leaving the Children’s School facilities, notify the Administrative Team of the reason for departure and expected duration, take the class first aid backpack, walkie-talkie, and personal cell phone as a backup, have children walk single file or in pairs, and have one adult lead and one follow the group.

• When crossing a street, have an adult stop the traffic and stay in the street, have children cross with another adult in single file or pairs, and allow traffic flow to resume only after all the children have safely crossed.
• When children have known allergies, be sure to follow the procedures specified by the parent and/or health professional regarding foods served or environmental precautions taken. Keep EpiPens out of the reach of children but easily accessible for quick action, including outside; be sure to take them with other first aid supplies on outings.

• When a child has a fall or other accident, follow the emergency procedures appropriate for the situation (10E.2). Administer basic first aid as appropriate or seek the help of an Administrative Team member or Carnegie Mellon EMT as necessary. Be sure to complete an incident report and place one copy in the office file, give one to the parent and place one in the student file.

• If a child ingests a poisonous substance, immediately bring the child to the office and have someone call the Poison Control Center. Follow the directions given by the Poison Control personnel.

• When a child is sick, bring the child to the office, help the child get settled in a comfortable position, and arrange for a call home. Be sure to designate an Administrative Team member to supervise the child before returning to the classroom.

• Release children only to adults who are listed in the child’s file or on a signed note from the parent (10D.6). Parents submit a list of adults to whom we may release their child. Oral changes are permitted if you can verify the identity of the individual. In that case, log the name of the parent, date, and time of the request, name of the individual, and name of the staff person taking the call.

• Our goal is to ensure that all children are in safe hands as we release them to parents, guardians, or caregivers at dismissal. On rare occasions, educators may be faced with the delicate situation of wondering whether the person picking up the child is in some way impaired and therefore an unsafe caregiver for the child. If such a concern arises, begin by observing the individual carefully to assess his or her demeanor, speech, eyes, and movement. If possible, cue another staff person to observe as well, and/or to care for the children while you walk the person to the main office. If the concern remains, calmly state that you are concerned about the person’s condition and ask if are other arrangements that can be made for the child’s care and transportation.

• At all times, interact with children without using physical punishment or any form of psychological abuse.
Preparing and Serving Food (5B, 10.D3)

- Food is prepared, served, and stored in accordance with the ServSafe training that is provided by our university dietician. All fruits and vegetables are thoroughly washed prior to eating, to avoid possible exposure to pesticides and bacteria (5B.8).
- Clean food preparation surfaces with Clorox Anywhere before and after use following the manufacturer’s instructions, as well as between preparation of raw and cooked foods (5C.1).
- Keep children safely away from any heat-producing appliances.
- Keep all liquids hotter than 110°F out of children’s reach.
- Check utensils and dishes prior to use to ensure that they are not chipped or cracked.
- Use paper cups or the water fountain for drinks between snack and meals.
- Do not re-use disposable products. Use no Styrofoam products in the kitchen (5B.9).
- Do not serve children younger than four any of the following foods: hot dogs, whole grapes, nuts, popcorn, raw peas, hard pretzels, spoonfuls of sun butter, or chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole.
- Store all non-perishable food in labeled, insect-resistant plastic containers with tight lids. Food should be dated when opened and/or purchased. All perishable foods such as fruit/vegetables should be dated when purchased.
- Items not meant for cooking/eating, such as playdough, should also be labeled and dated.
- Discard foods with expired dates (5B.4).
- Work with families to ensure that lunch brought from home meets recommended nutritional guidelines.
- Make sure that food requiring refrigeration stays cold until served (5B.3).
- Provide food to supplement food brought from home if necessary.
- The program documents compliance and any corrections that it has made according to the recommendations of the program’s dietician / health consultant that reflect consideration of federal and other applicable food safety standards (10D.3).
- For each child with special health care needs or food allergies or special nutrition needs, the child’s health care provider gives the program an individualized care plan that is prepared in consultation with family members and specialists involved in the child’s care (5B.5).
- All foods and beverages brought from home for storage at school are labeled with the child’s name and the date and stored in re-sealable containers.
- The program protects children with food allergies from contact with the problem food. The program asks families of a child with food allergies to give consent for posting information about that child’s food allergy and, if consent is given, then posts that information in the food preparation area and in the areas of the facility the child uses so it is a visual reminder to all those who interact with the child during the program day.
For children with disabilities who have special feeding needs, program staff members keep a daily record documenting the type and quantity of food a child consumes and provide families with that information (5B.5).

Cleaning, Sanitizing, and Disinfecting (5C.1, 5C.5)

• Carnegie Mellon’s cleaning service is responsible for the following tasks.
  Daily – Clean & disinfect door and cabinet handles
  Clean and disinfect sinks, faucets, surrounding counters
  Clean and disinfect soap dispensers
  Clean and disinfect toilet bowls, seats, handles, etc.
  Clean & disinfect floors
  Vacuum carpets and all area rugs
  Clean & disinfect countertops and table IF they are totally clear
  Clean and disinfect mops and cleaning rags
  Quarterly - Shampoo carpets and area rugs

• All other classroom area cleaning and sanitizing / disinfecting tasks are the responsibility of the teaching staff. (See the guidelines for washing surfaces in the Health & Safety Appendix.)
  • Clean and disinfect any surface contaminated with body fluids immediately (e.g., saliva, mucus, vomit, urine, stool, or blood).
  • Clean and disinfect changing table with Clorox Hydrogen Peroxide Disinfecting Wipes or a bleach solution after each child’s use.
  • Drain, sanitize, and refill the water table for each session (morning and afternoon for preschool, daily for kindergarten).
  • Clean and disinfect countertops and tables daily using Clorox Anywhere following the manufacturer’s instructions.
  • Clean and sanitize utensils, surfaces, and toys that have been in contact with saliva or other bodily fluids after each child’s use. Acceptable methods include use of the kitchen dishwasher or washing by hand with water and detergent, then rinsing, sanitizing, and air drying (5C.3).
  • Clean dress-up clothes not worn on the head weekly.
  • Clean non-disposable hats after each child’s use.
  • Clean lockers monthly.
  • The Administrative Team handles laundering of pillowcases, blankets, etc. after each sick child’s use.
  • When using wading pools (typically during June camp), follow the guidelines for Disinfecting a Wading Pool (see Appendix). Empty the pools daily.
  • Wash sheets after each use with a nap mat. NOTE that none of our programs include a regular rest time.

NOTE: The Children’s School does not use walkers, potty chairs, cribs, mattresses, or sleeping bags.
Pets and Visiting Animals

• Pet reptiles are not permitted at the Children’s School because of salmonella risk. Small mammals, birds, amphibians, fish, worms, and insects are permitted if secured from reputable dealers and cared for according to instructions in appropriate habitats.
• Only qualified animal handlers are permitted to bring visiting animals to school (e.g., blind society representative with a seeing eye dog, nature preserve representative with various animal friends, etc.).
• Take care to instruct children on safe behavior with animals, to supervise all interactions between children and animals, and to ensure that they wash their hands before and after contact.
GUIDELINES FOR OUTDOOR CLASSROOM USE (9B)
(Designed for both the Playground and the Reflection Garden, with a focus on safety and in the spirit of developmentally appropriate risk)

• Only open areas when there is sufficient coverage to monitor them (e.g., Imagination Playground, bikes, water play, etc.).

• Teachers ensure that they maintain good lines of sight to cover all areas of the playground using an “eyes up” approach. If there is enough coverage, a teacher may do a more focused activity with children.

• Monitor the gates to make sure they stay closed and latched.

• Be vigilant for safety concerns in the outdoor classroom. Teachers should carry their walkie-talkie at all times.

• Monitor the fall zones around each piece of equipment.
  Height of equipment is less than 30 inches = 6-foot distance between structures
  Height of equipment is more than 30 inches = 9-foot distance between structures
  Keep the alligator seesaw on the blue surface, not near the slide or climbers.
  The large adult size picnic table is the only picnic table to be inside the bike oval. All small child sized tables are to remain on the outside of the bike oval.
  Monitor loose parts so that they are not creating hazards in the fall zones or slide exits.
  Ensure that children keep their feet on the ground in the Music Exploration Area.

• Ensure that children wear helmets during use of any riding toy or scooter (whether as driver or passenger). Do not allow children to wear their helmets while playing in other areas because helmets change the children’s head dimensions and increase the possibilities for entrapment.

• Teachers focus on supervising and promoting productive play among children.

• Classes can use the Pavilion and Reflection Garden for dramatics, snack, etc. with supervision.

• Picnic tables and chairs are for bottoms only. No standing. No jumping.

• Jumping is permitted from the Rock Climber, Climbing Tunnel, Beanstalk Climber, benches and platforms.

• Use sidewalk chalk only on the sidewalks, NOT on the Bluestone in the Reflection Garden.

NOTE: Teachers use judgment re: supervising children’s catch / chase games. Staff Members should NOT be chasing children or encouraging children to chase them.
• No climbing on the fence or on the adults.

• Bikes - Wear your own helmet, ride in the designated direction, no ramming, but pushing is allowed with adult supervision. Park bikes in the “parking lot” in the grassy area between the musical instruments and the double gate.

• Wagons – All potential passengers wear helmets, with only 2 passengers at a time (3 passengers ok for field trips).

• Scooters – With helmets and supervision only.

• Slides – All positions are fine as long as everyone pays attention for safety.

• Sandbox – Sand stays in the sandbox, sand toys stay in the sandbox. Water in the sandbox only with adult permission. Children may remove shoes for sandbox play.

• Mud Kitchen – Mud stays in the mud kitchen. Ensure that there is no standing water at the end of each session.

• Dig only in the sandbox, garden boxes, and wood chips (i.e., not the gray Eco-Trail).

• Imagination Playground (IP) - No climbing in the storage box. Noodles are for building, not hitting. All loose blocks should be returned to their designated areas at the end of each session, though interesting structures may be left for the next group.

• Shed – No children in the shed without supervision.

• Clean Up – Park bikes in the “parking lot” between the musical instruments and the double gate, make sure sand toys are in the sandbox, and put other toys away.

Special Notes:
• Photos may be taken by outsiders only with permission of the office. The photographer should be wearing a nametag like other visitors.

• Dogs and other pets are not permitted on the playground.

• No children may leave playground without an adult. Permanent staff members must accompany children to the bathroom (i.e., not student employees or volunteers). Researchers with clearances on file may take children from the playground to participate in research sessions. Indoor classroom practices apply to children’s use of the restroom in the preschool while their class is in the Reflection Garden.

• Teachers close shed doors and lock gates when playground time is finished. Sheds are locked at the end of the day.
BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES (1E & 3B)

At the Children's School, our rules and expectations are designed to help children learn to manage their behavior for effective interaction and cooperation. All staff members guide and support children by clearly communicating in a positive manner and tone. For example, "Let's keep the sand in the sand table so that we have a lot to pour." Typically, the children are eager to act appropriately and are recognized for doing so. We design activities that are age appropriate in both task and duration to maximize positive interactions. Our teachers also carefully monitor the children's activities to anticipate and diffuse problems before they begin. A child who is losing interest in one activity or getting too loud may be redirected to another area that can spark renewed engagement and positive behavior.

Basic Behavior Expectations at the Children’s School

Knowing and meeting expectations encourages independent action and fosters self-esteem.

Signals:
- **Lights Off** means Stop, Look and Listen
- **Bell** means Clean Up and Find the Teacher

School Rules:
- Be a kind friend.
- Listen the first time.
- Follow the routine.
- Stay in your own space.
- Use your words.
- Use inside voices.
- Use walking feet.
- Use things appropriately.
- Put everything in its place.

The students in each class will discuss behavior expectations throughout the year. As appropriate, each class will add specific examples relating to each of the items listed above. For example, for “Be a kind friend,” one year, a 4’s class added “share”, the Kindergartners added “respect the rights of others,” and the 3’s specified “if you put down your toy and move on to something else, another friend can use it.”

All Children’s School staff will:
- Provide limits in a calm, consistent, and respectful manner, which allows the child to grow in self-control and self-esteem.
- Respond to a child’s challenging behavior, including physical aggression, in a manner that provides for the safety of the child and the others in the classroom.
- Help children learn to identify both positive and negative emotions, as well as to express them appropriately.
• Work with children to develop conflict resolution skills necessary to solve their disagreements in an appropriate manner.
• Help children express and acknowledge their choices.
• Help children describe problems, evaluate their actions, verbalize alternatives, and consider the perspective of others. Children are guided and supported as they learn to accept the natural consequences of their actions.

This approach includes positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior, redirection, reminders of classroom rules, modifying the classroom environment and/or daily schedule, and providing a supervised quiet time for the child to gain control. After a quiet time, the teacher invites the child to rejoin the group and reminds the child of the relevant expectations for the activity in progress (1D.4-8, 1E, 1F.1-3).

EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

The Children’s School’s Emergency Action Plan specifies four safety levels including one for normal operations, one for cases when children need to be kept away from a certain area (e.g., a hazardous spill that needs to be cleaned, an accident, etc.), one for emergencies that require a lockdown / containment away from windows (e.g., a chemical spill from the nearby railroad, etc.), and one for evacuation (e.g., in case of a fire). Our first evacuation sites are the reflection garden, parking lot, or outdoor classroom. For longer evacuations, we go to the Cohen University Center or The Cyert Center for Early Education. In the event of an emergency in which Carnegie Mellon main campus facilities require evacuation, we will be relocated to the Entertainment Technology Center (ETC) located at 700 Technology Drive, Pittsburgh, PA for shelter and safety. In the event of a long-term evacuation, we contact families as quickly as possible via phone to notify them of the plan for reuniting them with their children. If phone service is not available, Carnegie Mellon officials use local broadcasting services to make announcements regarding status and procedures.

In an emergency or time-critical situation when the Director is not present or reachable by phone, the most senior Administrative Team member present will serve as the Acting Director. If neither the Director nor either of the Educational Administrators is present at the time of an emergency, the most senior teacher present will decide collaboratively with other staff on a course of action.
Hand-washing Song
(sung to the tune of “Row, Row, Row Your Boat”)

Slide, slide, slide your hands,

Make a bridge like this.

Don’t forget both bracelets,

Then you have to twist!
Lifting Safety: Tips to Help Prevent Back Injuries (familydoctor.org)

Have you checked the object before you try to lift it?
• Test every load before you lift by pushing the object lightly with your hands or feet to see how easily it moves. This tells you about how heavy it is.
• Remember, a small size does not always mean a light load.

Is the load you want to lift packed correctly?
• Make sure the weight is balanced and packed so it won't move around.
• Loose pieces inside a box can cause accidents if the box becomes unbalanced.

Is it easy to grip this load?
• Be sure you have a tight grip on the object before you lift it.
• Handles applied to the object may help you lift it safely.

Is it easy to reach this load?
• To avoid hurting your back, use a ladder when you're lifting something over your head.
• Get as close as you can to the load. Slide the load towards you if you can.
• Don't arch your back--avoid reaching out for an object.
• Do the work with your legs and your arms—not your back.

What's the best way to pick up an object?
• Use slow and smooth movements. Hurried, jerky movements can strain the muscles in your back.
• Keep your body facing the object while you lift it. Twisting while lifting can hurt your back.
• Keep the load close to your body. Having to reach out to lift and carry an object may hurt your back.
• "Lifting with your legs" should be done only when you can straddle the load. To lift with your legs, bend your knees, not your back, to pick up the load. Keep your back straight.
• Try to carry the load in the space between your shoulder and your waist. This puts less strain on your back muscles.

How can I avoid back injuries?
• Warm up. Stretch your legs and your back before lifting anything.
• Pace yourself. Take many small breaks between lifts if you are lifting a number of things.
• Don't overdo it--don't try to lift something too heavy for you. If you have to strain to carry the load, it's too heavy.
• Make sure you have enough room to lift safely. Clear a space around the object before lifting it.
• Look around before you lift, and look around as you carry. Make sure you can see where you are walking. Know where you are going to put down the load.
• Avoid walking on slippery, uneven surfaces while carrying something.
• Don't rely on a back belt to protect you. It hasn't been proven that back belts can protect you from back injury.
• Get help before you try to lift a heavy load. Use a dolly or a forklift if you can.