



## **MISSION STATEMENT:**

Five Mile River Nursery School provides a warm, nurturing, and engaging atmosphere allowing children to be creative and adventurous learners. Our school focuses on the development of the whole child: intellectual, social, emotional, and physical. Our goal is to inspire self-confidence, a love of learning, and meaningful engagement with the world.

## **VISION STATEMENT:**

We believe that our work affects the future of society by developing creative thinkers that are confident, competent, and collaborative; lifetime learners who will value the natural world, all peoples, and cultures. They will use knowledge constructed through discovery to make intellectual sense of the world, and will embrace an individual, as well as a collective, sense of purpose.



**Dear Families:**

Welcome to the Five Mile River Nursery School!

Our newly revised Family Handbook provides information about all our programs and policies in two parts:

**Part 1:** Covers all our program policies and the program curriculum.

**Part 2:** Provides a complete packet of the state-required forms that must be updated yearly and kept on file at the school. **These forms must be correctly completed and returned to the school by August 15<sup>th</sup> for all programs, or your child will not be allowed to attend school.**

The Handbook should be used as a source book to get to know the policies of the Five Mile River Nursery School. It is important that you familiarize yourself with all the information contained in the Handbook. Five Mile River Nursery School will make every effort to provide this information to each family in a language they understand, if needed. You acknowledge your understanding of our policies when you sign and return the Family Contract contained in the forms packet included with the Handbook. Our goal is to provide a network of support for each family we serve, with workshops and articles to help with all your concerns, and form a strong bond in partnership with you, to make your experience of preschool as rewarding as it is for your child.

**FMRNS Nursery School Council:** The names of the Nursery School Council will be distributed at the Family Meeting in September. The Council is the governing body of the school and is comprised of church and family representatives. The Council meets monthly and meetings are open to all interested parties.

Tuition checks should be made payable to Five Mile River Nursery School and sent to 5 Pennoyer Street, Rowayton, CT 06853. You may also deliver them to the school office. Payment may also be made by credit card with a 3.5% convenience fee. Please contact the office if you have any question about your bill.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the **Director at (203) 838-4266**. We look forward to getting to know you and your children.

**Sincerely,**

**The Five Mile River Nursery School Staff and Council**



# FIVE MILE RIVER NURSERY SCHOOL FAMILY HANDBOOK

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**Note: The Forms contained in a separate packet include the Family Contract, Emergency Form, Health Forms, and Permission Form and must be completed and returned prior to school opening, by August 15, or your child will not be allowed to attend school.**

## FIVE MILE RIVER NURSERY SCHOOL \*2021 - 2022 CALENDAR NOTES ON SCHOOL DAYS\*

Please send your completed health, emergency and other forms to the school by August 15<sup>th</sup>. Children may not attend school without an adult caregiver until all forms are correctly completed and on file at the school.

A Meet and Greet will be held in small classroom groups and by appointment, on the playground the morning of **Wednesday September 8<sup>th</sup>** and a **Welcome Meeting for families** will also be held **Wednesday, September 8, at 7:30 PM** to meet the teachers and Nursery Council Members.

**Orientation Day** with families for **2s, 3s, PM 3s/4s PreK, 4's/PreK and 5s/PreK is Thursday, September 9<sup>th</sup>**, which will be a regular full day for all classes. Families are invited to stay to visit the classroom with their child, to meet with the Director for coffee in the Fellowship Hall, and to remain as long as necessary to help transition their child smoothly into the program. Children may not be left at school without completing the proper health, emergency and permission forms prior to the first day of class.

Thereafter, children will be greeted at the entrance to the program, and escorted to their classroom or the playground.

**Children in the 2s class who have not yet turned 2, may attend with an adult caregiver until their birthday. Families will be encouraged to leave their child in the classroom, but must remain in the building. If families wish, they may stay in the classroom a maximum of 12 half-hour visits.**

**BE SURE TO CHECK THE CALENDARS POSTED IN YOUR CHILD'S CLASSROOM OR ON BRIGHTWHEEL OR THE FRONT BULLETIN BOARD IN CASE OF CHANGES TO THIS SCHEDULE:**

<b>August 15</b>	<b>All completed health and emergency forms are due at school</b>
September 1 – September 8	Staff return for classroom set-up
September 1	Nursery School Council Meeting 8PM via Zoom
September 2	Staff Meeting 12 PM Review of Policies
September 6	<b>NO SCHOOL</b> - Labor Day
<b>September 7</b>	<b>NO SCHOOL</b> – Rosh Hashanah
<b>September 8</b>	<b>Meet and Greet for children and families to meet teachers on the playground – by appointment only.</b>
<b>September 8</b>	<b>7:30 - 9 PM Welcome Meeting for Families</b>
<b>September 9</b>	<b>First full day of school; ‘Orientation Day’ families are invited to transition their child into the program by visiting the classroom, having coffee in the Fellowship Hall with the director and council and remaining until their child is comfortable. No child may be left at school without completing all health, emergency and permission forms prior to the first day.</b>
<b>September 15</b>	<b>Lunch Bunch and Enrichment begin</b>
<b>September 16</b>	<b>NO SCHOOL</b> – Yom Kippur

<b>October 4</b>	<b>NO SCHOOL</b> – Norwalk PS Closed for Professional Development
October 6	Nursery School Council Meeting 8 PM via Zoom
October 13	Workshop on Kindergarten Readiness: CTEDLS and Curriculum and Assessment with the Director 7:30 PM via Zoom
October 22	Annual Fall Fundraiser Party (Date subject to change)
November 2	<b>NO SCHOOL</b> - Election Day-Family Conferences
November 3	Nursery School Council Meeting 8 PM via Zoom
November 6	Harvest Fair 11 AM - 3 PM
<b>November 11</b>	<b>NO SCHOOL</b> - Veteran's Day
November 16	Picture Day
November 18	"Sensory Processing: How it Impacts Behaviors and Influences Learning." "Workshop with Jane Erbe, OTR/L 8 PM via Zoom
<b>November 24, 25, 26</b>	<b>NO SCHOOL</b> - Thanksgiving
December 1	Nursery School Council Meeting TBD
<b>December 17</b>	<b>Early Closing at Noon</b> ~ Staff Christmas Luncheon
<b>December 20 - January 1</b>	<b>NO SCHOOL</b> - Christmas and New Year Recess
December 20, 21, 22	Vacation Camp – 9:30 am -1 PM (\$55 per day)
January 5	Nursery School Council Meeting TBD
January 7	Staff Meeting: Prepare for Open House!
<b>January 7</b>	<b>ENROLLMENT FORMS DUE</b> for returning families
<b>January 8</b>	<b>Open House and Registration 2 PM—All currently enrolled families must submit their applications by January 7th</b>
<b>January 17</b>	<b>NO SCHOOL</b> - Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday
February 2	Nursery School Council Meeting TBD
<b>February 17 – 22*</b>	<b>NO SCHOOL</b> – President's Day Long Weekend *(Note that Norwalk PS are closed 17-21; Stamford PS are closed 18-22 Darien PS are closed 18-25)
March 2	Ash Wednesday
March 9	Nursery School Council Meeting TBD
March DaDness!	Calling all Fathers, Grandfathers, Uncles, Big Brothers and significant male role models: Each classroom invites you to participate in March DaDness! Please plan to visit your child's class this month ~ remembering you are welcome to visit at any time!
<b>March 14 - 18</b>	<b>NO SCHOOL</b> - Spring Recess

March 14, 15, 16	Vacation Camp 9:30am - 1:00 PM (\$55 per day)
<b>March 31</b>	<b>NO SCHOOL</b> - Family Conferences (Thursday)
April 6	Nursery School Council Meeting TBD
<b>April 15</b>	<b>NO SCHOOL</b> - Good Friday
April 17	Easter Sunday 6:00 am Sunrise Service at Bayley Beach; 10am RUMC
<b>April 18</b>	<b>NO SCHOOL</b> – Easter Monday
<b>April 27</b>	<b>NO SCHOOL</b> – Staff Professional Development Day
May 2	Teacher Appreciation Day (all week) - bring a homemade card and a flower from your garden to your teacher!
May 4	Nursery School Council Meeting TBD
May 6	Annual FMRNS Art Show Preview 9 am, Cocktail Gala 7 PM (subject to change)
May 24	Last day of Lunch Bunch
May 25	<b>LAST DAY OF SCHOOL</b> PM 3s/4s, 4s/PreK and 5s/PreK Year-End Program @11:45am; All-School picnic at FMRNS, 12 noon. (subject to change)
May 26 - 27	No Camp – Teacher Clean-up days
May 29	Decorate your little red wagons and march in the Rowayton Memorial Day Parade with FMRNS. Meet at the Rowayton Community Center by 12 noon.
<b>May 30</b>	<b>NO SCHOOL</b> -- Memorial Day
May 31 <sup>st</sup> – July 30	Nursery School Summer Program



## **1. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM PLAN - PHILOSOPHY & PURPOSE**

The Five Mile River Nursery School was founded to provide this community with a resource for the care and nurture of its preschool children. The school is a non-denominational, non-profit weekday program operated by the Rowayton United Methodist Church. Our goal is to provide each family with a network of individualized support, and form a strong bond in partnership with you, to make families' experience of preschool as rewarding as it is for children. We will make every attempt to communicate with each family in a language they understand.



We hope to create a **flexible** framework of varied materials, and an atmosphere of love and acceptance, in a partnership between families and staff that will set the stage for discovery and growth. We believe that when we allow a child to make appropriate choices, we are building a firm foundation for later learning and which prepares them for the ever-changing world.

By looking at the children individually, we encourage autonomy and support them in all areas of development: social, emotional, intellectual and physical; thereby achieving a positive self-image for each child. The classroom will be arranged to meet all areas of development in a clean and safe place for the child to grow. The day plan will be **flexible**, however, to meet and enhance the diverse needs and interests of the children, which includes their cultural, language and developmental differences. We will structure the environment, but not the processes of play itself.

We plan to interrelate each year of the program to give continuity to your child's preschool education. The four-year-old class will build on the experiences of the three-year-old class, as the threes will build on the twos. More emphasis will be made on developing listening skills and following directions as the child progresses from year to year. Through puzzles, art, dramatic and sensorimotor experiences, the children will be exposed to pre-reading, pre-writing and math skills. All cognitive instruction will be introduced according to children's individual readiness. A major portion of the daily plans will include outdoor experiences to promote large motor development.

Teaching staff are assigned each program year to work specifically with each class of Twos, Threes PreK, Fours PreK or Five PreK children, day-to-day and stably over time.

## PROGRAM CURRICULUM

We do not follow exactly any one curriculum, but rather an evolving mix of what we feel is the best of many. We use the ideas of the Bank Street Method, the Creative Curriculum, and the Emergent Curriculum. We incorporate the theories of psychologist Lev Vygotsky and his idea of "scaffolding" learning to help children achieve beyond their "zone of proximal development;" and of psychologist and educational theorist Howard Gardner and his ideas of teaching to the "Multiple Intelligences" of each child. We try to use art, nature, music, movement, math, language, logic, and inter- and intra-personal relations in our approach with children. Both child-initiated and teacher-initiated experiences will be offered in a responsive classroom set up for exploration and discovery. Learning experiences will be presented individually and will be whole group and small group activities.

We implement the State of Connecticut Early Learning Development Standards by following an intentional process of planning for the observation of children's development as it naturally occurs in the learning experiences of the classroom. Using the CT Documentation Observation Teaching System (CT DOTS), we observe both planned and natural or routine experiences and also use family input to assess children's developmental progress. We incorporate learning strands from the CT ELDS which are cross-walked with the Common Core standards for Kindergarten. We reflect on our observations, and then plan strategies for supporting children in subsequent themes as children master the benchmarks of development and emerge into successive levels of growth.

Teaching young children is a creative process that addresses all aspects of a child's development: social-emotional, creative, physical, and cognitive. Cognitive development includes: sense of self as a learner; decision-making (executive function); ability to delay gratification through self-regulation; social studies; science; math, and literacy.

We arrange the rooms to promote interest centers and equip each center thematically so that children explore materials that promote the development of large and small motor, imaginative and cognitive skills. From the Bank Street Method, we take the idea that cognitive growth cannot be separated from the growth of social and personal processes. The school is an active community, connected to the social world of which it is a part, rather than an isolated place for "learning lessons." We take trips out into our community: to local merchants, the fire station, the post office and around town by bus. Our fire chief and local community police officer come to school to visit us, as do the dental hygienist and a local farmer.



From the Creative Curriculum we incorporate the stages of development: to trust others outside the family, to gain independence and self-control, and to take initiative and be assertive in socially acceptable ways. We enhance and foster this development by following a consistent schedule, making contact with each child during the day, giving them developmentally appropriate materials to use, praising their efforts and allowing them to explore the environment freely. We also encourage dramatic pretend experiences, which help them channel their frustrations, plan and work constructively with peers, and see tasks through to completion.

We also use the Emergent Curriculum; which is a curriculum that develops topics from children's interests, experiences, family and community culture. Throughout the year we will explore a variety of work topics with the children. Some topics include: shapes and colors, apples, fall, winter, spring, nature, the weather, seasons, feelings, pumpkins, multicultural celebrations, family traditions, transportation, safety, community helpers, fire prevention, the post office, letters, numbers, fairy and folk tales, nursery rhymes, insects and spiders, bears, geography (where we live in the world), our bodies, food, nutrition, our senses, seeds, flowers, birds, farm, baby animals, sea life, and parades. Many of our topics are selected from the Core Knowledge Sequence for Kindergarten.

We also allow the curriculum to emerge from the children's experiences. For example, if a child recently visited Florida and saw sea turtles, we will turn the classroom into a study of turtles for the day. Perhaps a child is fascinated with Peter Pan. We'll read the story together and put on a play with props that we made.

Our goal is for each child to develop a frame of reference of ideas, knowledge, **problem solving**, and motor and social skills that facilitate concept formation, language development and sensory discrimination, and will prepare her for a lifetime of learning.

## FMRNS PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The program objectives are to develop self-esteem, independence, listening skills; stimulate imagination and creativity; develop social skills, particularly inner controls; develop gross motor skills; and develop fine motor control; and develop cognitive skills based on individual readiness.

We develop self-esteem through specific praise and providing opportunity for a sense of achievement with developmentally appropriate art experiences, such as collages for 3s, or more detailed work involving cutting, pasting, and drawing for 4s. Creative experiences are designed to draw out the original skills and thinking of the child, and are not teacher determined crafts.

We develop independence by offering children an appropriate choice of learning experience centers such as puzzle table, clay table, easel, creative art, blocks, and housekeeping.

We work on listening skills at circle time, story time and with music. We work on social skills and inner controls with positive supervision of free choice in the classroom and on the playground by suggesting ways to share and take turns. We stress **problem solving** among children, rather than enforcement by adults.

We help stimulate imagination by providing the means of imaginative experiences with blocks, clay, paint, sand, and a housekeeping corner, rather than providing "entertainment." Teachers are available and alert to the trends of the children's imagination and offer suggestions to promote discovery by a naturally curious child. Creative experiences are designed to allow children the opportunity to express their own ideas in all areas of the program including the arts/media, dramatic play, music, language and movement.

We balance the day with active and quiet play, with sensitivity to the needs of the individual child. Our "Siesta" rest time is offered after Enrichment from 2:15 until 3:15 PM.

**Healthy practices are promoted with nutritious, organic snacks; routines for self-care such as proper handwashing and toileting; and learning basic self-help skills such as dressing, safety, and responsibility for clean-up and maintenance within the classroom community.**

**No foods are served that may present a choking hazard for children under 4, including but not limited to: Grapes, Hot Dogs, Carrots, Pretzels, Popcorn. Food may be cut into small pieces to prevent choking.**

Gross motor control is encouraged through play on outdoor apparatus such as overhead ladder and climbing wall, as well as running, throwing, jump rope, tricycles and other equipment stored in the shed.

Fine motor control is developed by daily opportunities to use numerous types of **art media**: brushes, glue, crayons, markers and scissors. A woodworking bench is available for work with hammer, nails, glue and saw. Projects involving weaving or "sewing" are also included.

An individualized program to develop cognitive skills such as color, number and letter recognition is available through games, puzzles, and pictures on the wall, circle time talks, and stories. Concepts such as shapes, quantity, opposites, and rhyming are explored in projects, puzzles, stories and songs. Science is investigated with stories, projects, field trips, planting and cooking. Areas of investigation include measurement, nature, weather, and the seasons.

Language learning experiences will provide opportunities for planned and spontaneous conversations, book reading in all genres such as poetry, fiction, non-fiction and songs. Motivations for writing, such as original story telling, "signing in," labeling classroom materials, making lists and signs, will be used to help develop phonemic awareness and written communication skills.

## FIELD TRIPS AND PLANNED ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

Each year, teachers plan special enrichment activities and field trips to enhance children's learning.

When they are ready, the Twos and Threes take local walking trips to Pinkney Park and the village of Rowayton. The Fire Chief will also drive a fire truck into our playground during Fire Safety week in October. They will dig for fiddler crabs or look for signs of the change of seasons at Pinkney Park.



The Fours and Fives may plan a special enrichment experience or Field Trip each month to tie-in with each topic.

Special programs may include:

- A visit to the Nature Center to learn to make Apple Cider
- A walk to the Post Office to mail Valentines
- A walk around the neighborhood to look at our community (the bank, hardware store, pizza parlor, market etc.)
- A walk to Pinkney Park to look for signs of the seasons
- A walk to the Five Mile River to search for Fiddler Crabs
- A trip to the Nature Center to learn about Baby Animals
- A visit from the Critter Caravan to touch and learn about animals
- A visit to the Maritime Aquarium to "Sense the Sea Life"
- A visit to the Wheels Bus Garage
- A visit from the Rowayton Fire Department
- A visit from the Norwalk Police
- A train ride from Rowayton Station to Stamford and back
- A trip to the Zoo

Our Field Trip and Enrichment plan is guided by the interests of the children and may vary from year to year. Please consult with your teacher about being a chaperone on a field trip, transporting children, or whether it is appropriate to bring a sibling along.

Staff may take children on walking trips in the neighborhood simply to discover the elements of community that surround us. On all Field Trips, staff carry with them First Aid, Meds Kits, as well as Emergency Information, cell phones and walkie-talkies.

## TWOS PROGRAM



The “Twos Together” is a two-year-old drop-off program. Families and caregivers may help to transition their child with a **maximum of 12 visits to the classroom**. \* We encourage families to separate from their child by leaving the classroom within a few minutes. If the child has not yet turned two, families must remain on the premises. Families or caregivers are invited to the conference room, to talk with each other families, caregivers and the Director about any concerns families may have. We may also discuss articles of interest shared with families through the school newsletter. Family Engagement will continue if there is interest in the conference room with the Director, where we will discuss a variety of topics of concern to families such as: separating, toileting, sleep, appropriate educational practices, and discipline.

\*(unless Covid restrictions are in place, in which case, one family member may drop off their under-three-year-old in the classroom.)

There will be a maximum of 8 children in the group with two teachers. Children under three years of age in our Twos Program will be supervised by sight and sound at all times

A diapering station will be located within the classroom, designated for use by the group in the classroom only. It is near the classroom sink which is dedicated to handwashing only. The diapering procedure will be as follows:

- The diapering area shall be an elevated, sturdy changing table made of a non-porous surface equipped with a safety strap
- The diapering area will be covered with a disposable paper sheet that will be discarded immediately after use.
- The diapering area will be washed and disinfected after use.
- The hands of the staff and the child will be thoroughly washed before and after each diaper change.
- The staff will put on protective gloves.
- The soiled diaper will be changed and the child will be cleaned with wipes. The soiled diaper, wipes and changing paper will be disposed of in a plastic bag.
- Disposable diapers shall be discarded in the plastic bag into a covered receptacle immediately after diapering.
- Gloves will be removed and a new, clean diaper will be applied.
- Staff will wash their hands and the child’s hands.
- Diaper area will be washed.
- Diaper area will be disinfected.
- Changing paper will be replaced.
- Staff will wash their hands again and dry with a paper towel.
- If the child wears cloth diapers or cloth training pants, all the above procedures will be followed. After changing, the soiled clothing and diaper shall be placed in a sealed zip-lock bag and labeled with the child’s name. The families will remove the soiled clothing and diapers daily.

- Diapers will be checked periodically throughout the day, before and after transition to outdoor play and/or nap/rest time, and changed if wet or soiled.

Toys used for toddlers, including riding toys, shall be kept separate, washed and disinfected at least weekly and as needed.

Handwashing will be taught and performed according to the posted handwashing procedures—a minimum of 20 seconds. The cleaning, sanitization and disinfecting procedures will be as posted, according to NAEYC Cleaning, Sanitizing, and Disinfecting Frequency Table.

The two-year-old will begin to work independently and begin to socialize with his or her peers.

## **OBJECTIVES**

1. To introduce families and children to the Five Mile River Nursery School faculty, program and facility
2. To provide opportunities for families to interact with children in a teaching environment over the course of a maximum of twelve half hour visits
3. To provide sensorimotor experiences for children
4. To introduce concepts of color, shape, relationship, self, community and culture
5. To give children the opportunity to develop communication skills with adults and peers in order to foster a positive self-concept
6. To give children the opportunity to cooperate in groups to develop social skills
7. To give children the opportunity to develop small and large muscle skills
8. To give families the opportunity to develop a network of support for each other, supplemented by articles of interest to families.
9. To help families encourage independence, thinking, experimentation, and the creative process in their children

## **THERE WILL BE 2 TEACHERS FOR THE MAXIMUM OF 8 CHILDREN IN THE GROUP. THE TEACHERS WILL:**

1. Organize interest corners for the topic of the day.
2. Select books and songs to tie-in with the topic, and to reflect rich language and vocabulary appropriate for the age and development of the class. In order to help children get the most out of literature, we will reread the featured book of the prior week, and give families advance notice of the literature for the coming week, so they may get the same book from the library to read at home.
3. Prepare and serve an organic snack to children

## **INTEREST CORNERS WILL INCLUDE:**

**CREATIVE EXPRESSION & ART** Art materials for drawing, cutting, collage, gluing, painting, stamping that may be used to experiment with or to create a craft that requires help from a caregiver, such as a toy or costume – masks, puppets, musical instruments. Children will be encouraged to explore all the art supplies so that they may develop a thorough understanding of the qualities of each material and how they may be used in a unique or creative way.

**MATHEMATICAL EXPERIENCES** Manipulatives (sewing cards, stringing beads), Rotating Puzzles, Patterns and Games.

**DRAMATIC & SENSORY PLAY** A corner will be set up with play-dough on the table, rotating costumes or props so that the corner may become a Post Office, fire station, restaurant, church, temple, beauty parlor or hospital; and a sensory table with water, shaving cream, finger-paint or other things to feel.

**BOOK/READING** There is a corner with a variety of books relating to the current topic.

**MUSIC** Music for listening, singing and dancing.

Children may select an interest corner in which to work. Children's current attention span will be respected and encouraged. The teachers may sit on the floor and build with blocks, sit at a table and work on a puzzle, and will work to develop a trust relationship with child.

## TWOS SCHEDULE OF DAY PLAN

9:30 – 11:15 am All teachers, families or caregivers and children wash their hands according to the posted hand washing procedure, before choosing any of the available centers. Snack will be available as a center. Wash hands for organic snacks offered between 10-10:45.

11:15am Clean-up, story, and song

11:30 – 12 PM **PICK UP ON THE PLAYGROUND OR FELLOWSHIP HALL FOR INDOOR AND OUTDOOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES** We will enjoy outdoor and Indoor gross motor experiences and pick up from the playground or Fellowship Hall.

Throughout the course of the year, the teachers will create for each child an individual portfolio using photographs, anecdotal observations, and work samples, which will be arranged according to 8 domains of development: Cognition, Social and Emotional, Physical Health and Development, Language and Literacy, Creative Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. The portfolio will be transitioned with your child to the 3s, 4s and 5s programs, so a record of your child's development will be maintained throughout your child's preschool experience.

## THREES PROGRAM



The three-year-old program is designed to promote socialization skills while providing an environment for discovery and exploration of music, art, science, math, social studies, and large and small motor skills.

**CURRICULUM** Teachers plan a daily language-focused experience, math and/or science focused experience, fine motor/sensory experience, and art experience. Weekly topics could include Doctor/Veterinarian, Transportation, Our Community, Instruments/Movement, Friendships, All About Me, and Origin of Holidays. Curriculum goals include:

**SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT** Develop social skills through whole group and class participation, conversations, exploration of similarities/differences, exercising appropriate manners, and cooperation.

**LITERACY/LANGUAGE** Encourage communication with others and strengthen word knowledge through a language-rich environment to foster children's development of early literacy skills, achieved through storytelling, conversations, writing, opportunities to identify letters and words to expand their vocabulary, and exposure to other languages and cultures through games, storytelling, music, cooking and art.

**MATHEMATICS** Expose children to counting, numerical recognition and reasoning, spatial relationships, as well as identifying and creating patterns. These skills are achieved through block-building, stringing beads, and puzzle assembly, as well as calendar and art experiences. Manipulatives teach the children to sort, order, and classify. We encourage **problem-solving** skills through sorting, patterns, counting, and games.

**SOCIAL STUDIES/EXPLORATIONS** By exploring and experiencing the world around them, including the local community, the children obtain information about themselves and their families. We visit the local post office, fire station, and other local merchants.

**PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT** Significant uninterrupted time is spent outdoors where large motor

development is encouraged through running, climbing, jumping, throwing, riding, swinging, and exploratory walks.

## THREES SCHEDULE OF DAY PLAN

### 9:30am ARRIVAL IN THE CLASSROOM

Each child is greeted as they hang up their belongings, wash their hands, and get ready to start the day.

### 9:30-10:15 CHILD-DIRECTED CENTER TIME

After we come in from the playground, children and staff will wash their hands according to the posted hand washing procedure. We will make available various materials such as blocks, puzzles, play-dough, paints, markers and paper, trucks, books, creative art, and a housekeeping area (dishes and pans, dolls and dress-up props) for the children. They may freely choose where in the room and with what materials they would like to work. We will circulate throughout the room to facilitate the experiences (changing paper at the painting station, getting out more materials if needed, offering encouragement, etc.). Once they are comfortable with the routine, we will offer a topic-based art experience during this free choice period.

We might do sponge printing, paper bag puppets, police hats or such depending on our topic. This art experience will be available on a voluntary basis because for many three-year-olds the freedom to choose is more of a learning experience.

### 9:30-11:30 ORGANIC SNACK

A **healthy snack** will be offered as a center choice every day. Adults sit with the children to enjoy conversation, **model healthy eating**, and polite behavior. We will attempt to bypass sugary snacks as much as possible. Some of our choices will be milk, juice, bread, muffins, crackers, vegetables and fruits. Some mornings we will make our snack. We have had great success making applesauce, vegetable soup, muffins, pasta, pretzels, pizza, French toast, and other foods with the children. They enjoy mixing, rolling, and dumping in ingredients and are very adventuresome when it comes to eating their own "creations."

### 10:30-11:15 OUTDOOR PLAYGROUND OR INDOOR GROSS MOTOR TIME

We make use of all the playground equipment. Children should be out in the fresh air every day, and we go out in every kind of weather! We will use the playground, go on walks in the neighborhood, or, if the weather is inclement, use our sensory playground equipment in the Fellowship Hall until 11:15 am every day.

### 11:45am CLEAN UP

We will all clean up together. It is important to see orderliness as a positive experience, i.e., we can always find the blocks if we put them back in the corner.

### 11:50-12 STORY TIME

We share a story and use the time to share other stories and ideas with each other. We will incorporate music at this time and other quiet listening activities like flannel board stories, finger games, etc.

### 12:00 PM PICK UP FROM THE CLASSROOM - And transition to Extended Day Programs

We invite guests to visit including our community policeman, the fire chief and others to enrich our understanding of the people who help us with concrete, hands-on experiences. We'll take advantage of all the fascinating resources in our community by walking to the Post Office, Fire Station, Boat Yard, River, and Park to observe all that takes place in the community.

The times indicated are a guide, not cast in concrete. We work with the rhythms of the class to introduce them to the world outside and to socialize well with each other, which develops their positive self-concept.

## PM 3s/4s PreK Program – Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum

is developed from the emergent interests of the children

**1:00 PM Arrival in the Classroom** Each child is greeted as they hang up their belongings, wash their hands, and get ready to start the day.

**1:00 – 2:30 Child Directed Center Time** We will make available various materials such as blocks, puzzles, play-dough, paints, markers and paper, trucks, books, creative art, and a dramatic play area. Children may freely choose where in the room and with what materials they would like to work. The teachers circulate throughout the room to facilitate the experiences.

**1:30- 2:00 Snack** will be offered during Center Time as a choice for the children who are hungry.

**2:30-2:45 Clean up and Story Time** with songs and listening games.

**2:45-3:30 Outdoor Playground or Indoor Gross Motor Time** Pick up will be from the playground or the Fellowship Hall.

## FOURS / PREK PROGRAM



The Fours / PREK programs are designed to prepare children for kindergarten by helping them grow as social beings: acquire confidence in body and mind with large and small motor skills; learn through creative art experiences and dramatic play; anticipate consequences; express feelings in an acceptable way and develop independence.

**CURRICULUM** Stories, music, center activities, science experiences, interactive technologies, cooking and field trips will be coordinated to introduce early literacy, social studies, math and science. Project topics could include Physics/Science Concepts, Diversity, Art Expression/Fine Art, Animals/Hibernation, Plants/Gardening, Taking Care of the Earth, Space, Architecture and more. Topics vary each year based on the interests of the group. Curriculum goals include:

**PERSONAL/SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT** Encourage positive interactions in conversations and cooperative play, self-discipline and respect for others.

**LITERACY/LANGUAGE** Encourage pre-reading skills through phonics, writing, participation in conversations and quiet reading corners and through exposure to other languages and cultures through games, storytelling, music, cooking and art.

**MATHEMATICS** Build on math concepts including matching and grouping objects, measuring, sorting, counting, patterning and comparing (e.g., *more or less*).

**SOCIAL STUDIES/SCIENCE** Provide opportunities to explore the community and encourage critical thinking about the natural world through observations, experimentation, predictions, measurement, cause and effect, and mapping.



**CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT** Provide opportunities that allow children to engage and express themselves musically, visually, spatially, and through dramatic play.

**PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT** Develop large motor skills and core muscle strength and stamina through running, jumping, climbing, balancing, rocking, swinging and exploratory walks. Develop small motor skills through writing, manipulating small objects, cutting and drawing.

**TECHNOLOGY** Enhance curriculum and experiences through interactive technologies.

## **FOURS / PREK SCHEDULE OF DAY PLAN**

### **FOR THE 4s/PREK CLASS:**

We will attempt to prepare children for formal education by enhancing their sense of accomplishment by making learning interesting, desirable, and exciting. Children learn best through hands-on experiences, exploration and discovery.

**9:15 – 10:15 am ARRIVAL ON THE PLAYGROUND OR FELLOWSHIP HALL FOR INDOOR AND OUTDOOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES.** We will gather outside to start the day. We will hang up our things on the fence and sign in to school. We will develop our physical selves through running, jumping, climbing, swinging, and tossing. When the weather is inclement, we will practice our gross motor and physical fitness and movements in the "big room" (church hall). Please wash your hands upon arrival in the building. We will also use this time for walking trips in the neighborhood.

### **10:15 am CLASS MEETING**

Upon arrival from the playground, we wash our hands according to the posted hand washing procedure before we sit on the carpet for our class meeting. The class meets briefly together to discuss what is available in which to participate at each center. The children learn to plan their activities for the day.

### **10:30 am ORGANIC SNACK**

We will offer a healthy, organic snack as a center choice each day after class meeting. Some choices are juice, bread, crackers, cheese, or fruits. We try to stay away from sugary snacks as much as possible. Sometimes we may make our own snacks, such as pizza, pretzels or vegetable soup. For days when we prepare something special, we may sit down together family-style.

### **10:15-11:45 CHILD-DIRECTED CENTERS AND SMALL GROUPS**

The children can move freely among the experiences that have been planned for them. They can participate in the science/math center, music center, writing, art, reading, or manipulative play areas. They can also visit the centers in the other PreK classroom such as block play, sensory table area, or dramatic play. The children also come together in small groups to work with teachers on planned learning experiences.

### **11:45 am CLEAN-UP TIME**

The child learns pride and respect for the classroom materials by helping to put everything back in its proper place. After clean-up we will get ready to leave by putting on our jackets and getting our backpacks.

### **11:45 - 12:00pm STORIES, SONGS AND MOVEMENT**

We will reflect on the day at a closing meeting and read a story or have a discussion of topic-related experiences. We will sometimes act out stories, use flannel boards, or have children dictate stories. The children learn to communicate verbally in front of their peers by sharing important events in their lives.

**NOON DISMISSAL—Pickup from the classroom. Please do not linger in the front hall. We will help to escort your child to your car for pick up at noon. If you need to speak to friends or teachers, please park in the Community Parking Lot accessible off of Wilson Avenue. Be sure to note your time of pickup when you arrive for the day on the sign in/out form.**

Our schedule is **flexible** and may change depending on the interests and tone of the group on a given day or at a given hour.

## FIVES / PREK PROGRAM

**CURRICULUM** The program is built on a developmentally appropriate, project-based curriculum, designed to further challenge your child's social, physical, academic, and creative development using the CT Early Learning and Development Standards as cross-walked with the Common Core Curriculum for Kindergarten. Our goal is for your child to experience intellectual joy while becoming an empowered, self-directed problem solver and life-long learner, all skills necessary for future academic and social success. Curriculum goals include:

### COGNITION

- Develop executive functioning, decision making, logic and reasoning, self-regulation and an effective approach to learning.

### PERSONAL/SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

- Encourage positive interactions in conversations and cooperative play, self-discipline, self-awareness, self-concept and respect for others.
- Recall and follow daily routines with little needed support, including adapting to changes

### LITERACY/LANGUAGE

- Increase vocabulary; understand homonyms, phonology and syllables
- Represent learning through creative expression, drawing and invented spelling
- Use rich descriptive language in peer interaction and in group settings
- Increase understanding of book/print concepts and conventional grammar

### MATHEMATICS

- Build on math concepts including counting, measuring, sorting, classifying and graphing
- Understand dimension and shapes, including 2D and 3D shapes
- Compare measurable attributes and describe the comparison
- Count to 100 by 1's and 10's
- Begin addition and subtraction

### SOCIAL STUDIES/SCIENCE

- Use scientific observation, investigation, documentation and data collection
- Pose and refine problems, hypothesize, predict outcomes and conduct experiments
- Sort and classify plants, animals and minerals
- Understand life cycles, the environment, weather and geography
- Understand similarities and differences between cultures
- Understand concepts of time
- Learn to take responsibility for self, classroom community and the larger community

### CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

- Provide opportunities that allow children to engage and express themselves through music, visual arts, dramatic play and dance
- Build understanding of the various arts including the use of descriptive attributes of the various arts

### PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT AND HEALTH

- Develop large motor skills and core muscle strength and stamina through running, jumping, climbing, balancing, swinging, throwing and exploratory walks
- Develop small motor skills through writing, manipulating small objects, cutting and drawing with control while using appropriate hand position

## FIVES / PREK SCHEDULE OF DAY PLAN

**9:00 am – 10:15 am ARRIVAL ON THE PLAYGROUND OR FELLOWSHIP HALL FOR INDOOR AND OUTDOOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES** We will meet on the playground (or the Fellowship Hall if the weather is inclement) to start our morning. We will take advantage of our neighborhood to take walks around the village to provoke a variety of studies. We will use our exploration to begin work in curriculum areas such as geography and mapping, social studies, and community, literacy and journaling, and math and science. In case of inclement weather, we will practice our gross motor skills in the "Big Room" (church hall). Please wash your hands upon arrival in the building.

### 10:15 CLASS MEETING

We will have a planning meeting about the work we have for the day. We will play memory and learning games, sing songs, and read from our chapter books.

### 10:15 – 11:45 am READING, CENTERS, SMALL GROUPS AND PROJECTS

We will come back to the classroom. Our morning routine will consist of hand-washing, question of the day, and class meeting. During class meeting we will read chapter books to tie in with our content area. After meeting we will have center choices to include snack, math, science, writing, and creative representation of our learning. Most topic areas will be projects based on ideas that emerge from children's questions, our walking trips together through the village, children's experiences they share with the group, and the books we read. Children will be expected to participate in the variety of choices offered and to work together as small and whole groups.

### 11:45 CLEAN UP AND MEETING

We will reflect on the day, read from our chapter books and get ready for lunch.

### 12:00 - 1:30 PM LUNCH

We will eat lunch together and enjoy conversation. After lunch we will go outside for pickup and transition to Enrichment programs.

## KINDERGARTEN – A Developmentally Appropriate Kindergarten

May be offered 12:15-5:15 PM

## EXTENDED DAY PROGRAMS

### EARLY MORNING STUDIO

**MONDAY - FRIDAY 8:30-9(5s)/9:15 (4s) or 9:30 (2s or 3s) / \$7.50 per day (5s) \$11.25 per day (4s) or \$15 per day (2s or 3s)**



An early morning enrichment program will be offered for 2s (in the 2s classroom, if there are a minimum of 3 children signed up. Please email [director@fmms.com](mailto:director@fmms.com) if you are interested.), 3s, 4s and 5s Mondays through Fridays at \$9 per day. Opportunities for independent exploration based on the emergent interests of the children will be offered each morning. Children will be escorted to their regular preschool program when it begins.

## LUNCH BUNCH

**MONDAY - FRIDAY 12:00 -1:30 PM / \$22.50 per day OR 12:15-1 PM \$11.25 per day**

### 12:00 - 1:00 PM

Children wash hands according to the posted hand washing procedure for lunch. We all sit down to eat lunch together. Each child puts the lunch they brought from home on a paper plate. Children are allowed to choose from whatever has been prepared for them, in any order. We encourage you to pack healthy choices. After each child has finished eating, they clean up their places. We then go to the carpet for quiet reading or center choices until all children are finished with their meals. Once all the children are finished, the teachers will read a story or play a quiet game with the children. Lunch Bunch is open to all children age 3 and up on a per day basis.

**PLEASE NOTE: For the safety of children with allergies, we maintain a nut free environment. DO NOT include any food product containing nuts, nut products, or foods processed with nuts, in your child's lunch.**

**No foods are served that may present a choking hazard for children under 4, including but not limited to: Grapes, Hot Dogs, Carrots, Pretzels, Popcorn. Food may be cut into small pieces to prevent choking.**

**1:00 - 1:30 PM**

We go outside. The children who will be leaving at 1:30 PM are picked up from the playground, or from the Fellowship Hall in case of inclement weather. The cost for this program is \$22.50 per day.

Families: If you are signing your child in for the afternoon, please bring them to their assigned classroom by 12:15 PM for lunch. The cost for Afternoon Lunch Bunch is \$11.25 per day

If there is interest, we will offer Lunch Bunch until 1:30 for 2-year-olds in their classroom. Please email [director@fmrns.com](mailto:director@fmrns.com) if you are interested.



**ENRICHMENT**

**Movement and Music MONDAYS** We will be exploring movement with music, making our own music, practicing yoga, and playing musical games.

1:30 - 2:30 PM / \$15 per day

**Ooey Goopy Art TUESDAYS** We will be exploring processes in art and learning about line, shape and color.

1:30 - 2:30 PM / \$15 per day



**Science and Math (STEAM) WEDNESDAYS** We will be discovering our world using scientific inquiry, learning the tools of science such as measurement and observation, and firming up foundational math skills such as sorting, grouping, patterning and counting. We will incorporate the disciplines of **STEAM** (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math) in our experiences.

1:30 - 2:30 PM / \$15 per day

**Drama Day THURSDAYS** We will be exploring storytelling by dictating and illustrating our own stories, as well as reading and acting out favorite and culturally important children's literature. We will use puppets, felt boards, art and food to learn all about books and authors.

1:30 - 2:30 PM / \$15 per day

**Yoga FRIDAYS** Children will be supervised by our regular substitutes while the teachers have their staff meeting on premises in the FMRNS Library. Please note we require a regular sign-up of a minimum of 6 children in order to have the enrichment program.

1:30 - 2:30 PM / \$15 per day

## **SIESTA Every day after Enrichment 2:30 – 3:30 / \$15 per day**

After our Enrichment portion of the day, we wash hands, use the bathroom, get our cozy towel or blanket, our water bottles and a book or a puzzle, we darken the room and we take a rest on our blue cots. We will listen to music or a story and have a chance to talk quietly with our friends. (Please note: a minimum of 3 children required to sign up in order to offer the 2:30-3:30 PM Siesta.)

All staff will support children through transitions from their program day, lunch and enrichment until 3:30 PM.

\*Sign up for one or as many sessions as you wish

\*Prices listed above are for FMRNS registered children; a registration fee of \$37.50 per child required for children not registered for preschool programs at FMRNS.

\*Any child age three and up, even non-FMRNS students may participate in Lunch Bunch and Enrichment, so bring a friend.

## **2. PAYMENT SCHEDULE**

\$750.00 Deposit due Feb. 1 for all programs

### **1-Day Two or Three-Year-Old Class \$2,000 per year:**

\$104.17 due in monthly installments beginning Mar 1<sup>st</sup> and ending Feb 1<sup>st</sup>

### **2-Day Two or Three-Year-Old Class \$4,000 per year:**

\$270.84 due in monthly installments beginning Mar 1<sup>st</sup> and ending Feb 1<sup>st</sup>

### **3-Day Two or Three-Year-Old Class \$5,500 per year:**

\$395.84 due in monthly installments beginning Mar 1<sup>st</sup> and ending Feb 1<sup>st</sup>

### **4-Day Two or Three-Year-Old Class) Class \$6,900 per year:**

\$512.50 due in monthly installments beginning Mar 1<sup>st</sup> and ending Feb 1<sup>st</sup>

### **5-Day Two or Three-Year-Old Class \$8,500 per year:**

\$645.84 due in monthly installments beginning Mar 1<sup>st</sup> and ending Feb 1<sup>st</sup>

### **5-Day Fours \$8,500 per year:**

\$645.84 due in monthly installments beginning Mar 1<sup>st</sup> and ending Feb 1<sup>st</sup>

### **5-Day Fives Program Class \$10,975 per year:**

\$852.09 due in monthly installments beginning Mar 1<sup>st</sup> and ending Feb 1<sup>st</sup>

### **Kindergarten \$11,275 per year**

\$877.09 due in monthly installments beginning Mar 1<sup>st</sup> and ending Feb 1<sup>st</sup>

**A 3.5% discount may be taken for tuition paid in full by May 1<sup>st</sup>.**

**PLEASE RETAIN THE PAYMENT SCHEDULE FOR YOUR RECORDS.**

Application fee, tuition deposits, and first tuition installments are non-refundable. **Refunds of tuition after withdrawal from the program will be on a per-diem basis at the discretion of the Nursery School Council and will only be issued as a credit toward future use of FMRNS programs.** Any returned check will be subject to a \$20 service fee. Families must provide the school with credit card information so any past-due payments will be charged to their credit card.

Families unable to keep current with tuition payments after 60 days past due, must make arrangements for payment with the Nursery School Council, and after 90 days past due, be suspended or withdraw from the program.

Tuition checks should be addressed to the Five Mile River Nursery School and mailed to 5 Pennoyer Street, Rowayton, CT 06853, Attn: Director. You may also hand deliver your check to the Director's box in the church library or to the office, located on the second floor. **Payment may also be made by MasterCard, Visa, American Express and/or Discover Card with a 3.5% convenience fee.**

Please provide your credit card information on the Family Contract included with your health and emergency forms.

The **\$75** application fee for nursery school entitles families to use the Extended-Day program and the Summer program. Children not registered for nursery school must pay a **\$37.50** extended-day registration fee per child and fill out a registration form indicating the days and times desired. Classes are available a la carte. Pick and choose days that are best for your schedule. Children must be at least 3 years old to enroll in these drop-off classes. Extended Day Drop off Twos may be offered if there is enough interest in the program.

<b>Programs</b>	<b>AM classes Monday - Friday</b>	<b>PM Classes Monday -Thursday</b>	<b>Fridays PM Classes may join Extended Day</b>
<b>Ext. AM Studio</b>	5s (1/2 hour) 8:30-9:00 \$7.50/session	4s (3/4 hour) 8:30-9:15 \$11.25/session	2s or 3s (1 hour) 8:30-9:30 \$15/session
<b>Lunch Bunch</b>	12:00-1:30 (1-1/2 hours) AM Classes \$22.50/session	12:15-1:00 (3/4 hour) PM Classes \$11.25/session	
<b>Enrichment</b>	1:30-2:30 \$15/session	3:30-4:30 \$15/session* except Fridays	*Minimum 3 children req.
<b>Siesta</b>	2:30-3:30 \$15/session	4:30-5:30 \$15/session* except Fridays	*Minimum 3 children req.

Families who wish to apply for Financial Aid should contact the Council at [director@fmrns.com](mailto:director@fmrns.com) for an application. Applications for Financial Aid are considered on a case-by-case basis by a subcommittee of the Council.

## **LATE PICK UP FEE POLICY**

**THERE IS A LATE PICK-UP FEE OF \$40 PER HOUR, which will be charged after the caregiver is 15 minutes late and, thereafter at the rate of \$1.50 per minute, for any child left after closing (or other times when Extended Day is not in session).**

Late fees will be charged beginning the second instance of late pickup and the rate will be doubled at each successive occurrence. Children not picked up after their program ends for the day will be charged for the next program increment (Lunch Bunch \$22.50; Enrichment until 2:30: \$15 or Enrichment until 3:30 PM: \$15).

We must receive your cancellation one day in advance, or receive notice that your child is sick by 10am, or you will be charged for the extended day program. Children remaining on the premises past

pick up time will be brought to the front vestibule and will be supervised by 2 staff members over the age of 18: teachers and/or an administrator.

## **LATE PAYMENT POLICY**

Families failing to pay in a timely manner will be notified of their default and given a forty-five (45) day period to bring their account up to date. If tuition remains unpaid after the forty-five (45) day period has expired, a late charge of \$25.00 will be assessed for each week the tuition remains delinquent. Failure to make any payments may result in the loss of your child's space in the class to another child and termination of this contact (without refunding prior payments, if any).

If the family withdraws the child from enrollment at FMRNS at any time after September 1st, the family remains obligated under this contract for the full year's tuition unless the child's place at FMRNS is filled by another child, in which case the family's monetary obligations under this contract shall decrease pro rata.

FMRNS shall not be obligated to mitigate a family's damages or required to accept a student to replace a student who withdraws from the school. FMRNS shall not be liable to return any pro rata to a family which has withdrawn their child from enrollment or to a family for which FMRNS has terminated this contract unless and until a replacement family has paid the tuition for their child.

There is also no reimbursement in the case of absence because of illness or other cause. It is agreed that the school may, in its absolute discretion, abrogate this contract at any time, at which time the parents will be liable for the prorated tuition, and thereafter, all liabilities hereunder shall cease.

The FMRNS outstanding balances procedures are outlined below:

- The original invoice will be emailed and must be paid within 30 days to avoid the late fee
- A reminder will be emailed at 45 days, and also a printed letter will be hand delivered to the family
  - Families may contact us to determine an individualized, adjusted payment plan.
  - Families may explore scholarship opportunities.
  - Extended-day participation is suspended until outstanding balance is brought up to date.
- A certified letter will be mailed at 60 days.
- A member of the FMRNS Council will call the family after 75 days.
- At 90 days past due, the FMRNS Council will initiate an in-person meeting and letter to discuss potential student withdrawal.
- After 90 days past due, a letter will be mailed to notify the family that the child will not be considered in the applicant pool for the following program year.
- A third part collection agency will be contacted to resolve the debt.

## **3. OPERATING POLICIES**

### **ACCESS TO FACILITY**

We are always happy to greet families and offer a word of welcome and farewell at drop off and pick up each day, if possible. For extended conversations about your child, we will make an appointment for a private conference at any mutually convenient time. If you plan to remain on the premises after drop off, we ask that you park in the community parking lot and walk the block to school, so as to help facilitate room on the street for other families to arrive.

As a consequence of the Coronavirus pandemic, we have been greeting families at the front entrance or at the playground gate, and escorting children in to the program, in order to minimize the exposure of the virus to the school community. We will continue this practice to facilitate drop off and pick up. Presuming that families will again be allowed in to the building, we would like to invite families to visit us on an individual basis.

Families will be given the code to the key pad at the front door verbally at the Family Meeting each year when it changes. Please be attentive to the safety and security of our children, families and staff, by checking that the door is securely locked when you close it. The door may be locked by lifting and lowering the handle as you leave.

Families are welcome on the premises at any time during the day or week. Please arrange to visit your child's classroom to share the experience of your child's classroom. We love to have "Mystery Guests" visit us to share a special talent or skill as well. Share your heritage, your woodworking skill, your music, or your friendly presence and help us solve some puzzles, or build with blocks!

It is important that you speak to your child's teacher before you plan an experience for your child's classroom because we want to fulfill NAEYC Accreditation Criteria for Developmentally Appropriate Practice. Information regarding best practices for children is available from the school through the Director, from workshops presented by the Nursery School Council or from research articles and book excerpts distributed in cubbies, by email or posted on bulletin boards.

Families will be encouraged to separate from their children in order to allow for growth in independence. Families do not regularly assist in the classroom but are involved in the operation of the school through the Five Mile River Nursery School Council, a sub-committee of the Rowayton United Methodist Church, which has a designated representative on the church's Life and Ministry Council (see Organizational Chart). Families are also welcomed into the classroom to share family or religious traditions, a particular talent, a story, or simply to observe the class day. **We need your help in our classrooms using the NAEYC Observation Form as a way for us to reflect on our environment and practices. Please call the office to reserve a time at your convenience.** Families are also asked to transport and accompany the class on field trips.

We consider families important partners with us in planning for children's development and learning. Our first conference is designed as a conversation to discuss your knowledge of your child and what we have observed in school. Together we will review the developmental continuum in the domains of development (Cognitive, Social, Creative and Physical) and plan our mutual goals for your child's school experiences for the year.

Mothers with infants who need to breastfeed will find an inviting and private area in the Fellowship Hall or Library. There are comfortable couches and chairs in each classroom, which you are also welcome to use.

## AGREEMENT WITH FAMILIES

Families are asked to sign a simple contract included in the packet of emergency and health forms that accompanies this Handbook. **By signing this contract, you acknowledge receipt of the information contained in this Handbook, agree to become familiar with these policies and to abide by them. You may petition the Nursery School Council at any time for a review of these policies, which are updated yearly.** The contract is an agreement between the family and the school to abide by all of the tuition and policy requirements of the school, including but not limited to, the returning and maintaining yearly, up-to-date health and permission forms as required by the State of Connecticut.

## ENROLLMENT POLICY

Enrollment takes place in January at the Saturday Open House, after current families have had a chance to enroll. Returning children are given first priority, considering the needs of all children, then as follows: children of Rowayton United Methodist Church members, children of Five Mile River Nursery School Council members, and balanced male and female students. We also consider whether the child is a sibling of children presently or previously enrolled, and the teachers' recommendations for the appropriate placement for the child, based on the child's age and development. If all priorities are equal,



a collaborative decision is made with the Administration and members of the Nursery Council as to placement for each child. Thereafter, children are placed according to lottery. **The Five Mile River Nursery School admits children of any physical, mental or emotional ability, race, creed, family status, ability to pay, or national origin.**

**Every family must select 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> choices for placement. We cannot guarantee that any child will be placed according to the family's first choice. Enrollment may continue throughout the year for any available places.**

Application fee, deposit and first tuition installment are non-refundable. Tuition refunds will be pro-rated based upon the amount of time used, at the discretion of the Nursery School Council, and issued as a credit against future use of the program.

**All families must submit an up-to-date health record of the physical completed within the year, in order to begin school which includes immunization records, date of birth and all pertinent information needed to provide appropriate care for your child.**

## **WITHDRAWAL/DISENROLLMENT POLICY**

Every effort will be made to meet a child's needs. We do not consider exclusionary measures until all other possible interventions have been exhausted. If both family and staff come to the mutual agreement that the school is unable to meet the needs of the child, and that it is in the best interest of the child, only then will the child be disenrolled. This policy is communicated to all families and staff.

There is a period of "provisional enrollment," of 30 school days, during which time family, staff and children are able to assess whether the school will satisfy the needs of all concerned. Our goal with this policy is to limit or eliminate the use of suspension, expulsion or any other exclusionary measures.

We will make every effort to use Scientifically Researched Based Intervention strategies to address challenging behaviors any child may display. We may also pull in any of our Consultants (See Family Handbook pages 42-43) for resources and advice. However, we reserve the right to exclude a child at any time we deem necessary. Reasons for exclusion include, without limitation, the following:

- Excessive disruptive behavior by the child or family
- Excessive and continuing injuring of other children, adults or property
- Failure to pay tuition on time
- Excessive lateness in picking up the child
- Any other inappropriate conduct, to be determined in our sole discretion

We reserve the right to exclude the child immediately and without notice under appropriate circumstances, to be determined in our sole discretion and so that our program complies with all federal and state civil rights laws. If the program and the family agree that disenrollment is in the best interest of the child, the Five Mile River Nursery School will make every effort to assist the family to access services and alternative placement.

## **FOOD SERVICE**

The Five Mile River Nursery School follows government child nutrition guidelines for the amount and types of food we provide. We promote healthy organic snacks consisting of two of each of

four components: 1. Milk or milk substitute; 2. Lean meat, cheese, eggs, beans, (**BUT NO PEANUT BUTTER OR OTHER NUTS, OR FOODS THAT MAY BE PROCESSED WITH NUTS**), seeds, or yogurt; 3. Whole grain or enriched bread or cereal; 4. Full strength juice, fruit or vegetable. Organic snack menus are posted a minimum of two weeks in advance on each classroom door bulletin board. Expired snack food will be disposed of at the first of each month. Excess food prepared for snack will be disposed of after snack is cleared for the day. Children who stay for Lunch Bunch must bring their own lunches (served between 12:15 and 12:45 PM). It is our policy to allow children to choose from any food, in any order, that has been provided for them. **Families are requested to provide a healthy lunch consisting of the above four components listed, pack an ice pack to keep the food fresh, labeled with the child's name and date, and to refrain from including candy.** Refrigerator space is available for perishable food offered by the school for snack. Families must pack lunches with a cold pack. Thermometers monitor refrigerator and freezer temperature. No food is to be heated hotter than 110 degrees F. Food brought for Lunch Bunch **will NOT** be reheated at school.

**No foods are served that may present a choking hazard for children under 4, including but not limited to: Grapes, Hot Dogs, Carrots, Pretzels, Popcorn. Food may be cut into small pieces to prevent choking.**

**DO NOT INCLUDE ANY FOODS CONTAINING NUTS, NUT PRODUCTS OR FOOD PROCESSED WITH NUTS IN YOUR CHILD'S LUNCH.**

**WE MUST BE INFORMED IF YOUR CHILD IS ALLERGIC TO ANY FOOD OR OTHER SUBSTANCE. PLEASE CHECK OUR POSTED MENUS TO MAKE SURE WE ARE NOT PLANNING TO SERVE YOUR CHILD A FOOD THAT WOULD BE HARMFUL TO HIM OR HER.**

**Please note that due to the presence of life-threatening allergies**, all food brought in by families for special snacks for children or adults must be fresh or whole fruits or vegetables, or commercially prepared packaged goods in factory sealed containers with clear labeling indicating all ingredients.

If you would like to celebrate your child's birthday, we suggest you come to class to read your child's favorite book, make party hats, play party games, sing and/or dance with us. A nice tradition we have observed in the past, is to give your classroom a new book or game to share.

We encourage families to share their traditions and culture. We welcome your family and friends to come to class to share all your traditions such as dance, music, art, and games.

The teachers will be responsible to plan cooking and food-related learning experiences which will be prepared at school. We welcome your suggestions and help planning those experiences.

For any child with a special feeding need, staff will document the type and quantity of food the child consumes and provide this information to the family each day.

## **MEDICATION POLICY**

The Five Mile River Nursery School will administer only certain oral, topical, epipen or inhalant medications regularly necessary for a child's safety, allergic or other physical condition of the child, according to state regulations. We must be notified if the medication is a controlled drug, which will be stored in accordance with 21a-262-10 of the RCSA. Non-prescription topical medications will be stored away from food and inaccessible to children with the exception of EpiPen's which will be stored within the classroom for the child that needs it. However, if a child is ill and requires temporary medication, the families must keep their child at home.

Only staff certified to administer medication may give medication to a child according to the following procedure:

1. **The Five Mile River Nursery School will not administer either the first or the second dose of any medication, with the exception of an Epi Pen.**
2. Administrator must wash hands thoroughly according to posted hand washing procedures and have the patient also wash their hands.
3. Patient and administrator will go to a quiet area.
4. The Medication Administration Records and Medications are to be removed from the medications box where they are secured in the children's bathroom cabinet.
5. The administrator will check for the "5 Patient Rights:" Right Patient, Right Medication, Right Dose, Right Route, and Right Time.
6. The medication will be administered. The medication will be recorded in ink on the "Controlled Drug Use Record"
7. The medications and records will be returned to their storage place.
8. All records of medications orders and administration of medications shall be kept on file with student's records for two years after the child no longer attends the program.
9. Families will be notified by telephone, email, text, in writing or in person if medication has been administered.

According to State Regulations, any child who is to receive medications at school must have an "Authorization for the Administration of Prescription Medications by Day Care Personnel" form on file from both the child's doctor and the child's family or legal guardian before the child will be permitted to receive any medications from the authorized staff member. Please understand that your child may not be able to attend school if the proper, completed authorization is not on file at the school.

**If families report any health condition on their child's health form, they must also provide the school with a MEDICAL CARE PLAN for that condition.**

## **OPERATING SCHEDULE**

The Five Mile River Nursery School is open five days per week, Monday through Friday 8:30am to 3:00 PM and during the Summer for eight or nine weeks 9:30am through 1:00 PM. Nursery School/Extended Day programs do not make up snow days. Families must sign their children in and out daily noting the time of day, on the sign-in/out sheet posted in each classroom. If your child is staying for the extended day programs, you must indicate so on the appropriate box of the sign-in/out sheet. When you pick up your child from the extended day program, you will sign the attendance sheet for that program with the time you have picked up your child.

**Please call the school by 10am each day if your child is going to be absent. There will be no charge for extended-day programs if you have notified the school in the morning that your child is sick, or if you call a day in advance if you have other plans.**

## **PET POLICY**

The Five Mile River Nursery School will occasionally adopt a pet for the enjoyment and education of the children in the program. It is our policy to ensure that the pet is healthy. The pet will be kept in an environment cleaned weekly by a staff member. Any litter will be placed directly into exterior garbage. A staff-supervised child will give pets fresh food and water daily. Anyone who handles the pet will be required to wash his or her hands according to the posted hand washing procedure before and after handling. All pets will be housed with a responsible family or a staff member on weekends and holidays. All persons caring for animals will receive training and supplies in order to assure the continued well-being of our pet. A Pet Care Plan will be posted near each pet in the classroom.

**Dogs and other personal pets are not allowed on the premises. Please keep your pets secured away from the playground and classrooms unless specifically invited inside. We cannot be responsible for animals brought onto our premises by families or others, and we must maintain the safety of all children, staff, caregivers and families.**

## **WITHDRAWAL/DISENROLLMENT POLICY**

Families are asked to give the school a minimum of two weeks written notice before withdrawing a child for any reason, such as moving to another community, so that the school may have time to enroll another child to fill the vacancy. Tuition will be refunded on a per diem pro-rated basis, **and be issued as a credit toward the use of any future programs**, at the discretion of the Nursery School Council.

Every effort will be made to meet a child's needs. We do not consider exclusionary measures until all other possible interventions have been exhausted. If both family and staff come to the mutual agreement that the school is unable to meet the needs of the child, and that it is in the best interest of the child, only then will the child be disenrolled. This policy is communicated to all families and staff.

There is a period of "provisional enrollment," of 30 school days, during which time family, staff and children are able to assess whether the school will satisfy the needs of all concerned. Our goal with this policy is to limit or eliminate the use of suspension, expulsion or any other exclusionary measures.

We will make every effort to use Scientifically Researched Based Intervention strategies to address challenging behaviors any child may display. We may also pull in any of our Consultants (See Family Handbook pages 42-43) for resources and advice. However, we reserve the right to exclude a child at any time we deem necessary. Reasons for exclusion include, without limitation, the following:

- Excessive disruptive behavior by the child or family
- Excessive and continuing injuring of other children, adults or property
- Failure to pay tuition on time
- Excessive lateness in picking up the child
- Any other inappropriate conduct, to be determined in our sole discretion

However, we reserve the right to expel the child immediately and without notice under appropriate circumstances, to be determined in our sole discretion and so that our program complies with all federal and state civil rights laws. If the program and the family agree that disenrollment is in the best interest of the child, the Five Mile River Nursery School will make every effort to assist the family to access services and alternative placement.

## **4. APPROPRIATE DRESS FOR SCHOOL**

We will be playing hard and children should be dressed casually for close encounters with paint, paste, sand, dirt, flour, water and clay. **Please do not wear your best clothes because we cannot guarantee their unstained return. Please wear sturdy shoes for safety while running and climbing during active play outdoors or in the Fellowship Hall.**

We will also come in contact with water in sensory experiences and while washing up, so a spare set of clothes, including underwear, socks, seasonal pants and shirt, clearly labeled, should be

brought to school at the beginning of the year, replaced when necessary, in case a change is necessary.

**Please be sure to label all your child's clothes clearly. Children do not always know which clothing is theirs, and the teachers certainly do not.** Help your child develop autonomy by allowing them to take off and hang up their own things on their own coat hook, and they will know personally where it is, and if they brought it to school.

**Winter Clothing Policy: We will go outside every day, at the discretion of the Director,** provided the temperature is 20 degrees F or warmer, so please dress for the weather. On cold days children need warm clothes including hats, mittens, snow pants and boots. Because we respect children's autonomy and seek to develop their independent self-care skills, **we do not presume to know whether your child feels hot or cold, so we honor what they tell us about whether they need their coats, hats or mittens. Children learn immediately how warm or cold it is outside and will request the appropriate clothing when they need it.** Please be sure to provide all appropriate clothing for the day in a bag or backpack if your child chooses not to wear it to school because they may request it later. **We do honor families' requests and will insist your child wear any clothing you deem appropriate, but you must give us specific instructions so we do not follow the policy outlined above.** Even rain will not daunt us, so raincoats and boots are appropriate on rainy days. It has to be a near monsoon to keep us inside!

An infant changing table is provided in the children's bathroom for the convenience of the adults attending with younger siblings. **Please dispose of all dirty diapers directly into the outdoor garbage.**

**All children enrolled in the drop off "Twos Together" program will use the changing table designated exclusively for their group, located in the classroom, where there is a step-on lockable diaper pail, inaccessible to the children in the program.**

**TOILET LEARNING POLICY: Children ages 3 and older are expected to be able to use the toilet independently. We encourage children and families to learn to use the toilet with kind adult support. Families should send their children in the same underclothing they wear at home. All children will be encouraged to use the toilet while at school.** The social setting can be very motivating for children to learn to use the toilet, and when your child is ready, we encourage families to put them in "big kid" underwear, around age 3. We do not leave children in soiled clothing longer than 15 minutes. We understand and expect some accidents so, please provide multiple changes of clothing for this possibility. Your preschool age (3-5) child will be expected to wipe or to change wet clothing by him or herself. Staff will help your child learn these self-care skills by "talking them through" the process. Children will be encouraged to toilet themselves independently.

We will instruct the child verbally how to wipe themselves, but not do it for them. If your child is not ready to learn to use the toilet independently, staff and families will plan together to help and encourage the development of these routine self-care skills. If your child has a special need, we will plan together to make the appropriate accommodations in order to include your child. In case of soiled clothing, we will remove and dispose of any soiled underclothing, and return other clothing the same day for cleaning in a waterproof bag. (Please do use plastic bags that may present a suffocation hazard. We suggest reusable coated grocery bags or wax paper wrapping.) Children will be changed in the designated changing area in the children's bathroom for their privacy.

## **5. RELIGIOUS POLICY**

The Five Mile River Nursery School is a non-denominational preschool; however, it is owned and operated by the Rowayton United Methodist Church, and is part of its Mission and Outreach to the community. While we do not instruct children in Methodist doctrine, our religious faith informs what we do.

At the Five Mile River Nursery School, we celebrate the traditions of the children in the classroom. Families are encouraged to bring the religious or traditional symbols of their own faith perspective to school and to share their culture and faith traditions with the class.

We hope that this policy helps to give honor and support to the diversity of each family and their values. We feel that it is better to discuss and celebrate with the children their religious values, rather than to try to ignore them, as if they did not exist. In this, as in our entire curriculum, we strive to develop a child's independence and self-esteem.

## **6. SUMMER PROGRAMS / VACATION CAMP**

### **MONDAY – FRIDAY SUMMER PROGRAMS**

Our Summer Program runs for eight or nine weeks each summer throughout June and July. All camp programs meet from 9:30 to 1 PM and cost \$55 per day. There is a 5% discount offered for sign up by the week in June, or any five days in June or July.

There will be at least two staff persons trained in Infant/Child First Aid and CPR with each group at all times.

In very hot weather, when the relative humidity causes the temperature to feel greater than 92° F, we will take children into the air-conditioned classrooms.

In case of an air quality alert, children or staff with asthma or other lung conditions are advised to stay home.

Children will be encouraged to drink fresh water frequently, given opportunities to play in sun and shade, and to cool off in water play in the sprinkler or slide.

Children bring their lunch, bathing suit and towel. Families are requested to apply sunscreen and insect repellent to their children before arrival. Five Mile River Nursery School must have specific, written permission from the family for any staff person to reapply sunscreen or insect repellent for the child, using sunscreen or insect repellent that has been supplied by the family for use by their child only.

Children may choose from a variety of experiences, including dramatics, outdoor equipment, puzzles, books, art and water play.

Registration for summer programs takes place each year in early April. Families currently enrolled may register in advance of the dates specified, as soon as forms are available in March.

Please note: themes are subject to change.  
Weekly Guest Enrichment Programs  
May not be offered in case of pandemic.



<b>Week Number</b>	<b>Weekly Theme</b>	<b>Enrichment Activity</b>
1	Circus	Mr. Bungles Bubble Station
2	Wild, Wild West	Pied Piper Ponies
3	Drama Days	Acting Out with Miss Karen
4	Cool Foods	Ice Cream Social
5	Animals	Critter Caravan
6	World Cup Soccer	Super Soccer Stars
7	Wild and Crazy Week	Magic with Mr. Bungles
8	More Animals	Critter Caravan
9	Dance	Kinderdance

## **VACATION CAMP**

The school may choose to operate **VACATION CAMP** during the scheduled school break in April. Look for more information about these programs by email, in your child's cubby, or on our website [www.fivemilerrivernurseryschool.com](http://www.fivemilerrivernurseryschool.com).

## **7. EXTENDED DAY POLICY**

The Five Mile River Nursery School offers extended day programs during the following times:

**8:30-9:00/9:15 or 9:30 ~ Studio (Early Drop Off)**

**12:00 - 1:30 PM ~ Lunch Bunch**

**1:30 - 2:30 PM ~ Enrichment**

**2:30 - 3:30 PM ~ Extended Enrichment "Siesta"**

**3:30 – 4:30 PM ~ Enrichment for PM Classes\***

**4:30 – 5:30 PM ~ Siesta for PM Classes\***

**\*(there must be a minimum of 3 children enrolled to offer these programs)**

### **LUNCH BUNCH AND EXTENDED ENRICHMENT**

The Lunch Bunch portion of the program is from 12:00 PM to 1:30 PM (or 12:15-1 for PM classes). The children bring their lunches and eat them at school as well as enjoy a story, free time outdoors and songs or group games inside. On Fridays, Lunch Bunch will be limited to 20 children.

Enrichment programs are offered 1:30-2:30 PM on Mondays (Movement and Music), Tuesdays (Ooey Goey Art), Wednesdays (Science and Math), Thursdays (Drama Day), and Fridays (Yoga) as well as Extended Enrichment from 2:30-3:30 PM.

If a child remains at school for longer than 5 hours (they arrive for early morning Studio at 8:30am and stay until 3:30 PM for Enrichment) they will be given an opportunity at 2:30 PM to have a short rest until 3:30 PM. Children should bring their own towel or blanket from home to rest on the cots provided. Cots are disinfected daily after use. Children may choose a book to look at, a puzzle to do, or work with a clip board and paper to draw or write. The room is darkened and soft music plays.

Lunch Bunch, Enrichment and Extended Enrichment are open to any child at least 3 years old, able to use the toilet independently, and can follow the directions of the teacher. A child need not be enrolled at Five Mile River Nursery School to attend and all eligible children are welcome regardless of which days they may attend Nursery School. Lunch Bunch follows the Five Mile River Nursery School calendar and begins the first week after Orientation.

Extended Day Programs (Studio and Lunch Bunch) for 2-year-olds will meet in their classroom, if at least 3 children sign up for each program per day. Please email [director@fmns.com](mailto:director@fmns.com) if interested.

State regulations require all lunches to be stored with an ice pack. Be sure to include one of each of the following food groups: Milk or 100% juice; a protein such as meat, cheese, egg, cooked beans or peas, seeds; bread or grain; fruit or vegetable. **Do not send any food with nuts, processed with nuts, or candy with your child's lunch.** Children are encouraged to eat something of everything you provide, in any order. Make sure each choice is healthy!

**Lunch Bunch-ers who come for the afternoon should arrive by 12:15 PM and sign in at your child's assigned classroom** with Lunch Bunch staff.

## 8. PLAN FOR SUPERVISION

**Teaching staff supervise children by sight and sound at all times.** Teaching staff supervise by positioning themselves to see as many children as possible. When children are in the bathroom, teachers will stand so as to see both the bathroom and the classroom; children will be escorted to the bathroom from the upstairs classrooms.

We make it a practice to use language that promotes self-esteem in both praise and discipline. When we observe and encourage your child at work, we take care to notice in detail what they have achieved. ("You worked a long time on that painting. You covered the paper with lots of blue lines. I see six of them! Let's count them together. You made a circle in yellow over here!") The child is then given the opportunity to identify what he has achieved and come to the conclusion on his own that his work is beautiful or good, and will be able to open up in his expression with a new self-confidence. Studies show that praise for effort, rather than talent, leads to greater resiliency in children.

Teachers will provide close adult supervision when cooking; using knives or tools, and any time or place where an injury may occur.

**There will be one staff person per 10 children or fraction thereof for ages 3 to 5 on the premises and supervising children indoors, outdoors or at naptime, at all times during program hours. There will be a minimum of 2 staff on the premises at all times. The children will be supervised in groups of no more than 20 at any one time, including outdoors. The playground will be clearly divided into sections for this purpose, so that children will be supervised in groups of no more than twenty, and will have one adult per 10 children at all times.** Other staff people may be helping children in the washroom, attending a sick child, preparing a snack or attending during rest time. **For children age 2, the maximum group size will be 8, with one staff person per every 4 children at all times.**

The maximum number of children allowed on the premises at any one time is 48. The maximum number of children allowed in each of the upstairs classrooms is a group of 12; the maximum number of children allowed in each of the downstairs classrooms is a group of 13.

We group children by age for the morning preschool and twos programs; extended-day and summer programs may be in multi-age preschool groupings.



Children must communicate with staff if they need to use the bathroom or move to another classroom to participate at a different work center.

**Families must always check in and out, using the BrightWheel App, which will notify families of the time of arrival and pick up as well as the name of the person checking your child in or out for the day. Families are asked to notify the school by 10am each day if the child will be absent. Absences may be marked on the BrightWheel App by the parent.**

Teachers will periodically take a head count, especially prior to snack time, circle time, before and during outdoor play. When picking up and dropping off your child, please park your car in the village parking lot or on the street and escort your child into school each morning or afternoon. Children must wash their hands upon entering the school, and must be handed to a responsible adult before leaving.

#### **FOR CHILDREN UNDER 3 USING THE PLAYGROUND:**

Children under 3 will be supervised in a maximum group size of 8 children with 2 teachers present at all times. Until they turn 3, children will be allowed to use only the equipment and sandbox lower than 5 feet high. The area on the front porch where there is mulch surrounding the base of the tree will only be used under close supervision by at least one staff member who will be certified in CPR and outdoors at all times. Staff will have portable means of communication: walkie-talkies, landline telephone and cell phone, to utilize in an emergency situation.

#### **PARKING FOR PICKUP & DELIVERY OF CHILDREN**

**During delivery and pickup of children PLEASE DRIVE WEST ON PENNOYER STREET, APPROACHING FROM THE TOP OF THE HILL DOWN. KEEP CIRCLING UNTIL AN APPROPRIATE PARKING PLACE BECOMES AVAILABLE.** You can approach Pennoyer Street by taking Witch Lane to Milton Place or Crest Road and traveling down Pennoyer, OR you can turn onto Wilson Avenue at the cannon and turn onto Crest and travel down Pennoyer Street. Approximately 10 cars can park along Pennoyer Street at a time. Please be considerate of all drivers by parking as close as safely possible to the car in front of you. **Please also remain in the parking place no more than three minutes during pick up and drop off times.** If you wish to remain at the program for any reason, please park in the village lot and walk one block to school.

Teachers are happy meet you at the **playground gate** with your child. Touchless sign in and out using the BrightWheel App on your device using the QR code hung on clipboards on the playground fence and by the entrance to the building. Staff may input your personal four-digit code to sign you in or out. You must answer the check-in questions to help protect the health of our community. There is a keypad lock on the front entry which is changed annually and the code will be given only to those who will be allowed access to the facility. **The time of drop off and pick up will be recorded in your child's BrightWheel feed every day.**

The designated area for drop off and pick up is between the Pastor's driveway and the edge of the building, which is approximately three car-lengths. Standing is allowed in this zone for no more than 3 minutes. **An adult, either a staff member if available, the child's family, another classroom family member, or a guardian for whom permission has been granted to pick up your child, must escort children on or off the playground or the school. We will not release children to anyone under the age of 18. Please be sure to close all school doors or gates behind you and check that they are securely closed or locked!**

Staff members will not be responsible for buckling your child into their car seat. We expect families or caregivers to be sure all children are securely fastened into the appropriate safety seating. The asphalted parking lot, accessible from Milton place and adjacent to the rear of the playground, is available for drop off and pick up from the playground for 15 minutes at the

beginning and end of each program. Families may park behind teachers' cars that are parked there while they are picking up or dropping off children briefly. Children will not be allowed access to this area except under the firm control of an adult. Please hold your child's hand at all times, and be aware of moving cars at all times.

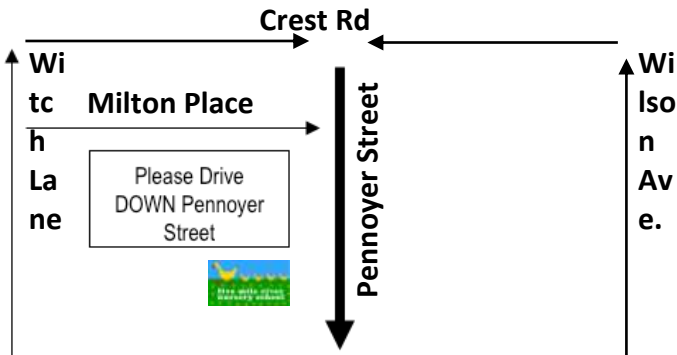
Please reserve the parking place closest to the back playground gate for the annual Auction winner.

We love it when you walk to school, which helps ease the parking crunch, but please **do not allow your pets to enter the playground or be accessible to children**. As gentle as your pets may be, they may not react gently to children who could surprise them.

**PLEASE BE AWARE OF PUBLIC ACT NO. 97-298: IT IS A CLASS A MISDEMEANOR TO KNOWINGLY LEAVE CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF TWELVE UNSUPERVISED IN A PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION OR IN A MOTOR VEHICLE.**

As of October 1, 2005 all children in Connecticut must be in a federally approved child restraint system (either a car seat or booster seat) until they are over 6 years old AND over 60 pounds. Children must remain rear-facing in their car seat until they are at least one-year-old AND 20 pounds.

**PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE YOUR CARS RUNNING  
OR YOUR KEYS IN THE IGNITION.**



**Do not leave your car idling longer than 10 seconds, except if vehicles need to idle in extreme heat or cold to maintain interior or engine temperatures.** In addition to causing your engine to operate inefficiently and wasting gasoline, you are exposing the children on the playground to harmful exhaust gases.

Teachers are responsible for supervising any children remaining at school during pickup time in the state-required ten to one ratio. Please supervise your own children primarily by sight and for short intervals by sound at all times when at school. Please do not allow your child to enter the building, or otherwise wander unsupervised

**Parking:** You may park along Pennoyer Street on the church side only, on Milton Place opposite church property, along Rowayton Avenue, on Crest Road, or on Pennoyer Street opposite side above Milton. The Wilson Avenue public parking lot in town is conveniently located a few steps from the school. All persons planning to remain on site for an extended period of time are encouraged to park there.

**DO NOT Double Park  
DO NOT Block the Pastor's driveway  
DO NOT Park in No Parking Zones**

**This poses a fire or emergency hazard to our neighbors and us. We will make staff available to escort your child from your car to school at the front door.**

## **LOST CHILD POLICY**

While at the Five Mile River Nursery School, utmost care is taken to supervise children by sight **AND** sound, and to be aware of every child's whereabouts at all times. On rare occasions, we invite families or other caregivers to help supervise while on field trips; at such times we require children to wear identifying apparel such as a bright Yellow FMRNS T-Shirt or a FMRNS label with telephone number.

In the event that a child is missing, the following actions will be taken by the staff at FMRNS:

1. We will check to see that the child was signed in for the day and then search the entire church and school grounds.
2. The Director, or in the absence of the Director, the head teacher, will be notified of the situation so they can proceed with the next step of action.
3. The Director will assign one person to recheck the grounds. He/she will then question the remaining staff as to what the child was wearing and where and when they last saw the child. Children should be identified as under FMRNS supervision by wearing a bright yellow FMRNS T-Shirt and/or wearing a logo address label with school phone number.
4. The Director will then call the police and report the situation and follow their advice.
5. The Director will call the family or caregiver and report the situation. They will ask the family to come to school the way they normally bring the child in case the child has found their way home.
6. When the family arrives at the school, if the child is still missing the family will be asked to return home and stay there in case the child returns home.
7. The staff not involved in the search will continue a normal program day by taking care of the rest of the children.
8. Before leaving on a field trip, all children will be counted by their classroom teachers. Children going on the field trip will be required to wear a bright yellow t-shirt and will be labeled with Nursery School logo address and phone number. The count will be re-checked before leaving the premises.
9. If a child is lost during the field trip, the adults present, staff and families, will be questioned as to what the child was wearing and where and when they last saw the child. They will then proceed with the trip while the lead teacher notifies the officials at the venue and take their advice.
10. In case the field trip takes place near a body of water, the water will be the first area searched.
11. The lead teacher will then notify the police of the situation and follow their advice.
12. If a family member is not on the trip, the lead teacher will notify the Director who will then notify the family and proceed as above.

At the end of the trip if the child is still missing the lead teacher will stay at the venue and continue searching for the child. The remainder of the group will return to the school.

## **9. DISCIPLINE POLICY**

Staff shall not use abusive, neglectful, corporal, humiliating or frightening punishment under any circumstances. Teaching staff do not engage in psychological abuse or coercion. No child shall be physically restrained unless it is necessary to protect the safety and health of the child or others.

Examples of prohibited practices:

**No Physical Punishment** such as shaking, hitting, spanking, slapping, jerking, squeezing, kicking, biting, pinching, excessive tickling, and pulling arms, hair or ears; no requiring a child to remain inactive for a long period of time.

**No Psychological Abuse** such as shaming, name calling (no endearments which are belittling), no ridiculing, humiliation, sarcasm, cursing at, making threats, or frightening a child; no ostracism, or withholding affection.

**No Coercion** such as rough handling (shoving, pushing, grasping any body part); nor forcing a child to sit down, lie down, or stay down (except when restraint is necessary to protect the child or others from harm); no physically forcing a child to perform an action such as eating or cleaning up.

Our method of discipline is preventive rather than reactive: we will develop disciplined behavior by setting clear limits, building the child's self-esteem, independence and respect for others and property. Acceptable behavior is encouraged through positive guidance and verbal feedback.

The teachers and assistant teachers will be models of the behavior we would like to instill in the children.

We will look for opportunities to show the child a new picture of him or herself, making the child his own model for the behavior we want through specific praise and suggestion. We will help to guide children's interactions by helping them to resolve interpersonal problems rather than imposing adult intervention on them.

We will phrase things positively. We will say what we may DO, how we can BE, rather than making an endless list of DON'Ts.

We will state our expectations clearly, without making pejorative comments. ("You need to put away all the puzzle pieces in their box. Very good, you are very organized! Now we can find them all next time.")

We will relate warmly to the children, expressing our approval or disapproval at their eye level, calmly, kindly and with an appreciation for the feelings of the child. ("You may not throw blocks. It is dangerous. If you are angry, you can say, "I'm so mad!" Maybe you can show me how mad you are when you draw a picture.")

Teaching staff never use threats or derogatory remarks and **neither withhold nor threaten to withhold food** as a form of discipline.

Inappropriate behavior will be redirected toward a more appropriate activity: a game of "Ninja Turtles" will be redirected into a game of soccer, so children will kick a ball and not each other. By asking a child to stop and think about their behavior, we help him or her to develop self-control.

We will show children how and when to use all of their negative behavior or feelings positively: loud voices are good for singing or outdoors, but not during story time ... running is safe outdoors, not in the classroom.

When children are in conflict, we will support their conflict resolution skills by guiding their interactions and providing them scripts they can use to resolve their interpersonal problems independently. We will state, "There seems to be a problem. How can we resolve it?" We will work to facilitate children's resolution of their conflict. Where appropriate we will facilitate peer mediation of the conflict.

**Children bringing toys from home will be given the choice to share them with the group or to safely stash them in their cubby or backpack. If at all possible, please keep your own toys at home. We have plenty of materials to share at school. We cannot be responsible for the loss or breakage of items brought from home.**

When a problem arises, the teachers will express their feelings strongly but will not attack character. We will show the child how to make amends. We will problem-solve with the child by brainstorming.

Children who are out of control will be given a safe base to calm down within the classroom, in the company of a staff member. Extremely violent behavior, biting or extremely rebellious or insubordinate behavior will be dealt with by temporary removal from the classroom experiences for a period of time not to exceed the number of minutes as the child is old (i.e., 3 minutes for a three-year-old). Generally, the child will decide when he or she is ready to return to the group with appropriate behavior. If necessary, staff may call the family.

All problems will be dealt with on an individual basis with the mutual cooperation of staff, family and child. If the behavior continues to persist and an agreeable solution cannot be reached within the program, the staff may call upon program consultants to help create a plan for the child. As a last resort only, the nursery school reserves the right to ask that the child be withdrawn from the program.

**All Parents must discuss this Discipline Policy with their teacher or the Director, and staff must discuss this policy with the Director, prior to starting in the program, and acknowledge in writing that they understand and agree to this policy.**

## **PLANS AND PROCEDURES FOR MANDATED REPORTING OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

All children have the right to be free from abuse and neglect. The Five Mile River Nursery School has zero tolerance for abuse and neglect, and is responsible for the prevention of such behavior and for the protection of children.

Child abuse is defined as: a child who has had non-accidental physical injury(ies) inflicted upon him or her, or has injuries which are at variance with the history given of them, or is in a condition which is the result of maltreatment such as, though not limited to, malnutrition, sexual molestation or exploitation, deprivation of necessities, emotional maltreatment or cruel punishment. (Connecticut General Statutes 46b-120)

Child neglect is defined as: a child who has been abandoned, is being denied proper care and attention physically, educationally, emotionally, or morally, or is being permitted to live under conditions, circumstances or associations injurious to his well-being. (CGS 46b-120)

All staff at the Five Mile River Nursery School are considered "mandated reporters" of child neglect or abuse by the State of Connecticut. As such, they are required as individuals to report directly to the **Department of Children and Families (DCF)** any suspected abuse or neglect. After staff make a report to DCF they must also immediately inform the Director of their action.

Mandated reporters are not obligated to inform the families that they have made a report to DCF about their child. However, depending on circumstance, it may be necessary and/or beneficial to do so.

If the child is suspected of being abused or neglected by a staff member, then the Director is required to immediately inform the family.

The Director may refer health care professionals to the family to assess the cause of the child's injuries, or they may refer mental health professionals or members of the clergy to provide families support and guidance.

If in the case of serious physical or sexual abuse, families may not be informed until after DCF has been notified, in order to protect the child or facilitate a criminal investigation.

Mandated reporters are required to give their name when they make a report to DCF; however, they may request anonymity to protect their privacy from the family. The identity of the reporter would not be disclosed unless written consent is given, or unless mandated by law (CGS section 17a-28 and 17a-101). The reporter's identity is disclosed only to a DCF employee, a law enforcement officer, an appropriate state's attorney, an appropriate assistant attorney general, a judge and all necessary parties in a court proceeding, a state child care licensing agency, executive director of any institution, school or facility, or superintendent of schools.

Staff are protected by law from discrimination or retaliation for reporting abuse and neglect, they are immune from discharge, retaliation, or other disciplinary action for that reason alone, unless it is proven that the report was intended to do harm.

If DCF suspects or knows that the reporter knowingly made a false report, his or her identity shall be disclosed to the appropriate law enforcement agency and to the perpetrator of the alleged abuse.

Staff are given formal training to recognize the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect and its prevention through mandated reporter training seminars and by distribution of this policy upon hiring or yearly renewal of contract.

Should a staff member witness abuse or neglect by another staff member, they must make a report to DCF and also notify the Director immediately. If staff witness the Director abuse or neglect a child, they must report to DCF and the Chairperson of the Nursery School Council immediately.

Reports to the DCF must be made as soon as practicable, but not more than 12 hours after suspecting abuse or neglect, and all reports to the Hotline are tape-recorded. The reporter must submit a written report to DCF within 48 hours of making the report using form DCF-136. A copy of this report must be submitted to the Director or the Chairperson of the Nursery School Council. The required written documents are kept as a confidential record in the school office. All records are saved for four years.

**Failure to make a report of suspected abuse or neglect may result in a fine of \$2500 to the program.**

If DCF, based on the results of an investigation, finds reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused or neglected by a staff member or a classroom volunteer, the Nursery Council Personnel Committee will immediately suspend the staff member with pay and will not diminish or terminate any benefits due the employee. The suspension shall remain in effect until the FMRNS Nursery Council can review the case and determine whether there is cause for termination. Volunteers in the classroom will be suspended from any volunteer duty until the DCF and the Nursery Council review the case.

All accidents, injuries, and abuse/neglect reports are recorded, filed and locked in the Nursery School office. All staff continuing education and training are also recorded, filed and locked in staff files in the Nursery School office.

**The 24-hour child abuse and neglect hotline number is 1-800-842-2288.  
The DCF Norwalk office number is 203-899-1400.**

## RECOGNIZING CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

	CHILD	INDICATORS	CARETAKER INDICATORS
	Physical Signs	Child's Behavior	
<b>PHYSICAL ABUSE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Unexplained bruises, welts or abrasions (—in various stages of healing; in shape of object (cord, roped, belt buckle); human bite marks)</li> <li>*Unexplained burns (—cigarette (on soles, palms, back, buttocks)—immersion (sock or glove-like)</li> <li>*Unexplained broken bones (—skull, nose, facial structure.—in various stages of healing)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Reports injury by a family member (or threatened injury)</li> <li>*Shrinks from adults' touch</li> <li>*Frightened of family</li> <li>Afraid to go home</li> <li>*Withdrawn or aggressive</li> <li>*Complains of soreness, moves uncomfortably</li> <li>*Wears clothing inappropriate to weather</li> <li>*Reluctant to change clothes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Offers vague, illogical, contradictory or no explanation of child's injury</li> <li>*Attempts to conceal child's injury</li> <li>*Delays or does not seek, medical treatment for injury when warranted</li> <li>*Uses harsh discipline inappropriate to child's age and transgression</li> <li>*Has unrealistic expectations of child</li> <li>*Significantly misperceives child (e.g. sees child as bad, stupid, different)</li> <li>* Misuses alcohol or drugs</li> </ul>
<b>SEXUAL ABUSE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Torn, stained or bloody underwear</li> <li>*Difficulty walking or sitting</li> <li>*Pain or itching in genital area</li> <li>*Bruises or bleeding in external genitalia</li> <li>*Frequent urinary or genital infections</li> <li>*Venereal disease, especially in pre-teens</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Reports sexual assault by caretaker</li> <li>*Reluctant to change clothes</li> <li>*Withdrawal, fantasy or infantile behavior</li> <li>*Bizarre sexual behavior or detailed sexual knowledge, especially in young children</li> <li>*Poor peer relationships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Extremely protective or jealous of child</li> <li>*Sexually abused as a child</li> <li>*Misuses alcohol or drugs</li> <li>*Non-abusing caretaker/spouse is frequently absent from home</li> </ul>
<b>EMOTIONAL ABUSE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Speech disorders</li> <li>*Lags in physical development</li> <li>*Failure to thrive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Sucking, biting, rocking in older child</li> <li>*Antisocial, destructive (and self-destructive)</li> <li>*Sleep disorders, inhibition of play</li> <li>*Compliant/passive or aggressive/demanding</li> <li>*Inappropriately adult or infantile</li> <li>*Developmental lags (emotional, intellectual)</li> <li>*Attempts suicide</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Excessively blames or belittles child</li> <li>*Repeatedly ignores or rejects child</li> <li>*Treats siblings unequally</li> <li>*Seems unconcerned about child's problems</li> <li>*Unreasonable demands or impossible expectations without regard to child's developmental capability</li> </ul>
<b>NEGLECT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Constant hunger, poor hygiene, inappropriate dress</li> <li>*Consistent lack of supervision, especially in dangerous activities or for long periods</li> <li>*Lack of needed medical or dental care</li> <li>*Abandonment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Arrives early at school, stays late; often absent; often falls asleep in class</li> <li>*Begs, steals food</li> <li>*Constant fatigue, listlessness</li> <li>*Says there is no caretaker</li> <li>*Shunned by peers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Misuses alcohol or drugs</li> <li>*Maintains chaotic home</li> <li>*Consistently fails to keep appointments</li> <li>*Demonstrates apathy or hopelessness</li> <li>*Has mental health problems.</li> </ul>

## **APPROPRIATE TOUCH**

Physical contact is valuable to children. We always let the child lead in showing us what kind of touch is acceptable to him or her. We will avoid using touch if we are the only supervising adult. We will always ask permission before touching children; we will try only to touch non-vulnerable parts of the body such as shoulders, back, arms and hands. We will be aware of any cultural considerations also. We will be aware of a child's activity level and will not interrupt the child engaged in play.

At times it may be necessary to restrain a child for his or her safety or the safety of others. In this case we will use touch without the child's permission. When touch is used for restraint, generally the teacher will hold her arms around the child, with the child's body facing away from the teacher. Teachers will use a calm, soothing voice to remind children that they are only being held long enough to ensure their safety and the safety of others. If we must use physical restraint, we will report to the families immediately.

## **10. PLAYGROUND SUPERVISION POLICY AND MAINTENANCE**

1. Teachers are to precede children onto the playground.
2. Teachers are to post themselves to cover distinct areas of the playground, particularly: tire swing, climbing apparatus, riding area and sandbox, porch, picnic tables, gates to parking lot, parsonage yard, inside and street. The playground will be sectioned to provide clear areas for supervision of children in groups of no more than 20 at a time, with a ratio of 1 staff member per 10 children at all times.
3. Teachers are to accompany children inside to go to the bathroom. When a teacher is inside, playground supervisors must shift positions to cover the teacher missing.
4. Classroom doors will be monitored at the front entrance to prevent entrance of individuals not related to the nursery school.
5. The playground is inspected regularly for safety by a certified playground inspector, committee volunteers and teachers, and is kept free of glass, debris, holes or other hazards; nuts, bolts, and screws on all equipment are tightened and covered.
6. There is a minimum of 75 square feet of outdoor play space per child using the playground at any one time. A 4-foot-high fence surrounds the entire playground.
7. All playground equipment and the tire swing are surrounded by impact-absorbing recycled rubber matting for protection of the children against falls.
8. The playground is anchored in underground cement footings according to OSHA standards and is arranged to provide a minimum of five feet for "fall and roll" space surrounding each apparatus or activity.
9. Drinking water is made available from the downstairs classroom sinks. On hot days, pitchers of water and disposable cups are brought outdoors.

We consider our playground an outdoor classroom with all the same educational centers as are provided indoors. There are areas for art, writing, science, gardening, block building, sensory and dramatic play in addition to the gross motor opportunities provided by tire swing, tricycles, climbing and sliding. The playground also provides areas of sun and shade throughout the day.

There are trees planted strategically surrounding the fenced area as well as a slatted "roof" over the tower, sandbox, and playhouse for shaded protection from the sun.

**TEACHERS MUST BRING A SCHOOL TELEPHONE AND WALKIE TALKIE WITH THEM TO THE PLAYGROUND IN ORDER TO CALL EMERGENCY SERVICES AND TO COMMUNICATE WITH STAFF INSIDE THE BUILDING FOR ASSISTANCE IF NEEDED TO MAINTAIN RATIOS OR TO PROVIDE EMERGENCY CARE.**



## 11. EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLANS

### (Emergency Drills are conducted monthly)

#### INJURY

1. The staff member qualified for first aid will administer first aid.
2. We will attempt to contact the family, guardian or alternate as specified on the child's emergency card. It is the family's responsibility to keep information up to date.
3. We will attempt to contact the child's physician or dentist.
4. If we cannot contact the child's physician, we will do any or all of the following:
  - a. Call another physician
  - b. Call an ambulance
  - c. Have the child taken to an emergency hospital in the company of a staff member, in a staff vehicle or program vehicle
5. Any expenses incurred under 4 above will be borne by the child's family.
6. If necessary, we will arrange for substitute staff.
7. An accident/incident/illness report form will be filed in the office and a copy given to the family through the BrightWheel app. **Any critical injury resulting in hospitalization, loss of life or limb, physical or psychological abuse, neglect or unusual lack of supervision shall also be reported to the NAEYC within 72 hours of the incident.**
8. First Aid kits will include:
  - a. Disposable nonporous gloves
  - b. Sealed packages of moist towelettes for cleaning\*
  - c. Non-glass thermometer for taking a child's temperature
  - d. One roll of adhesive tape (hypoallergenic)
  - e. Scissors
  - f. tweezers
  - g. Sterile gauze pads
  - h. Flexible roller gauze
  - i. Triangular bandages
  - j. Safety pins
  - k. At least 2 Instant cold packs
  - l. Current AAP Standard first aid guide or chart
  - m. Water\*
  - n. Liquid soap\*
  - o. Assorted sizes of adhesive strip bandages (Band-Aids)
  - p. Plastic bags for storage\*
  - q. CPR mouth barrier (face shield)
  - r. Any emergency medication needed for a child with special needs\*
  - s. List of emergency phone numbers, families' home and work numbers and the Poison Control Center Number\*
  - t. Copy of First Aid and CPR certificates of all staff

\*also, to be included in supplies for field trips

Staff will bring their own cell phone on field trips with walkie talkies if in the area for use in an emergency.

#### FIRE

1. Teachers will take a head count of children and escort them in an orderly fashion to an area safe from fire and emergency vehicles.
2. Assistant teachers and aides will follow children out, bringing all notebooks with emergency information on all children, all attendance clipboards, keys to parsonage, and emergency kits, and will close doors to contain fire.
3. Director or in the absence of the Director, the Assistant Director, will pull fire alarm, if not already sounded.

4. Children will be walked to the far corner of the playground to wait. Families will be called to pick up their children as soon as possible from the next-door parsonage.

## **SUDDEN ILLNESS OF A STAFF MEMBER**

1. Administer first aid or CPR by trained individual
2. Call staff person's physician
3. Call an ambulance
4. Take staff person to emergency hospital
5. Arrange for substitute staff

## **WEATHER**

School will be cancelled mornings when heavy snow or storms are predicted or in progress, according to the decision of the Norwalk School System. Closings and delays are decided by the Norwalk Superintendent of Schools, and are meant to protect children, families and staff. Occasionally, the Governor of Connecticut will declare a state emergency, and local municipalities must comply with that order as well. Closings are announced over local radio station WNLK 1350 AM, or on Connecticut Television News Broadcasts Channel 3, 6, 8 or 12. You may also call 203-854-4123, the Norwalk Schools Information Line, for all closings and delays. This information can also be found on news12.com.

**If the Norwalk Schools announce a delayed opening, the Five Mile River Nursery School will open the corresponding time (60 or 90 minutes) later at 10 or 10:30am. EXCEPT: in the case of an announced two-hour delay, the nursery school will open for all programs at 10:30 am. In case of early dismissal, the Five Mile River Nursery School will dismiss the corresponding hours earlier.** If the public schools close early, all families are advised to pick up their children as soon as possible, rather than wait until the designated closing time. For instance: if the schools close two hours early, then Lunch Bunch will end at 1 PM, and there will be NO afternoon preschool. Please call or email the school if you have any questions. We will send out an email to all families as soon as schedule changes are known. Please add our MailChimp to your inbox to be sure you receive our announcements. **It is important to continue to monitor local broadcasts, in case the weather changes for the worse and schools change their delayed opening or closing times.**

The Five Mile River Nursery School follows the Norwalk Public Schools for **closings and delays only**. The Nursery School functions on its own Calendar. When the Norwalk Schools are closed for Professional Days the Nursery School is open for Conferences. **We will NOT offer remote learning if school is canceled due to weather.**

## **12. CIVIL PREPAREDNESS PLAN**

1. The Five Mile River Nursery School, 5 Pennoyer Street or 180 Rowayton Avenue, Rowayton, provides a full-day Nursery School program for a maximum of 48 children ages 2 to 5. The center is staffed by at least 2 people at all times for the hours of 8:30am to 3:15 PM, Monday through Friday, from September through the last week of May. During the summer, the center is open from 9:30am to 1:00 PM.
2. The Director is responsible for the preparation and execution of all emergency plans. In the absence of the Director, the designated Head Teacher will be in charge.
3. During any civil emergency (environmental hazard due to weather or hazardous materials: fire, flood, bomb threat, explosion) the staff will monitor the Emergency Broadcast System (EBS) radio station for our area (WNLK 1350 am or WGMX 95.9 FM).

4. We will take one or more of the following actions as quickly as possible:
  - a. Take shelter within the facility away from all windows and glass (the bathrooms). We will turn off all lights, close all windows and doors and shut off other means of ventilation (fans).
  - b. Temporarily evacuate to the outside as per our Fire Evacuation Plan.
  - c. Evacuate our facility by transporting children, via family or guardian, to their homes.
  - d. Evacuate the area per direction of the Mayor or his Deputy in Charge to the designated shelter facility (for example: The Rowayton Community Center or Brien McMahon High School depending on the circumstances and the advice from the city). Staff and Directors may provide transportation or bus service may be called, such as WHEELS or First Student, Inc. An evacuation kit containing name tags, water, radio, markers, storybooks, blanket, snacks, flashlight, first aid kit, batteries, dust masks, emergency phone lists, and rope will be taken to the evacuation point. The answering machine at the Nursery School will be updated to give information to families calling in.
  - e. Attendance will be taken regularly throughout the emergency
5. The Director of the center will determine the reopening of the facility based on advice of the City of Norwalk Emergency Operations Center. **The Director will contact the Mayor's office to determine whether our school may re-open, even if the Norwalk Public Schools remain closed.**
6. A lock-down policy is in place to handle any emergency that may be deemed harmful, is reviewed with staff during the annual review of policies at the beginning of each school year, and is practiced throughout the year during emergency drills the first or second week of each program month. Please be aware of CT General Statutes 53-206 and 53-206c prohibiting any dangerous weapon or facsimile of a firearm on the premises of any child care center unless the carrier of such a weapon is a peace officer.

### **13. PLAN FOR THE CARE OF A SICK CHILD**

1. The child may be isolated within the classroom in a quiet corner arranged for his comfort until a family member arrives.
2. We will attempt to contact the family, guardian, or emergency contact.
3. A staff member will remain with the child until picked up.

## **RULES FOR ABSENCE AND EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL**

**Families and guardians are asked to  
Notify the school when a child is absent due to illness.  
Not to send a child to school who has a cold, any communicable disease, or if any of  
 the following circumstances are present:**

- Fever over 101 degrees orally or 100 degrees axillary
- Mouth sores with drooling
- If awaiting the results of a throat culture
- Severe abdominal pain or discomfort continuing more than 2 hours and/or associated with fever or other signs/symptoms
- Blood in stools
- Acute diarrhea (twice the usual frequency of bowel movements to a looser consistency within a period of 24 hours)
- Sore throat or severe coughing
- Yellow eyes or jaundiced skin; red eyes with discharge until treatment initiated;
- Infected, untreated skin patches

- Difficult or rapid breathing or wheezing
- Skin rashes accompanied by fever or behavior change
- Vomiting illness: 2 or more episodes in previous 24 hours until vomiting resolves

The exclusion period for patients (whether FMRNS staff, families or children) with communicable disease is stated in the table below. **Communicable disease must be reported** to the Department of Health at 203-854-7776 by the staff member, child's physician or family.

**The Five Mile River Nursery School will report to all families the following Communicable diseases, while maintaining the privacy of the staff person or child, by posting a notice in each classroom and by email to each family:**

<u>DISEASE</u>	<u>TIME PATIENT IS EXCLUDED FROM SCHOOL</u>
Chicken Pox	Six days from onset or until all sores have dried and crusted.
Diphtheria	Until two negative cultures have been obtained by a physician
German Measles (Rubella)	Six days from onset
Impetigo	On certification by a physician that patient is under adequate treatment (24 hours after initial treatment)
Fungus	On certification by a physician that patient is under adequate treatment
Ringworm of Scalp	On certification by a physician that patient is under adequate treatment
Hepatitis A Virus	As directed by Health Department after appropriate treatment has been initiated to children and staff; or physician certification that a child is cured.
Ivy or Shrub Poisoning	Not excluded
Measles	Four days after rash appears
Meningococcal-Meningitis	Until certified by physician as cured
Mumps	Until glands are normal or 9 days after onset
Pediculosis (Head Lice)	Until all signs of nits are gone or after first treatment. To protect other children in the program, we will confidentially inspect children's heads for lice after a confirmed case is reported. We regularly clean dramatic play materials, steam clean carpets, and keep children's hats separated in their coat sleeves on their hooks.
Pinkeye	On certification by a physician that patient is under adequate treatment or 24 hours after first treatment
Poliomyelitis	Ten days
Rash	Until diagnosed by physician plus certification that patient is under adequate treatment
Scabies	Until diagnosed by physician plus certification that patient is under adequate treatment
Scarlet Fever	On certification by a physician that patient has completed treatment
Streptococcal Sore Throat	On certification by a physician that patient is under adequate treatment and until 24 hours after initial antibiotic treatment and cessation of fever
Tuberculosis (Active)	Upon physician certification that patient is cured.
Unspecified Respiratory Illness	Until diagnosis & certification of health care provider
Whooping Cough (Pertussis)	Until 5 days of appropriate antibiotics are completed
<b>Covid-19</b>	<b>14 days quarantine after close contact exposure; return to school 10 days since symptoms first appeared and 24 hours fever-free without medication</b>

**ALL PERSONS (Staff, children or families)  
ARE PERMITTED TO RETURN TO SCHOOL  
24 HOURS FEVER FREE WITHOUT MEDICATION.**

The Five Mile River Nursery School will use discretion to excuse any child who appears to be ill.

If families report any health condition on their child's health form, they must also provide the school with a MEDICAL CARE PLAN for that condition.

Flu shots are required immunizations and must be administered annually in the same flu season between August 1 and December 31. Children who have not received the flu vaccine by December 31 must be excluded from school for the duration of influenza season, March 31, or until they receive at least one dose of the influenza vaccine.

A specific health notice will be sent to all families in the case of any communicable disease. If a child has not been immunized for any of the diseases listed above, the child will be excluded from school as soon as the disease has been reported.

## **14. PLAN FOR THE CARE OF THE CHILD NOT PICKED UP AT CLOSING**

1. Two adults, age 18 or older, will remain with the child at all times until someone arrives to pick up the child.
2. We will attempt to call the family or guardian after 15 minutes.
3. We will attempt to call the family or guardian through any of the persons listed on the emergency information card after 30 minutes.
4. If we are unable to reach you or any of your emergency contacts, the local police will be called after one hour.
5. Under no circumstances will staff members take the child home with them or drive them anywhere else without family authorization.
7. The child will be taken inside while the staff person makes the necessary calls, and be supervised by the second staff person.
8. Please make every effort to be on time when picking up your child. It is very upsetting for the child to be the last one left at school, and puts our classrooms out of compliance if too many children are left waiting while other programs have begun. Families who are late may pay for Lunch Bunch (\$18), Enrichment 12:00 - 2:15 PM (\$27) or Extended Enrichment 12:00 - 3:15 PM (\$39).

**After closing at 3:30 PM (or 5:30 if PM Siesta is offered) families will be charged a LATE PICK-UP FEE of a minimum of \$40 after 15 minutes the family is late; and \$1.50 per minute thereafter.**

## **15. PROCEDURE FOR FILING COMPLAINTS**

This procedure is for child day care programs, which are licensed under the authority of Connecticut General Statutes 19a-79-1 through 19a-79-8, inclusive. Most problems within a day care center are non-life threatening and can be resolved by:

1. Discussing the problem with the classroom teacher.
2. Discussing the problem with the Director.
3. Discussing the problem with the Five Mile River Nursery School Council or
4. If the problem is not resolved, you may contact the State of CT Office of Early Childhood

In cases of emergency, notify the State of Connecticut Office of Early Childhood as soon as the emergency is under control.

In cases of abuse/neglect or life-threatening situation, contact the Department of Children and Youth Services at 1-800-842-2288 and the State of Connecticut Office of Early Childhood.

ALL INSPECTION REPORTS AND COMPLIANCE LETTERS ARE AVAILABLE FOR YOUR INSPECTION AT THIS DAY CARE PROGRAM OR BY CONTACTING THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD AT:

Mailing Address:

Telephone Numbers:

State of Connecticut 1-800-282-6063 (Toll free)  
Office of Early Childhood 1-800-439-0437 (Toll free)  
410 Capitol Avenue MS#12DAC  
P.O. Box 340308  
Hartford, CT 06134-0308

## **16. PLAN FOR CONSULTATION**

The Five Mile River Nursery School has contracted with an early childhood educational consultant, a licensed nurse, a licensed dental hygienist, and a social service consultant in order that they may advise and support our program, staff and families each year. **Each shall be available to make an annual review of pertinent policies and in-service education programs; be available by telecommunication for advice regarding specific problems; and be available to visit the program, staff or families to consult either individually or as a program seminar.**

**Our nurse consultant visits our program on a weekly basis until all children turn two years of age, and then on a monthly basis thereafter, to observe all environmental and health factors. In addition, the Health Consultant reviews the health and immunization records of children and staff; reviews the contents, storage and plan for the maintenance of the first aid kit; the general overall health and development of the children; the diaper changing and toileting areas, procedures and hand washing; reviewing the policies, procedures and required documentation for the administration of medications, including petitions for special medication; and assisting in the review of individual care plans as needed.**

While Consultants are not members of our staff, families may feel free to consult with our consultants or staff as their first resource for advice or help.

## **17. LIST OF FIVE MILE RIVER NURSERY SCHOOL CONSULTANTS**

- |  |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
| 1. Early Childhood Education Consultant: | 3. Dental Hygienist:          |
| Ms. Kathy Coppola                        | Jody Bishop-Pullan,           |
| 237 Strawberry Hill Ave                  | 16 Thomes Street              |
| Norwalk, CT 06854                        | Norwalk, CT 06853             |
| 203-866-5789                             | 203-852-1655                  |
| 203-554-5658                             | 203-219-3171                  |
| 2. Nurse Consultant:                     | 4. Social Service Consultant: |
| Jean McPhilmy, MS, RN, CNE               | Betsy Perry                   |
| 5 Charcoal Road                          | 239 Barberrry Road            |
| Norwalk, CT 06854                        | Southport, CT 06890           |
| 203-434-1112                             | 203-216-2029                  |
|  | 203-255-8645                  |

## 18. FAMILY-TEACHER RELATIONS

The school aims to have excellent relations with families as well as children. Major changes that affect children are discussed with families at the earliest opportunity. Families are considered partners with the school in addressing the needs of their children. All your questions are welcomed. We will consider and address any concerns, while balancing the needs of all families involved in the school as fairly as possible. Any family wishing translation of any document, or a translator to be present at any time, should contact the school, and every effort will be made for that provision. All families are informed of upcoming Council Meetings through the calendar and by email from Classroom Volunteer Coordinators, in order to solicit their input on changes in program or policies they would like to propose or other ideas they may have for improvement of the school.

Here are some suggestions for working with the staff and the School Council.

1. **Asking questions about your child.** We make ourselves available at drop off and pick up as well as at other mutually convenient times to answer your questions about your child. We are also happy to schedule a Zoom call, or communicate via BrightWheel or email when you have questions or concerns. Our staff is well schooled in child development and have many years of experience working with young children. Additionally, staff have been trained in use of our assessment tools, specifically the Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards/Documentation Observation Teaching System. If you have a question about your child's behavior, whether it happens at school, home or elsewhere, you can and should use your child's teacher as a resource. Teachers will also seek families' specific ideas for working with their child when at the program.

Our Educational Consultant, Kathy Coppola, and our Social Work Consultant, Betsy Perry, are excellent resources. They have many years of experience in early childhood education and are familiar with a vast library of literature on child development and rearing. They are available for discussions with families of any child in the school.

2. **Family-teacher conferences.** Teachers hold scheduled conferences in the fall and spring to discuss your child's development. They provide observations on skills and behaviors in all key areas (i.e., social interaction, gross motor and fine motor skills). Conferences also may be requested by teacher or family at any time.

**How we assess your child.** Assessments are an integral part of our program, which we use to support children's learning. By using our observations of your child, a developmental continuum as outlined by State of Connecticut **Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS)**, and **Documentation Observation and Teaching System (DOTS)**, and portfolio sampling of children's work over time, we can tailor our activities to help your child develop in eight developmental domains: Personal/Social; Cognitive, Language and Literacy, Social Studies, Math and Science; Creative Expression/Aesthetic Development (visual and performing arts) and Motor (small and large muscles). (Classroom teachers will observe the children in their own classroom during whole group teacher-directed learning, during small group learning, and as learning naturally occurs in play.)

We provide the **Ages and Stages Questionnaire** (which is completed by the family) as a form of an initial screening for each child, from which we plan for each individual child's needs as they pertain to our program and the goals of the family. We will also use questionnaires provided by the Norwalk and Darien School Systems when referring children for observation by speech and language pathologists or other specialists. Families are considered an integral part of the assessment process, helping to set goals with the teacher for their child, and providing information on the child that may not be observable in school. Please help us to plan for your child's learning experiences by

responding to our Family Background Questionnaire. Much of what our teachers do is “capture” your child’s milestones by observing their play. Teachers observe and document children’s growth and development over time. The teachers in the school work together as a team to collaborate on children’s assessment. The teachers of a child from the previous year may consult with the child’s current teachers to discuss the child’s growth; the director, who develops relationships with all children and families in the program, is also available to come into classrooms to observe children.

We formally collect this information in a portfolio which we keep for each child to share with families during conferences. Additionally, we observe children using the Connecticut Preschool Early Learning and Development Standards which is a set of benchmarks on a developmental continuum. If we have any concerns about your child’s development, we will speak to you privately about them and help you to have your child’s needs assessed by the support services available in your community. All assessments are kept confidential, and any reports the teachers or administration submit are with your written permission to special needs assessors and are kept in a locked file in the office. Portfolios are prepared by the classroom teachers, and shared with parents during twice yearly formal conferences in November and March, or at any other time families may request a private conference. At every conference, families are treated as partners in their children’s developmental assessment and are given every opportunity to ask questions about their child and the program.

In partnership with the Norwalk ACTS Transition to Kindergarten Workgroup, FMRNS also administers **the PELI (Preschool Early Literacy Instrument)** to all Preschool age children (3, 4, 5) 3 times per year (Beginning, Middle and End of Year) by a staff member who is familiar with the child, in a comfortable location within the program. Results of the assessment are shared with the family in a private conference with the family at their request.

We respect every family’s privacy and will limit all conversations to a discussion of your child only. We will keep information regarding other children confidential. The content of each child’s health and safety file is confidential but is immediately available upon request to: administrators and teaching staff who have consent from a parent or legal guardian to access the records; the child’s parents or legal guardians; and regulatory authorities.

The feedback we receive from families at our conferences are used to make overall program improvements.

- 3. Teacher-Family problem resolution.** If you feel you have a problem with your child’s teacher, we encourage you to first discuss it with the teacher directly. However, if this approach is not satisfactory for any reason, please contact the Director who oversees family-teacher relations. The Director will work with you and the teacher to bring about resolution.

If for any reason this approach does not meet your needs, the Personnel Committee is available to hear your concerns or complaints.

If you feel that your concerns are not addressed, the State of Connecticut provides a formal complaint procedure through its Office of Early Childhood, ChildCare Licensing. See the procedure for filing complaints (and compliments) under Section #15.

**Challenging Behavior.** When a child’s ongoing challenging behavior must be addressed, we will first: Assess the function of the behavior. Second: Work with families and professionals to develop an individualized plan to address the behavior. And third: Include positive behavior support strategies, such as the Pyramid Strategy which provides varying levels of support within the classroom to benefit all children based on their individual needs.



4. **Asking questions about the school.** If you have questions about the operation of the school, your teacher may be able to answer them. However, many questions about tuition, operations, administration, parking and other issues may need to be answered by the Director or a member of the Nursery School Council. Each family is supplied with an organization chart and list of people responsible for various aspects of the school's operation. **The school makes every effort to communicate with families frequently, both formally and informally, in order to provide children with smooth transitions between school programs and home. There are monthly scheduled opportunities to meet with the Director or the Family Representative, so that families may meet to discuss any concerns they may have.** Classroom newsletters are published every week. Important notices about special events and day-to-day happenings are distributed by email and posted on the bulletin boards in the entranceways and classrooms. Accidents and injuries are reported both verbally, either by telephone or in person, and in writing with an "Accident/Incident" report form. The school maintains a "homepage" on the World Wide Web, at [www.fivemilerivernurseryschool.com](http://www.fivemilerivernurseryschool.com) which provides contact information, license number, employer ID number and links to educational web sites, as well as newsletters, enrollment forms and other helpful information.
5. **Annual Survey.** Each year the school requests your feedback through an anonymous survey. This survey helps us to reflect on our practice and to plan for improvements to the school. It is important that all families participate by responding to the survey, which is also required to maintain our Nationally Accredited Status. We share the results of the survey in our school-wide newsletter. You are also welcome at any time to view the actual surveys and how they are tabulated by making an inquiry to the office.

## **19. CARE AND EDUCATION OF THE SPECIAL NEEDS CHILD**

The Five Mile River Nursery School considers the needs of all children to be unique. We endeavor to respect, support and nurture the emotional, intellectual and physical capacities of every child we serve. We carefully observe each child during the program day and individualize our curriculum plans to, as described by child psychologist and educational theorist, Lev Vygotsky, "scaffold each child's learning within their zone of proximal development." We call on families, staff and community educational resources to assist with planning for your child's development. Services may include, but are not limited to: speech and language specialists, occupational therapists, social workers, child psychologists and education consultants in order to best meet your child's developmental needs. Children with diagnosed special needs are welcome in our program. We make every accommodation possible in order to provide a well-rounded and appropriate preschool experience to include all children.

When staff suspect that a child has a developmental delay or other special need, we document and explain our concerns using our observations and evaluate the observation using the CT Early Learning Standards developmental continuum. At the earliest possible time we will arrange for a private conference with the family and provide them with information about our suggestions for next steps, such as evaluation by a doctor or other specialist, and furnish resources and contacts so families can access diagnostic evaluation and support.

The Five Mile River Nursery School has arranged for consultation once a month with pediatric **Occupational Therapist Jane Erbe OTR/L**. Classroom experiences will be observed and teachers will collaborate on strategies, in order to support children with their Sensory Integration. Families may contract with Jane Erbe to receive private services while their child is at the program.

## **20. OUR CONNECTION TO THE COMMUNITY**

The Five Mile River Nursery School is closely connected to its surrounding communities. The Director serves on the Norwalk Early Childhood Council and helps to plan for children's Transition to Kindergarten and training programs for staff. Additionally, our school plans family education and enrichment programs on a variety of topics of interest such as Discipline, Literacy, Brain Development, Assessment, and other topics as suggested by families.

We keep families informed of interesting activities available to families, such as the annual Fire Station Open House, or Family-Zone discussion circles at the Stepping Stones Children's Museum. We also give families the opportunity to participate in Rowayton United Methodist Church Mission projects, such as food and warm clothing drives for local and international needs, a children's talent show to raise funds for ABRO (the American Bela-Russian Relief Organization) to bring orphaned children to America for six weeks in the summer, and Alex's Lemonade Stand, raising funds for children's cancer research. Be sure to check the bulletin boards and your child's cubbies for information on these events.

With the church, we will also sponsor "Food of the Month" drives for the Norwalk Emergency Shelter; "The Gift of Giving" anonymous Christmas gifts for children of shelter families; Easter Baskets, two each for shelter children, one containing treats and books, the other containing necessary health supplies such as soap and toothpaste.

Also located in the office is a resource guide to all the area support services, including information on how to contact local Health Departments, Help lines and Hotlines, Schools, Counseling, ESL Classes, Adoption Services Transportation and other community, Advocacy and Government Organizations.

Staff work together with community schools to facilitate a smooth transition to public or private Kindergarten. Staff work with local Associations for the Education of Young Children as well as the Norwalk Early Childhood Councils and area towns' Kindergarten Administrators and Teachers, to share appropriate skills inventories and assessments, to inform the receiving school of your child's experiences, development, skills and knowledge.

## **21. ORGANIZATIONAL PLAN**

The Five Mile River Nursery School Council is made up of volunteers except where noted and consists of interested church members who, in accordance with our organizational document, represent the interests of the church, and nursery school families who are responsible for all the decisions that affect the day-to-day operation of the school, including approval of its policies and programs and any special events it might sponsor. We work together in support of our continuing commitment to excellence in achieving the highest standards of quality in early care and education.

As family, your help and input are vital and **you are welcome to attend meetings of the Council. Please submit your agenda item to the Chairperson one week before the scheduled meeting.** The Nursery School Council meets the first Wednesday of each month October through May, with a special meeting scheduled at the end of summer and before the opening of school.

Nursery Council members will receive information and training from the Director during each Council meeting to orient all volunteers to the criteria for quality as advanced by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. **Families may also participate in training opportunities through special Family Education programs presented by our consultants and by the Director.**

The staff at the Five Mile River Nursery School may consist of any of the following: Aides, Assistant Teachers, Teachers, Head Teachers and Director.

Employees are covered for Workers Compensation through the Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church.

Supervision of staff is the responsibility of the Director. Supervision of the Director is the responsibility of the Personnel Subcommittee of the Five Mile River Nursery School Council. Staff set goals annually with the Director in a private conference. The Director sets goals annually with

the Nursery Council. A record of each conference is kept in each staff person's confidential file. All contracts, reviews, and personnel-related correspondence are maintained in a locked file.

Staff are hired with a 90-day probationary period.

All teaching staff are required to communicate with families a minimum of twice per year in a private conference. Teachers are encouraged to communicate with families daily regarding the progress of the individual child and to email families weekly with photos and news from the classroom.

Staff receive annual compensation for direct teaching time plus daily set up and clean up, planning time, preparation of classroom and child portfolios, staff meetings, and 42 hours for yearly set up and clean-up of the classrooms. Optional healthcare and retirement plans are available to staff. Staff each receives 5.3% of their total annual hours of paid sick or personal leave. The annual budget provides \$625 per staff member for continuing education tuition reimbursement. The State of Connecticut does not require church-owned schools to register for Unemployment Insurance; therefore, this benefit is not available to our employees.

## **STAFF**

**DIRECTOR** Must fulfill all requirements as set by the State of Connecticut Day Care Licensing regulations. The Director shall be responsible for state compliance and accreditation. He/she shall be responsible for school operation in keeping with the mission and vision of RUMC and the policies and procedures set forth in this document and by the Nursery School Council. He/she shall oversee all administration and education operations and be responsible for evaluation of the school's programs and personnel. The Director shall be responsible for all PR/communication from or about the school to its various audiences including the RUMC, families, staff, community, licensing and accreditation, and professional organizations. He/she shall have budget responsibility and review of all contracts and payments. He/she shall be responsible to oversee the Bookkeeper to verify and manage financial operations of the school and its programs. The Director shall be responsible for all personnel issues, including evaluations, compensation, recruiting, training, and changes. He/she shall have responsibility for the physical plant/facilities concerns and maintenance management. The Director shall recommend capital and program enrichment needs to aid fundraising efforts and shall work with the FMRNS Council to develop appropriate programs.

**BOOKKEEPER (Paid Position)** Responsible for all deposits, payrolls, bills, IRS payments, balancing bank statements, budget.

**OTHERS** The balance of the staff positions which the Council deems necessary to operate the Nursery School including, but not limited to: Team Director, Head Teacher, Teacher, Assistant Teacher, Teacher's Aide, Bookkeeper, and Maintenance. These positions shall be defined in an addendum to this document and shall be detailed and maintained in keeping with local, State of Connecticut, Federal and RUMC mandated personnel policies and procedures, and are to be reviewed annually by the Nursery School Director and Personnel Committee. The Personnel Committee shall propose changes to these positions for approval by the Council. Volunteer positions will also be defined in an addendum to this document.

## **OFFICERS OF THE NURSERY SCHOOL COUNCIL**

**CHAIRPERSON** Shall set agendas and preside at all meetings of the Council and Nominating Committees, sign letters and other documents for the Council, represent the school in the absence of the Director, serve as a member of the Nursery School Council Personnel Committee, and see that all Nursery School Council activities are represented to the RUMC Life and Ministry Council.

**VICE CHAIRPERSON** Shall assume the duties of the Chairperson in his/her absence, provide general assistance to the Chairperson in all functions, and serve as a member of the Nursery School Council Personnel and Nominating Committees.

**CO-CHAIRPERSONS** When the Chairperson and the Vice-Chairperson wish to equally divide their responsibilities, they may be effectively Co-Chairpersons.

**DIRECTOR** Shall serve on the Council ex-officio, with vote, and represent the school's administrative and educational concerns, including staffing issues. He/she shall be responsible for implementing the Council's policies and procedures and making recommendations to the Council for safe, healthy and effective operation of the Nursery School and its programs.

**FINANCE OFFICER** Shall present current financial statements during the regular Council meetings. The Finance Officer shall assist the Director in drafting the budget for the coming year and review important budget exceptions. Tuition, fees, scholarships, and tuition assistance will be reviewed annually by the Finance Officer within the context of budget development. The Finance Officer will submit a budget for the coming year to the Nursery School Council for review prior to submission to the RUMC Finance Committee and Life and Ministry Council as necessary for approval. The Finance Officer shall also be responsible for submitting monthly financial statements to the RUMC Finance Committee and the Life and Ministry Council. The Financial Officer shall serve in an advisory and support capacity to the Director and the Council in terms of financial planning and management. The Finance Officer serves a two-year term.

**FAMILY EDUCATION MEMBER** Shall represent the concerns of families and children to the Council. He/she shall be responsible to work with the Director to design and recommend methods by which the school may help families be more effective and also become more informed as to early childhood development and education. The Family Education Member serves a two-year term.

**FAMILY REPRESENTATIVE** Shall represent the families and their views and concerns to the Council. The Family Representative shall serve on the Nominating Committee to suggest new members to join the Council for each new program year. Shall coordinate volunteer activities and organize family volunteers with Classroom Volunteer Training in the Fall, and initiate Family Coffees and evening gatherings "Parents Night Out." They shall also inform Classroom Volunteer Coordinators of upcoming Council Meetings, any special events, volunteer opportunities, and fundraising activities. They shall keep Classroom Volunteer Coordinators informed of their ongoing responsibilities throughout the year. The Family Representative serves a two-year term.

**PERSONNEL OFFICER** Shall serve as the Chair of the Nursery School Council Personnel Committee, which is comprised, with the Personnel Officer, of the Council Co-Chairpersons (or Chair and Vice Chair) and the Finance Chair. He/she shall work with the Director and the Council as regards matters pertaining to personnel. He/she will be responsible for, with the Personnel Committee, aiding the Director in developing or amending personnel policies, interviewing candidates during the hiring process, reviewing annual staff contracts, arranging for the Annual Review of the Director, which will take place by December each year, and helping to resolve any other personnel issues that may arise. The Personnel Officer will be responsible for providing an objective forum for any grievances, and for reporting all Nursery Personnel activities to the RUMC Staff/Parish Relations Committee. The Personnel Officer serves a two-year term.

**RUMC PASTOR** Shall serve on the Council ex-officio, with vote, as an advisor to the needs and concerns of both the School and the RUMC. He/she shall serve on the Council Personnel Committee.

**SECRETARY** Shall be responsible for distributing notices of upcoming meetings, and keeping minutes of all meetings of the Nursery School Council, including attendance

records. The Secretary shall serve on the Nominating Committee. The secretary serves a two-year term.

**TEACHER REPRESENTATIVE(S)** Shall be elected from the teaching staff and represent the views and concerns of that group. The Teacher Representative will be responsible for providing a written report to all staff members of the Council's monthly meeting and activities. The Teacher Representative will take notes regarding all action-items at Staff Meetings and provide the Council with information about how and when each action-item was resolved. The teacher representative serves a two-year term.

**TRUSTEE** Shall serve as a liaison with the RUMC Board of Trustees, representing both Church and Nursery School concerns relating to the facilities maintenance and improvement. The Trustee serves a two-year term.

## **FAMILY VOLUNTEERS ON THE NURSERY SCHOOL COUNCIL**

**BEAUTIFICATION** Works to improve the school setting by periodically checking the environment, including exterior, classrooms and playground. It includes organizing school clean up days.

**EVENT PLANNING/FUND-RAISING** A subcommittee organized by the Nursery School Council Vice Chairperson responsible for planning and organizing all fund-raising activities. These include three to four fundraisers per year such as the Giving Tree Party and Auction (October), Harvest Fair (November), Family Party (Late Winter/Early Spring). Events are subject to change.

**MARKETING** Works with the Director to develop a marketing strategy to drive awareness of the school's programs and events to current and prospective families. The role includes development of marketing materials and content management of the school's website.

**FAMILY EDUCATION** Plans and organizes morning coffees, lunch, or evening dessert meetings for families centered on a discussion or lecture relating to child-rearing concerns such as health and safety, discipline, child development, promoting self-esteem, child rearing skills, or appropriate educational practices. Will also recommend helpful articles and resources of interest to families that may be shared in the weekly newsletter.

**CLASSROOM VOLUNTEER COORDINATORS** Each classroom will have one or two volunteers who will help recruit families in their class for volunteer activities; inform families of upcoming Council Meetings to gather families' input on changes in program or policies and special events or school closings; arrange for class coffees for families; assist the teachers with planning for holiday or other celebrations and coordinate class fundraising activities.

**LIBRARIAN** Organizes and oversees class librarians (one volunteer from each classroom, who is in charge of going to local libraries to check out books requested by teachers each month). Also maintains school library, school Amazon Wish List and compiles monthly Scholastic Book Orders for all students and teachers.

**WELCOME AND OUTREACH** Works to provide a connection between the school, community and families of FMRNS by greeting and welcoming new and inquiring families into the school community at Open House and Registration in January, in order to call new families who've been accepted into the next school term in February, and welcoming and introducing new families to teachers and other staff and Council during Orientation in September. The Welcome and Outreach representatives may also work to plan and implement mission projects in collaboration with the church such as food and clothing drives or disseminate information about community events. Overall, they will serve to help families feel more connected to the school and community.

**A list of Staff and Nursery School Council Members for the current year will be distributed at the Family Meeting in September.**

## 22. AT-A-GLANCE

### FIVE MILE RIVER NURSERY SCHOOL

Accredited by NAEYC's  
National Association for the Education of Young Children  
Program Number 478417

Five Mile River Nursery School  
5 Pennoyer Street, Rowayton, CT 06853  
TEL: (203-838-4266) FAX: (203-854-6627)  
Email: [director@fmrns.com](mailto:director@fmrns.com)  
Homepage: [www.fmrns.com](http://www.fmrns.com)

**ADMISSIONS** Admissions follow these priorities: Enrollment takes place the first full week in January beginning at the Open House scheduled for the first Saturday in January at 2 PM each year after current families have had a chance to enroll. Returning children are given first priority, considering the needs of all children, then as follows: children of Rowayton United Methodist Church members, children of Five Mile River Nursery School Council members, balanced male and female. We also consider if the child is a sibling of a child presently or previously enrolled and the teachers' recommendations for the appropriate placement for the child, based on the child's age and development. If all priorities are equal, a collaborative decision is made with the Administration and members of the Nursery Council as to placement for each child. Thereafter, children are placed according to lottery. **The Five Mile River Nursery School admits children of any physical, mental or emotional ability, race, creed, family status, ability to pay, or national origin.**

**Every family must select 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> choices for placement. We cannot guarantee that any child will be placed according to the family's first choice. Enrollment may continue throughout the year for any available places.**

**CALENDAR** The Five Mile River Nursery School follows the Norwalk Public Schools for closings and delays only. The Nursery School functions on its own Calendar. When the Norwalk Schools are closed for Professional Days, the Nursery School is open for Conferences. The Nursery School does not make up missed days. Please contact the Director to address with the Nursery School Council any situation that might be considered exceptional.

### **FUNDING**

1. Tuition, which covers the operating budget;
2. Fund-raising, which covers capital improvements or special programs;
3. Loans from church endowment, to cover building or other capital needs.

**LICENSING** Licensed by State of Connecticut, Office of Early Childhood

License Number: 12506  
Federal Employer ID#: 06-1044234  
NAEYC Accredited Program: #478417

**MANAGEMENT** Governing body is the Nursery School Council, composed of families, professional staff members and church members.

**ORGANIZATION** Not-for-profit, non-denominational community outreach program of the Rowayton United Methodist Church, founded in 1987.

**PROGRAMS**

Class Ages	# of Days Per Week	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Tuition
Twos	Pick Any One Day	9:30-12	9:30-12	9:30-12	9:30-12	9:30-12	\$2000
Twos	Pick Any Two Days	9:30-12	9:30-12	9:30-12	9:30-12	9:30-12	\$4000
Threes	Two Days MT or ThF	9:30-12	9:30-12		9:30-12	9:30-12	\$5500
Twos	Pick Any Three Days	9:30-12	9:30-12	9:30-12	9:30-12	9:30-12	\$5500
Threes	Three Days MTW or WThF	9:30-12	9:30-12	9:30-12 9:30-12	9:30-12	9:30-12	\$5500
Twos	Pick Any Four Days	9:30-12	9:30-12	9:30-12	9:30-12	9:30-12	\$6900
Twos or Threes	Five Days	9:30-12	9:30-12	9:30-12	9:30-12	9:30-12	\$8500
PM Threes / Fours PreK	Four Days Monday – Thursday	1-3:30	1-3:30	1-3:30	1-3:30		\$6900
4s/PreK	Five Days	9:15-12	9:15-12	9:15-12	9:15-12	9:15-12	\$8500
5s/PreK	Five Days	9:00-1:30	9:00-1:30	9:00-1:30	9:00-1:30	9:00-1:30	\$10,234
Kinder-garten	Five Days	12:15-5:15	12:15-5:15	12:15-5:15	12:15-5:15	12:15-5:15	\$11,275

**SCHOOL CLOSINGS** Listen to WNLK 1350 am, or 96.7 FM, for closing watch Cable News Channel 12, news12.com or call 203-854-4123. Nursery School follows Norwalk Public School closing, i.e., if Norwalk Schools are closed so is Five Mile River Nursery School. If Norwalk schools are delayed, the Nursery School will open the corresponding time (60 or 90 minutes) later **EXCEPT: in the case of an announced two-hour delay by Norwalk Schools, the nursery school will open for all programs at 10:30am.** In case of early dismissal, all programs will end the corresponding number of hours earlier. Please call or email the school if you have any questions. We will send out an email or a message via BrightWheel to all families as soon as schedule changes are known. Please be sure to add our MailChimp to your Inbox. FMRNS will NOT offer remote learning in case of cancelation due to weather.

**STAFF ACTIVITIES** Administration, teaching, professional development, curriculum development, licensing, safety and other regulation compliance. Member of Connecticut and National Associations for the Education of Young Children.

**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES** Nursery School Council member; organization of special events and fund-raising activities such as: Giving Tree Party and Auction (October), Harvest Fair (1<sup>st</sup> Saturday in November) Family Party (Spring); playground maintenance; beautification projects, classroom help for field trips, "Mystery Guest" teacher and other special events.

**The Five Mile River Nursery School of the Rowayton United Methodist Church Organizational Chart**

**RUMC Life and Ministry Council:**

Chair & Vice Chair	Secretary	Treasurer	Lay Leader	At Large (2)	Pastor (serves Ad Hoc FMRNS)	All RUMC Committee Heads
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**Committee Heads:**

Nursery School Council	Education	Finance	Staff – Parish Relations	Trustees	Worship	Mission	Member-ship
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**Nursery School Council – All Voting Members:**

Chairperson & Vice – Chairperson	Secretary	Finance	Personnel Committee Chairperson	Trustee	Family Education	Family Rep -Volunteer Coordinator
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**A majority of the members of the FMRNS Council must be members of RUMC**

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Director / [Assistant Director]

Teacher Representative

Administrative Coordinator

Classroom Volunteer Coordinators

All School Families

Team Directors

Bookkeeper

Head Teachers

Custodian

Classroom Teachers

**In the absence of the Director, the Assistant Director, the Administrative Coordinator, and Team Leaders will be responsible for the school, respectively.**

Assistant Teachers and Substitute Teachers

The Five Mile River Nursery School is owned and operated by the Rowayton United Methodist Church which is supervised by the District Superintendent and the Bishop of the New York Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church