

# **McGee's Farm Cooperative Preschool Handbook 2001**

2214A Grant Street  
Berkeley, CA 94703  
510/849-3593

Welcome to McGee's Farm. This Handbook is designed to introduce you to our program and to help you be an effective member and participant. It includes important information on how the school is run. Please keep it available for reference.

We're glad to have you with us!

## **SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY**

We feel that preschool can offer children a stimulating and nurturing environment that is safe, healthy, and secure.

We feel that nurturing the social-emotional side of the preschool child is our most important objective. We want our children to feel secure, to like themselves, to feel competent and able to give of themselves without feeling threatened. To this end we encourage social play, conversation, giving and sharing, but they are never forced. We recognize the right of the child to be alone, to feel free from threat, and to be protected from harm. We feel the child has both rights and responsibilities and should be offered a choice where possible but that the teacher/parent is ultimately responsible and may stop the actions of a group or individual child in the interest of safety and/or the needs of the children.

We feel a semi-structured program can best support our objectives. Thus we alternate long free-play periods with short, structured periods. The free-play periods offer the child a choice of indoor or outdoor time. The structured periods offer opportunities for both group and individual activities. By providing props and supplies for dramatic play as well as ample amounts of raw materials for art activities, we feel we can meet the preschool child's desire to create. We foster their need to learn as well as their eagerness to continue to learn by striving to provide group and individual activities that promote the learning of skills in a fun, challenging manner.

In order to achieve our objectives we are assisted and guided by the expertise of a professional director/teacher and staff.

Lastly, we feel that preschool children enjoy having their parents (primary-caregiver) present at school and that learning to share their parent(s) with their peers is a meaningful experience.

## **SCHOOL STRUCTURE**

McGee's Farm Co-op was started by a group of moms in 1982 to answer the need for a neighborhood preschool for their two year old children. In December 1983, the Co-op was incorporated and was recognized as a non-profit corporation in 1984.

## **CO-OP/CORPORATION/GENERAL MEMBERSHIP**

These three terms are interchangeable. We prefer to refer to the corporation/general membership as the Co-op, as we are first and foremost a co-op. We incorporated to limit parent and staff liability as well as to facilitate the licensing procedure.

The Co-op is composed of all families currently enrolled as well as current employed staff. Parent membership begins with the enrollment of their child or children and ceases with their withdrawal. Staff membership begins with employment and ceases with termination. Each family and staff person has one vote. We have no set limit on the number of families that can join the Co-op. A natural limit occurs when enrollment is full, usually at about 12 families. We currently have three staff persons. (A reading copy of the Corporate Articles and Bylaws is available at the school.)

### **Monthly Meeting Policy**

Our Co-op depends on its collective conscience to survive. Everyone's ideas, concerns, observations, joys, needs, and desires about the school need to be heard on a regular and consistent basis. The monthly General Meeting is the time and place where every member can discuss, recommend, amend, or adapt the school's policies and where all members vote for or against these policies.

### **General Membership Meeting**

1. Time/Place: 7:30 p.m., school's Red Room, last Tuesday of every month, unless otherwise posted. Scheduled adjournment is 9:30 p.m., but at times it will be earlier.
2. A poll will be taken each September to determine if the meeting date is to be changed.

**POLICY: ONE ADULT MEMBER OF EVERY FAMILY AND ALL STAFF PERSONS SHALL BE PRESENT AT EVERY GENERAL MEETING.**

3. Each family is allowed to miss one meeting per school year. (Single parents may miss two.) If

a family misses more than one meeting, they will owe two hours classroom participation or \$15.00 per missed meeting.

4. If you are unable to attend or plan to be late, please advise the president, a fellow member or the director.

5. Minutes will be taken and distributed no later than 1 week after the meeting.

6. It is up to each member not in attendance to obtain any immediately effective information. We urge you not to bother the staff with obtaining information, but to ask a fellow parent member or call the secretary.

7. Infants are welcome, but toddlers and preschoolers can be disruptive. We ask that you come without them.

### **Agenda**

The general meeting is chaired by the board president. The staff and any job-holders or committee chairs with pertinent information will give reports. After old business is completed, any new business is discussed, referred to committee, or voted on. A preliminary agenda is posted one week prior to each meeting. (See Decision Making Policy and Procedure section for voting policy and procedure.)

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The board has three officers: president, secretary and treasurer. Board officers are elected once a year from current, continuing members. The president is the licensee of the school and the board is accountable for upholding the state and local laws that regulate our license and permits.

THE BOARD SHALL ACT IMMEDIATELY AND WITHOUT BENEFIT OF COLLECTIVE DECISION TO CORRECT ANY MATTER THAT POSES AN IMMEDIATE THREAT TO THE HEALTH AND WELFARE OF OUR CHILDREN OR THAT MAY THREATEN OUR LICENSE OR PERMITS.

In other matters the board is responsible for approving administrative and staff decisions of a routine nature and for the setting up of committees such as hiring committee, evaluation committee, budget committee, etc. The board meets no less than once a year. The board of directors is established as part of our articles of incorporation and specific ongoing duties are on file at the school. (See Decision Making Policy and Procedure section.)

### **THE COUNCIL**

The council is made up of member parents who hold specific jobs in lieu of or as well as participating as teacher assistants in the morning program. The standing configuration of the council is: chairperson/board president, finance person, secretary, building and grounds person, recruiter, and scheduler. The council does not include staff. The president, finance person and secretary are always in attendance while other job holders attend as the needs of their specific jobs demand, but not less than four times annually and as the holder changes.

The council is responsible for a large array of day-to-day matters: recruiting new families, repairing gates and fences, procuring extra supplies, paying teachers and bills, advertising, fundraising, scheduling parent participants, etc. The council convenes their monthly meeting at 7:00 p.m., on the last Tuesday of every month and adjourns to the general meeting by 7:30 p.m. Any member (staff or parent) may attend. (See Decision Making Policy and Procedure section.)

### **THE STAFF (Director/Teacher and Afternoon Teacher)**

#### **Director/Teacher Job Description**

McGee's Farm is staffed by a full-time professional director/teacher who meets or exceeds the required qualification standards as set by the state licensing agency. Authority to run the daily program as specified by state law (licensing) and local law (permits) is designated by the Corporation to the director/teacher.

THE DIRECTOR/TEACHER SHALL ACT IMMEDIATELY AND WITHOUT BENEFIT OF COLLECTIVE DECISION TO CORRECT ANY MATTER THAT POSES AN IMMEDIATE THREAT TO THE HEALTH AND WELFARE OF THE CHILDREN.

In addition, the director/teacher is authorized by law to act as a direct liaison with the state licensing agency in the receipt of deficiency notices and their correction as well as to report any deficiency that the Co-op chooses to ignore.

The director/teacher is responsible for realizing the goals of the school (see School Philosophy section) and for the supervision of both parent/teacher assistants and the afternoon teacher.

The director/teacher's job is contracted for one year and subject to an evaluation prior to renewal. All parents and staff are included in the "evaluation of staff" process. A specific job description and benefit package is on file at the school. (See Staff Hiring and Terminating section for a discussion of that process.)

### **Afternoon Teachers Job Descriptions**

The afternoon teachers are qualified teachers as defined by state licensing requirements and are under the supervision of the director/teacher. The afternoon teachers are responsible for relieving the director/teacher of the care of those children who stay for the afternoon program. After the school is closed, the afternoon teachers complete their responsibilities by readying the school for the next day.

### **Substitutes**

Whenever possible substitute teachers are chosen from:

1. Afternoon teacher for morning program
2. Current member parents
3. Qualified teacher substitutes

The director/teacher designates full authority to a substitute teacher to run the program and safeguard the children. The director/teacher shall be responsible for insuring that the substitute teacher is fully informed on McGee's policies, procedures, and philosophy. Substitute teachers shall familiarize themselves with the McGee's Farm Handbook prior to commencing the job.

A SUBSTITUTE TEACHER SHALL ACT IMMEDIATELY AND WITHOUT BENEFIT OF COLLECTIVE DECISION TO CORRECT ANY MATTER THAT POSES AN IMMEDIATE THREAT TO THE HEALTH AND WELFARE OF THE CHILDREN.

As a substitute teacher, your role is to plan and coordinate all activities, as well as to engage yourself directly with the children. Acquaint yourself with the daily schedule, then check the weekly curriculum plan and follow it or substitute your own activities. Be sure to inform the parent participant of any change before the day begins. You are responsible for announcing transition times and leading group activities. The first group time is for sharing, discussion, and cognitive games or music. Choose whatever games or music activities you feel comfortable using. The final group time is for stories, fingerplays, etc., of your choice. During free play times, you are responsible for your areas and activity and also for being generally aware of all activities, including those run by the parent participant. Final responsibility for the day's program rests with you.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

McGee's Farm Preschool is open to any child (in or out of diapers) between the ages of two and five years regardless of race, color, national or ethnic origin. Full or part-time enrollment is available. We require a minimum of three morning slots per week. Only those children enrolled in the morning program may enroll in the afternoon program for that day.

Prior to receiving this Handbook all parents shall receive an admissions procedure letter, detailing the requirements of pre-enrollment and enrollment. A copy of the letter is on file at the school. The procedure McGee's Farm follows is that which is required by the state licensing agency as well as the actual needs of the school.

### **Pre-Admission Conference**

All prospective parents shall be interviewed by the director before enrollment in order to determine if our school can meet the needs of their child. The conference will also include the following:

1. An Orientation: The director will introduce the new parent to the school and its policies. All new parents shall receive a copy of this handbook. All new parents shall receive requisite forms.
2. A Buddy: All new families who wish shall have a volunteer parent member to guide them through the early months of assimilation into the Co-op. The recruiter will assign a family to your family.
3. Admission Agreement: Incoming parents shall read this handbook and discuss any concern or confusion with the director before signing the Admissions Agreement at the close of the meeting.

## **HOURS OF OPERATION AND CALENDAR**

Hours Morning Program/Co-op Preschool: Monday – Friday, 8:30am – 12:30pm

Afternoon Program: Monday – Friday, 12:30pm – 5:30pm

### **Calendar**

McGee’s Farm Preschool is a year-round school. A calendar of observed school holidays is posted at the school. The school is closed the week between Christmas and New Year’s Day and one week for spring break which will be at the same time as the Berkeley school system, and the last week in August which is curriculum week. Such closures and arrangements for providing care during these times are voted on by the general membership each year.

### **FEES**

#### **Tuition**

Fees are calculated monthly based on the number of slots per week. Each AM or PM a child attends per week = 1 “slot”. Example: A child attends Monday, Wednesday, Friday morning program and Monday and Friday afternoon program, for a total of five slots (three morning plus two afternoon slots). Multiply the number of slots by the slot fee to get monthly tuition. Current fee schedule is included in the last section of this handbook entitled “Yearly Updates.”

#### **Parent Participation**

We require that all families participate. Participation may consist of a combination of morning participation (from the hours of 8:45am to 12:45pm) or off-site jobs.

#### **Three Month Commitment**

Due to the complexity of our multi-choice schedule, we ask that each family make a three-month commitment to the participation of your choice. Schedules are spread over the three-month intervals, thus eliminating imbalances as well as allowing the scheduler to set schedules in advance. (Participants will have ample opportunity to pre-approve their schedule.)

#### **Tuition Payment**

Payment: Please pay by a check, cashier’s or personal, or by money order made out to McGee’s Farm Preschool and deposit into the Finance envelope by the first business day of every month. Fees are considered late if not paid by the 7<sup>th</sup> of every month. There is a 10% penalty for late payments made after the 7<sup>th</sup> of the month. Each family will be allowed one month’s late payment per year without penalty. If payment has not been made by the last day of the month, then the child will not be admitted to McGee’s on the first day of the next month.

1. Returned Checks: A charge equal to our bank charges will be collected for checks that bounce.
2. Post Dated Checks: Parents unable to pay by the 7<sup>th</sup> can, with prior approval from the finance person, post their checks for later deposit.
3. Posting: A schedule of current fees owed is posted on the inside bulletin board each month.

### **OTHER FEES**

#### **Registration**

1. A \$75 waiting list deposit is collected upon intent to register. The deposit is applicable toward future tuition.
2. A deposit equal to one month’s tuition is payable 30 days prior to enrollment. This deposit is held against your last month’s tuition.
3. The first month’s tuition is due on or before your child’s first day of enrollment.

**Late Pick-Up Fee**

If a child is picked up after 12:30, there shall be assessed a \$5 late fee for each additional five minutes that the child is left at the school, up to a maximum of \$20.

**REFUNDS**

Parents are responsible for all fees and participation regardless of their child's absence for any reason. No refunds or deductions are made for absences due to illness, vacations, school holidays or abrupt withdrawal.

Waiting List Deposit: This fee (\$75.00) is refundable when the school cannot accept a child at the agreed upon registration date. If a family chooses not to enroll, the fee is non-refundable.

One Month Tuition Deposit: This fee is applicable to the balance owed on your last month's tuition if proper withdrawal notice has been given. (See Withdrawal section.)

**WITHDRAWAL**

1. Parents may withdraw their child at any time by giving a 30-day written notice from the first of the month to the director, president, recruiter, finance person and scheduler of your intentions. The deposit will be credited to the last month if a 30-day notice is given.
2. Parents must complete their participation obligations prior to withdrawal.
3. Last month's tuition must be paid on the first day of the child's first month, otherwise the child will not be admitted to McGee's Farm.
4. When a family cannot meet the tuition payment and/or participation requirement or in cases of excessive unexplained absence of the child, a general membership vote shall determine if the family must withdraw.

**ENROLLMENT**

Adding Slots: Families wishing to add slots to their current schedule should advise the director who will accommodate them when slots become available.

**Dropping Slots:**

1. Parents may "drop slots" upon 30-day written notice from the first of the month to the director, president, the recruiter, finance person, and scheduler.
2. Any outstanding participation shall be completed before participation associated with the decrease can be dropped.

Note: For any changes in a child's schedule, whether or not the number of slots has changed, notification shall be given to the director, president, scheduler, recruiter and finance person.

**Graduation**

All children of kindergarten age shall withdraw from the school on or before the last school day of August. Arrangements for a child to continue shall need prior approval by the Corporation (general membership).

**Drop-In**

Drop-in is handled on a space available basis and shall be prearranged through the director for both morning and afternoon programs. Parents are responsible for payment on any reserved slots, whether used or not. Payment is added onto the following month's tuition. Current drop-in rate is listed under Fee Schedule in the Yearly Update section. Drop-in slots for lunch (12:30 – 1:30 pm) are occasionally available. Permission for lunch drop-in must be made in advance through the director/teacher. Cost is currently \$5.00 and will be added to the following month's tuition.

**TUITION RATE CHANGES**

McGee's Farm Co-op shall not increase, decrease, or change the existing fee structure in any way without benefit of a collective general membership vote. A minimum 30 day notice of a fee change will be

given all members by the board of directors. Rate changes generally occur in conjunction with our fiscal year budget recommendations, effective July 1 of each year.

## **DECISION MAKING POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

### **GENERAL**

All issues, concerns, and recurring matters of a far reaching nature such as policy setting, fee setting, budgeting, major procedural changes, curriculum goals, major expenditures, hiring and terminating, staff, etc. shall be collectively decided.

Matters of a lesser nature concerning day to day operational needs are decided by parent participant job holders as they arise or shall be brought to the council meeting for decision.

### **Small Matters**

Parents may bring any small matter to the attention of the individual job holder by direct communication or in writing. (Holders and their jobs are posted.) Job holders will decide if they can act on the matter or bring it to the council meeting for decision.

In instances involving problems with other children, concerned parents will take the matter first to the director and the president who will decide how to proceed.

### **Large Matters**

Parents shall direct large concerns, matters and issues to either:

1. The board president/chairperson.
2. The council by attending the meeting.
3. The director personally or in writing; who acts on one of the two above methods.

All directives shall be discussed at the council meeting where recommendations shall be made or held for further discussion, then recommendation at the general meeting.

**IN ANY MATTER THAT MAY THREATEN THE IMMEDIATE HEALTH AND WELFARE OF THE CHILDREN, THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS WILL ACT IMMEDIATELY AND WITHOUT BENEFIT OF COLLECTIVE DECISION TO CORRECT THE MATTER(S).**

### **COLLECTIVE DECISION**

There are three areas for the initial discussion of any matter:

1. Board meeting
2. Council meeting
3. General meeting

Most new matters will have been directed to the council, while board matters are generally recurring functions. Some matters simply come up during the course of discussion at any of the meetings. The board and council shall discuss a matter, then make a recommendation (a proposal). Neither body shall make motions to act on a recommendation. All recommendations shall be brought to the General Meeting for a vote. (See General Meeting section.)

### **Voting Rules**

1. A vote shall pass by a 2/3 majority of those present. **EXCEPTION: SAFETY MATTERS SHALL PASS ONLY BY UNANIMOUS DECISION OF THOSE PRESENT.**

## **STAFF HIRING AND TERMINATING POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

### **Hiring Policy**

McGee's Farm is an equal opportunity employer. Our hiring procedure has been developed to meet the legal requirements of state licensing as well as the needs, goals and ideals of our school. The board of directors shall be responsible for hiring and terminating staff but the process shall be one in which all members take part. The decision to hire a staff person is made collectively. Parents and staff shall have an equal opportunity to choose new staff when the need arises.

## **HIRING PROCEDURE**

### **Hiring Committee**

1. Set up by board of directors
2. Served by member volunteers, any member (parent or staff) may serve
3. Chaired by board president

### **Committee Functions**

1. Screen all applicants; establish that state licensing qualifications are met
2. Accept resumes from all applicants
3. Accept completed Personnel Form (LIC 501) from all applicants
4. Verify a minimum of three references on all applicants; check:
  - a. Validity of past experience
  - b. That no history of corporal punishment exists
  - c. That applicant is at least 18 years old; if any doubt applicant shall show California driver's license or I.D. card
5. That applicant has desirable attributes
6. Set up interview time and place, and post

### **The Interview**

1. Conducted by board president
2. Any member may attend
3. All applicants asked same set of (pre-agreed) questions
4. Members agree upon one or none of the applicants
5. A recommendation is made  
If a recommendation cannot be reached the procedure shall be repeated.

### **General Meeting**

The board president carries the recommendation to the next general meeting or a special general meeting for a vote. A vote shall pass by a 2/3 majority of those present. Proxy votes are accepted where there is "reasonable cause" for absence. If the recommendation fails the procedure shall be repeated.

### **Hiring**

The agreed upon applicant shall submit for board verification:

1. Health Screening Report (LIC 503)
2. Proof of T.B. clearance; performed not more than one year prior to or seven days after employment
3. Copy of school transcripts
4. Proof of age (where there is doubt)
5. Letters of reference
6. Full set of fingerprints (processed through D.S.S.)

### **Timetable**

Items 1, 4, and 6 shall be completed before first day of enrollment.

Items 3 and 5 shall be accepted during the "trial period" but no later than 30 days after employment.

Item 2, see above.

### **Trial Period**

Each new employee shall have a "trial period" of 30 to 90 days.

### **Renewal of Contract**

Staff shall be evaluated no less than once a year prior to renewal.

## **TERMINATION POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

### **Summary Dismissal**

When a staff person causes an immediate threat to the health and welfare of the children, THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS SHALL ACT IMMEDIATELY AND WITHOUT BENEFIT OF COLLECTIVE DECISION TO TERMINATE THAT STAFF PERSON.

### **Second Chance Approach**

Staff persons shall be given ample opportunity to redeem themselves before being terminated or before a contract renewal is denied. The decision to implement a second chance plan shall be determined by collective decision (general membership vote). If the plan fails a decision to terminate shall be determined by collective decision.

## **IN SERVICE TRAINING**

### **PARENTS**

McGee's Farm, by its very nature as a parent cooperative, acts as a continuous training program for parents under the leadership of our qualified director/teacher. At the start of each school year, in September, a "Parent-Participant" workshop is held. The purpose of the workshop is to guide incoming parents through the process of being a parent/teacher. The workshop is conducted by our director/teacher.

Throughout the school year, as interest demands, other workshops may be arranged for the parents on a variety of subjects, such as: Discipline, Parental Stress, Creative Play, Cognitive Objectives in the Preschooler, Socializing the Preschooler, C.P.R., Music, Books, etc. The workshops are held in conjunction with guest speakers, qualified parent speakers, and the school director. Because we compensate speakers, including staff, where appropriate, our workshops are subject to prior budget approval. Workshops are held at the school outside of school operational hours.

### **STAFF**

McGee's Farm encourages its staff to take courses and workshops to increase and enhance their professional skills. Class and/or credit work in C.P.R., First Aid, Early Childhood Development, and Childhood Development are suggested. Such classes are paid for in part or in full by the school with prior approval from the board of directors.

## **PARENT PARTICIPATION POLICIES**

### **PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENT POLICY**

A certain amount of participation is required of every member family. How much a member family participates is based on the job chosen. Participation can be fulfilled through classroom assistance and/or out-of-school jobs, noted in the following. Families are also required to participate in fundraising activities and work parties.

### **Participation Options**

1. Teaching assistant during the morning program, 8:30 am – 12:30 pm,
2. A specific out-of-school job has a specific duration. The president maintains a list of current job-holders, job availability dates, and a waiting list for those interested in specific jobs.

### **Scheduling Form**

1. The scheduler shall pass out a form at three-month intervals to determine participation choices of all member families.
2. Use the form to select the participation option.
3. Parents shall make a three month commitment to their choice. (See Three Month Commitment in Fee section.)
4. All classroom parent participant schedules shall be okay'd by member families prior to taking effect.

### **Work Parties and Fundraising**

All families shall participate in work parties and fundraising.  
Work Parties: 4 per year about 4 hours each family

Fundraising: In recent years fundraising has consisted of one major fundraising activity and a tax-deductible cash or participation contribution. All families are encouraged to buy scrip. Fundraising options will be discussed and voted on annually.

## **JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

Parents holding these jobs are expected to work at least a number of hours.

A Parent who holds a specific job shall:

1. Attend the first council meeting following the start of that job. Exceptions: snack person and auxiliary clean-up person.
2. Attend all council meetings if the job is: president, finance person, or communications.
3. Hold no more than one job unless otherwise decided upon by membership.
4. Act to make no decision of a "far reaching nature" without benefit of collective decision (general membership vote). (See Decision Making Policy and Procedure section.)
5. Take full responsibility for completing the job as described. (See Job Requirements and individual job handbook.)
6. Find a substitute when unable to complete commitment for any reason.

## **JOB REQUIREMENTS**

### **FINANCE**

The finance person is responsible for maintaining the financial records of the school. Duties include:

1. Accounts payable
2. Accounts receivable – preparation of the monthly tuition statements
3. Payroll
4. Annual non-profit tax information returns
5. Attendance at council meetings
6. Presentation of financial reports at general membership meetings
7. Serves as treasurer on the Board of Directors
8. Acts as liaison with our professional bookkeeper. Bookkeeper files quarterly and end of year payroll tax returns and prepares monthly financial statements.

### **FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE**

Fundraiser organizes and supervises the running of annual fundraising events (yard sale, etc.) as well as grantwriting.

### **RECRUITER**

The essence of the recruiter's job is to fully enroll the school with children. The parts of the job are as follows:

1. Advertise, market, and otherwise make known to the community the existence of McGee's Farm
2. Work with director on varied admissions-related duties
3. Talk with prospective families and tell them about our program; mail brochure and other information
4. Call prospective families after brochure is sent – this step is very important
5. Answer all follow-up questions
6. Set up appointments to visit the school
7. Call families after they visit school – this step is also very important
8. Arrange for pre-enrollment interview with director
9. Inform finance person and scheduler of new family enrollment
10. Arrange schedule of attendance

### **SCHEDULER**

1. Responsible for setting up parent participation schedule
2. Responsible for seeing participation slots are filled



is advantageous. Andronico's, Berkeley Natural Grocery, Berkeley Bowl, Whole Foods, Living Foods, Wild oats, etc.

2. Keeps refrigerator and food cupboards orderly; throws out old food regularly and organizes food storage areas.

#### **EAST BAY COUNCIL**

1. Attends monthly meetings (10 yearly, no meetings during June or July) There is a monetary fine imposed by the East Bay Council (EBC) for more than one missed meeting; this fine is the personal responsibility of the job holder and will not be paid by the school.
2. Serves on one EBC committee.
3. Reports to school and to council on activities: Consultant services, insurance, sharing information about other schools, etc.

#### **SCRIP / SCOOL POP**

1. Take and fill orders for grocery certificates.
2. Buy certificates from Berkwood Hedge School
3. Deposit checks and balance checkbook.

#### **EMERGENCY COORDINATOR**

1. Update food/water supplies as needed (every 6 mos for water, for food)
2. Periodically check smoke alarms, emergency exits, and emergency evacuation signs posted.
3. Make sure each child's emergency info is current and included in emergency back packs. This means getting new info from families as they enroll.
4. Keeps first aid supplies up to date and stocked.

#### **PRESIDENT/CHAIRPERSON**

The role of the president is to keep peace and encourage and maintain communication among staff and parents. Also ensure that the business of the school proceeds smoothly. Specifically:

1. Establishes agenda for meetings.
2. Chairs council and general meetings.
3. Acts as official spokesperson of the school.
4. Acts as primary contact person for licensing agency.
5. Acts as primary contact person for director and teachers.
6. Acts as liaison among job-holders to resolve disputes, if necessary.
7. Prepares teacher contracts.
8. Maintains waiting list for off site jobs.
9. Insures that the hand book is brought up to date at the end of the year, including a list of holidays.
10. And a host of extenuating issues as they develop.

NOTE: The president is elected as president of the board of directors as well as fulfilling the above job-holder duties.

#### **SECRETARY**

The secretary is a member of the board of directors and is elected once a year from among continuing members. The board secretary may or may not hold other off site jobs, and it is often, although not necessarily the Communications jobholder.

#### **TREASURER**

1. Prepares and files yearly taxes.
2. Meets with the president to prepare the annual budget.

The treasurer is a member of the board of directors and is elected once a year from among continuing members. In accordance with our by-laws, the treasurer should also hold the finance job.

For more information on the secretary, treasurer, and president position, please see the section on school structure. These three are elected positions. The officers of the board of directors are ultimately responsible for the business of the school.

### **TEACHING ASSISTANTS**

(See Basic Guidelines for the Parent Participation section.)

Parents shall arrive by 8:30 a.m. to participate. Morning participation hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. In the morning, it is absolutely essential that the participating parent arrive no later than 8:45 a.m. Many children are here by that time and we must have the coverage. In cases where this is not possible, participating parent needs to arrange with other parents for coverage.

### **HEATH**

All participants having direct contact with the children shall:

1. Sign a statement of "Good Health."
2. Complete a test for T.B.
  - a. It shall be performed not more than one year prior to or seven days after initial presence in the school.
  - b. Proof of clearance by a physician shall be given to the director.
  - c. Test shall be repeated every two years.

McGee's Farm Pre-School shall allow only those parents who have met the above criteria to participate as teacher assistants. THE DIRECTOR CAN AND WILL TURN AWAY A PARENT PARTICIPANT UNTIL THE CRITERIA ARE MET.

### **RATIO**

State licensing requires that parent cooperative center have at least one staff member or participating parent present for every six children (1:6) in attendance.

The ratio is met at our school by always having a teacher and one participating parent for the 12 children in the morning and 1 teacher for the 6 children in the afternoon program. In order to maintain the ratio:

1. Parents shall be scheduled for those days their child is enrolled.
2. Sibling children (infants included) shall not accompany parent participants.
3. At any time the ratio exceeds 1:6 THE DIRECTOR CAN AND WILL TURN AWAY CHILDREN OR ASK CHILDREN TO BE PICKED UP UNTIL THE RATION IS ESTABLISHED.
4. Parents unable to keep their scheduled obligation shall find a substitute from among the current (adult) participants.

### **SUPERVISION**

The director/teacher supervises all parent participants (teacher assistants). Parents shall look to the director/teacher for guidance and advice.

### **SAFTEY**

1. Parents shall report any unsafe structural condition to the director or head teacher immediately.
2. Parents shall keep the entire group under supervision (in mind, sight, or hearing) at ALL times. (See Basic Guidelines for Parent Participation section.)
3. Parents shall familiarize themselves with Safety Policies for Walks and Field Trips.
4. Parents shall familiarize themselves with the Emergency Care and Disaster Action Plan.
5. Parents shall adhere to the Discipline Policy.

### **DAILY PROCEDURE FOR ALL PARENTS**

## **Arrival**

### **Arrival time**

Children may arrive any time after 8:30 a.m. It is preferable that they arrive before 9:30 a.m. Please inform the school if you cannot arrive by 9:30 a.m.

## **Daily Inspection**

Every child is greeted daily by the director/teacher or the designee and accepted into that day's program. The director/teacher can choose not to accept a child who shows obvious symptoms of illness. (See Illness Policy) The child need not know that they are being "inspected," but a parent or person bringing the child is to remain until the child is accepted. It is appropriate at this time, when the child is accepted, to sign in.

## **Sign In**

A sign in sheet is located near the front door. All children are signed into the program by the parent or person who brought them. We ask that you sign your child in as you leave the school, i.e., after the director has greeted your child. This procedure clarifies staff responsibility while a parent may still be present at the school. Under the column entitled "Comments," please note anything unusual; for instance: if our child will be staying all day and doesn't usually, or that some other designated person will pick them up, or that they have a cut, bump, or bruise, etc., that occurred out of the school. Otherwise there is no need to fill in the column. There is also a space to check when your child is attending as a "drop in." You may sign your first or last name; law does not require a full signature. (Initials and printing are not considered signatures.) We ask that parents do not talk extensively with the staff at arrival; staff needs to be free to focus on children.

## **Absences**

Please call if your child will be absent that day. In the case of planned absences (vacations), please let the director know in advance. There is a calendar in the kitchen. Please note vacations or scheduled absent days. Whenever possible, parents should notify the director/teacher either the evening before or by 9 a.m. the day the child will be absent.

## **DEPARTURE**

### **Pickup Time**

Children may be picked up at anytime throughout the day. We ask that you inform the director/teacher if you intend to pickup your child early, so that you might be aware of field trips, short walks, or any other curriculum plans that might interfere with your early pickup. The "Comments" column on the sign up sheet is the appropriate place for noting your intention to pickup early and we encourage you to advise the director/teacher.

Morning Program: Children enrolled in the morning program only are to be picked up no later than 12:30 p.m.

Afternoon Program: Children in the afternoon program are to be picked up no later than 5:30 p.m.

Pickup Person: Only those persons designated on the "Pickup Authorization" form are allowed to pickup a child unless other arrangements have been cleared with the director or teacher in charge.

Sign Out: All children are to be signed out with the parent's first name or last name. Sign your child out immediately upon arriving at the school, this again to clarify staff responsibility while a parent is present but not necessarily ready to leave with their child.

Late Pickup: Please call, if you can, when running late. An adult will always remain with a child until the designated pickup person arrives. **NO CHILD WILL BE LEFT WITHOUT ADULT SUPERVISION UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.** Please remember that late pickups from the morning program are uncomfortable for your child as the remaining children will be starting their naps. Late pickups cause an inconvenience; we urge you to avoid them.

Note: There is a fee for late pickups. See "Other Fees" above.

## **DAILY SCHEDULE (SAMPLE)**

### MORNING PROGRAM

8:25 Director / teacher arrives  
8:30 Parent participant and children begin to arrive; parent participant to arrive no later than 8:45  
8:00–9:00 Snack Preparations; free play  
9:00–9:55 Free play and activities inside and outside  
9:55–10:00 Clean-up time  
10:00–10:40 Snack and group times  
10:40–11:30 Free play and activities inside and outside  
11:30–11:45 Clean-up time  
11:45–12:00 Story time  
12:00–12:30 Children prepare for lunch, wash hands, and eat  
12:30–12:45 Departures

### AFTERNOON PROGRAM

12:35–1:45  
1:00–1:30 Free play  
1:30–2:00 Story  
2:00–3:45 Naps / quiet time  
3:00–3:45 Art activity for children not napping  
3:45–4:00 Wake-up  
4:00–4:15 Snack  
4:15–5:00 Activities  
5:00–5:30 Clean-up begins for children.  
5:30–5:55 Departure of children; teacher clean-up  
6:00 Teacher leaves

## **PROGRAM AND CURRICULUM DESCRIPTION**

### **MORNING PROGRAM**

#### **Free Play and Activities**

The program at McGee’s Farm is designed to provide a neighborhood like setting. Children are encouraged to plan their own activities and games and ample raw materials (boxes, blocks, cardboard, sheets, odds and ends) are available for their use. Social play is encouraged and adult interference carefully controlled. Each day there are two long periods for free choice. Children may engage in self-directed activities inside or outside or may become involved in a teacher directed activity. Areas are set up for small and large dramatic play, self-directed manipulative and cognitive materials, art, reading, sand play, gross motor activities, or resting quietly. There is at least one teacher-directed activity for each period for children to engage in if they wish. The first period is generally for art and cooking projects; in the second period, there may be science projects, walks, plant care, or art activities.

#### **Themes**

To this setting is added a theme-based child centered curriculum. Themes are based on developing the “whole child.” The curriculum includes a strong art, music and dramatic arts program to expand the creative expression of each child and foster strong self-image and self esteem. Teacher directed activities often revolve around the current theme; however, not all activities are related. Please check with the director for an update on current theme(s). Themes for a year might be:

Autumn: Self-Image. We begin by introducing ourselves to each other, welcoming new children. Children should become aware of themselves as individuals, aware of their bodies, and develop a sense of competency and artistic expression. We will discuss basic identification, the body, health, nutrition, and emotional health, concluding with a focus on social responsibility.

Winter: Weather and Seasons. Children will become aware of and learn to appreciate the natural world around them in its ever-changing forms. Focus will be on animals, their origins, and environments; weather, precipitation, air, wind sun, heat and the seasons.

Early spring: What is life? Children will become aware of the life cycle through observations of seeds and eggs and plant and animal growth. They will develop an appreciation for the life in and around them, and an acceptance of the natural cycle. They will learn about animals and plants.

Late Spring: Our World. We will study the past, beginning with how the world began, then dinosaurs, then America's past. Then we'll look at our present world, as a planet and as a community. Finally we'll discuss outer space and the future.

Summer: The ocean marine life, oceanic environment, etc.

### **Group times**

Each morning there are two group times of about twenty minutes duration. For the mid-morning group, children are loosely separated into "older" and "younger" kids. While one age group has a snack, the other group is with the teacher for discussion and sharing, cognitive games, and/or music. The groups then switch places. For music or special interests, the two groups may meet together. At the end of the morning, all of the children meet for story-time/circle-time.

### **AFTERNOON PROGRAM (Currently not available)**

A relaxed and more recreational afternoon program is provided for children who have been in school all morning. Each afternoon is centered around one long period of free play in which the teacher follows the lead of the group. Emphasis is on constructive/dramatic play; outdoors, with water, sand, blocks, large construction; indoors, with blocks, or other narrative toys, house play, etc., and arts/crafts more structured but still child-directed table work with a large variety of media. Lunch time is quiet with conversation and manners encouraged. Story time is a cooling out period following free play and can last as long as attention is given. An hour's rest period is desirable for all children beginning with the reading of books on their respective mats, then nap. For those children unable to nap, quiet time continues, followed by a quiet activity. The daily snack is structured like lunch, appropriate behavior defined and encouraged. We end the day with a short playtime that often includes stories, self-directed arts/crafts, quiet dramatic play. Kid clean up is encouraged through the day.

### **BASIC GUIDELINES FOR PARENT PARTICIPANTS**

1. Always follow and enforce house rules.
2. Keep the entire group under your supervision in mind and sight or hearing at all times. It is unsafe to focus solely on one child.
3. Avoid interfering in child-directed activities that are running smoothly unless you are asked by them to participate. In general, avoid making models for children in art projects. Instead, verbalize about their creations, make oblique suggestions (I wonder what would happen if...), encourage them to verbalize.
4. Attempt to treat all the children equally. Avoid grudges and personal dislikes. You may not like a child or his/her parents, but you can respect that child (and the parents!). Your child may need extra attention from you. This is OK in limited doses as long as it does not take you away from the group or keep your child from becoming involved. If your child does want to leave you to go to another activity, don't feel slighted but let her/him go. This is healthy, normal behavior.
5. Don't worry if your child is acting up because you are there; this is not unusual. Ask the teacher for help if necessary. Don't be harder on your child than the others. Above all, don't be embarrassed for your child.
6. Be prepared to participate! This means knowing the daily schedule, dressing appropriately, and arriving no later than 8:45 a.m. on the day of your participation. Check the curriculum board when you arrive. If you must be late for an unavoidable reason, please call the director and advise. If you have questions about the day's schedule, ask! Otherwise it will be assumed that you know what to do with minimal supervision.
7. Free Play Periods: Be aware of all activity in your area if you are involved with a project. Encourage, but do not force, children to join a teacher-directed activity. Help children to involve themselves if they seem aimless.
8. Group and Snack Times: If a child gets up, quietly try to get him/her to rejoin the group. If this is not possible, go quietly with the child to a separate area and talk or engage in a non-obtrusive activity; letting a child roam about during group time is disruptive. If you are not with the group during group time, and if you hear a child being disruptive, then quietly but firmly ask the child to

- come with you to the other room. If you are conducting a group alone, inform the child that she/he must either join the group or sit quietly elsewhere where he/she will not disrupt the others.
9. Clean-Up: Encourage children to help. Do not let them take out new toys during this time. Be specific: the blocks go in this basket, bring me all the green pieces, etc. At other times, encourage children to put away activities as they finish, but be flexible – another child may wish to use it, the child may want to leave his/her block creation up for a while etc.  
Please clean up your area. During clean-up time, this means putting all toys on shelves, against the wall, or in baskets. Outside, putting away all special project materials, and covering the sandbox. The easel may stay set up. Please put leftover perishable food in the refrigerator, throw away all partially eaten food, and stack dishes neatly on a tray by the sink. Put any other clean-up items here, such as paint containers. Try to keep the school in good order at all times (not just morning). This means that the person in charge of an area will see to it that everything is picked up and put in its proper place at the end of a session (afternoon, individual child there with parent). Unless the teacher/director needs the parent at the 12:00 noon circle time, please spend this time cleaning up the kitchen, sweeping the floor, and putting things away. Try to leave the outside area in good order for the afternoon teacher.
  10. Outside Area: Supervise general activities and any planned teacher directed activity. Move tires, ladder, boards in any way that will stimulate activity. Make sure sand stays in the sandbox. Allow water play only if agreed upon with the teacher. Make sure the gate is closed and watch children going inside to make sure they arrive.
  11. Ramp & Front Area: Children should be in these areas only if an adult is physically present. Do not allow a child using the ramp to go in the side area or the front yard.
  12. Park: Take a periodic head count. Place yourself in a strategic position where there are a number of children. Do not physically assist a child to reach a position she/he cannot reach along. Help a child down only if absolutely necessary. Instead, verbally show the child how to go up or down.
  13. Walks: Require children to hold hands. No exceptions! Everyone must stop at the curb and look for cars before proceeding. Children should walk directly across the street with no dallying or goofiness. Because of the need for safety, walk rules are NOT flexible. Children may NOT walk together more than 3 at once.

### **McGEE'S FARM HOUSE RULES**

1. The teacher is the ultimate authority during regular operating hours.
2. Children may not physically or verbally hurt other children. (Even if kids are laughing, it's not okay; no teasing either.)
  - First, warn child
  - Next, remove toy, etc.
  - If all else fails, teacher/director removes child
  - If this occurs, validate child's anger, feelings are okay – let them stomp, kick, or hit the floor, a pillow etc.
3. Children may not break or abuse toys, books or other school property.
4. A child's work (e.g. block towers) must be respected and not interfered with, except at the child's invitation. Artwork should not be modeled for children. Children should wear smocks when working at the easel and for messy art work. Encourage them to do so. Children should wear comfortable play clothes, shoes, etc.
5. Children must sit at the tables for snacks and lunch. Hand washing before eating is required. No playing or shouting is allowed at lunchtime.
6. Children should only take out the toys they need and put them away when finished. No aimless dumping or trashing of toys. Block building should be done in block areas, not in front of doors. Block building are not allowed near doorways. Blocks from knocked down block structures are to be picked up right away.
7. Sand and water play should be supervised. Try to keep sand in the sandbox. No throwing, kicking or pouring sand from a high level. No tossing sand with shovels. No throwing bark or making dust with bark. Sand and bark play is okay outside sandbox. The water table may not be climbed into or on. No bark or sand in the water table. No climbing around the water table.
8. No climbing on fence or railings, period.

9. Outside toys stay out; inside toys stay in. ( We agreed that toys shouldn't be moved in and out at all.)
10. No muddy feet indoors. Sand should be dumped from shoes before entering school.
11. Bottles are permissible only at nap time. This includes arrival and departure.
12. Weapons and toy weapons are not permitted at school.
13. No more toys from home. Instead, we are encouraging children to bring cuddlies, leaves, and natural things to share around the current school theme.
14. Playdoh stays at the table. Generally, toys should stay in the general area where they were taken out (manipulatives at or near the table; blocks in the red room, etc.) We are making a distinction between Playdoh and baker's dough. Only creations of baker's dough may go home.
15. A 1:4 ratio is required for filed trips or walks. Children may not walk together more than three together at once.
16. The gate must remain latched at all times except when an adult is supervising entries and exits. Children should not open the gate from either side. (Remember, the gate on the north side now has an additional latch to keep it more secure. Be sure to fully lock it.)
17. No banging on steel drums or hitting objects with shovels or bats (except balls)
18. No running or yelling inside. No undue screaming outside.
19. No throwing or dropping objects from high places. No exceptions.
20. All tree climbing must be supervised at all times.
21. Play Structure: When on top level, both feet must be on the floor. NO climbing on railings. Children may not throw anything down from the structure.
22. Climbing Alone: Children may not be lifted up by an adult to a place on a tree or structure that they can't get to by themselves. They should also be encouraged to get down by themselves.
23. Underwear should be worn at all times, including while playing in the paddling pool. (Bark in the bottom is a bummer.)
24. Children must remove shoes and socks before playing in wet sand.
25. Please encourage children to use smocks when painting.

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY AND GUIDE**

### **POLICY**

In keeping with the ideals of our school and as state law specifies, our children are to be kept free from corporal or unusual punishment, infliction of pain, humiliation, intimidation, ridicule, coercion, threat, mental abuse or other actions of a punitive nature including any punishment associated with food, rest, or toileting.

THE DIRECTOR CAN AND WILL ASK A PARENT PARTICIPANT TO LEAVE THE PROGRAM AT ANY TIME THAT THE DISCIPLINE POLICY IS BROKEN.

### **GUIDE**

Be alert at all times. Place yourself in a strategic position where you can hear and see your entire area. Be aware of all children in your area. Keep the group in mind. (For example, it's okay to comfort one crying child, but keep the five others in the sandbox in mind, lest there be other problems.)

If you maintain firmness from the beginning, things are less likely to get out of hand. Avoid initiating or encouraging games that are likely to get out of control. If a dispute threatens, move in closer to be ready to intervene. Step in before a problem escalates but avoid intervening where children seem to be finding their own solution.

You are in charge. Know this and feel secure in resolving a problem. Use a calm but firm tone of voice.

State rules and directives in a clear, concise way. Try to use positive statements and a positive attitude. First, state the rule. If the behavior is repeated, state the rule and its reason. If necessary, state the rule again and the consequence if it is not followed. Follow through on a consequence. Where a choice is possible, offer one. However, do not offer a choice or consequence that you cannot follow up on. Also know that children are astute at seeing through "false" choices.

In a dispute, listen to each child's story. Encourage them to verbalize directly to each other or (if necessary) through you. Suggest solutions, such as using a toy together, asking to use it when the other child is through with it, finding a similar toy.

Try to stop aggressive behavior before it gets out of hand! The child who is hitting should be taken to the director/teacher for appropriate discipline and guidance.

In a situation of aggression, comfort a child who has been hurt, state clearly to the aggressor that hitting (or kicking etc.) is not allowed. I-statements work well (I don't like to see a child hit). Avoid moralizing (That's not nice, I'm ashamed of you, You're big enough to know better). Avoid prolonging a situation with undue discussion. If a child will not respond or a situation is beyond your control, call on the teacher or another adult for help.

If a child loses control, calmly remove the child to a quiet, secure place. Avoid discussion at this point. Talk warmly to the child or leave alone, whichever seems best and as the situation allows (i.e. don't leave other children unattended!) Let the child know he/she is welcome to leave the place when calm (sometimes a reminder will be necessary later).

If you feel out of control, remove yourself if possible or at least distance yourself from the problem, take a deep breath and relax. Call on another adult for help and take a five-minute break, if possible. If you feel uncomfortable about the manner in which you settled the problem, let the teacher know. The teacher can act objectively to bring about a harmonious resolution for both you and the child.

Save the end of your shift to discuss problems with the teacher. Never discuss problems with the teacher in front of the children.

## **MISCELLANEOUS POLICIES AND INFORMATION**

1. **CONFERENCES**: All parents meet with the director for a pre-admission (initial) conference. In addition, the director will ask for a parent conference when she/he feels the need for one. Parents are free to ask for a conference or to discuss their child informally with the director. The director is available by appointment.
2. **CHILDREN'S RECORDS**: Each child has a folder where all their individual records are kept. The director keeps notes on all the children and we urge you to read your child's file in conjunction with the director to avoid misconceptions. Your child's folder is held confidential and may not be read by any other parent; however, the state licensing agency representatives can by law reproduce your child's records upon demand during normal business hours.
3. **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**: We encourage parents and staff to work problems out on a personal basis whenever possible, i.e. "talk it out". If the grievance involves another child, parents are asked to first contact the director and president with the problem. The director, the president, and the parent will determine the best method to resolve the issue. Where a personal attempt at a resolve has failed or communication is not possible, grievants may attend the council meeting that council will act to bring about a fair resolve. Where the problem cannot be settled by the council or the timing of the next council meeting is inconvenient, you may appeal to the board for a special hearing. It is our hope that the board will bring about a resolve; should it fail, the board will then call for a general membership hearing of the issue and subsequent vote.
4. **EMERGENCY CARE AND DISASTER ACTION PLAN**: A complete plan is posted on the bulletin board in the kitchen. All parents shall familiarize themselves with the plan. Please let us know if you have certification or special skills in First Aid or C.P.R. Our staff is trained or we will assist them in training in both C.P.R. and First Aid.

In the event that the school must be evacuated, the children will be taken to:

- The backyard first
- The front house (Hamill house) phone 848-1969
- Neighbor's house to the North (Julie Daniels)
- Washington School

5. **INJURY REPORTS:** Any injury your child sustains that requires medical assistance will be reported in duplicate by the director. One copy will be sent to the licensing agency and the other will be kept in your child's file. You will be informed by note or personally or both of any such occurrence.
6. **FIRE DRILLS:** Parents – all participating teacher assistants will participate in at least one fire drill during the monthly general meeting, usually at the orientation meeting in September. Children will participate in a minimum of one fire drill per quarter during school hours.

PARENTS SHALL FAMILIARIZE THEMSELVES WITH FIRE EXITS, PLANS AND LOCATION OF FIRE EXTINGUISHERS.

7. **INSURANCE:** McGee's Farm is a member of the East Bay chapter of the California Council of Parent Participating Nursery Schools, often referred to as the East Bay Council. It is through this council that a policy is held with a Southern California insurance broker. The council holds a monthly meeting and offers their members a variety of specialized services, including scholarships. A representative "job holder" attends the meetings and informs the membership of council services, and actions.
8. **ILLNESS POLICY:** It is our intent to try and reduce the spread of contagious illnesses within the school community as much as possible. We therefore ask parents to use the following guidelines in deciding if their child should attend school. A child with any of the following shall not attend school:

- Fever within the last 24 hours
- Colds when two or more symptoms are present (runny nose, sneezing, sore throat, tearing eyes, cough, fever).
- Vomiting or diarrhea within the last 12 hours (unless diarrhea is due to an allergy).
- An ill child who displays signs of discomfort, such as: crying, inability to participate, needing to lie down, "feeling miserable", listlessness.
- Any contagious illness as advised by doctor/health worker. Parent should follow the advice of their own doctor/health worker in determining the length of the child's absence from school. Contagious illnesses may include (but are not limited to): strep throat, scarlet fever, chicken pox, mumps, rubella, pink eye, pinworms, impetigo, ringworm, croup and roseola. Please report all such illnesses to the director.

**Parental discretion is advised for the following:**

- Cough not associated with a cold (e.g. asthma).
- Persistent runny noses (as in allergies or at the end of a cold)

A child who becomes ill during school hours will be appropriately cared for (isolated if illness appears contagious to the teacher or parent participant), and parent will be contacted to pick up child

Parents should contact the director if a child has a contagious illness. It will be the director's responsibility to post a report of any major contagious illness.

Prescription medicine that needs to be administered during school hours must be clearly identified and labeled with dosage and doctor's name, and teachers must be notified verbally and in writing. Non-prescription medicine will not be administered without clear, written instructions, and permission

9. HYGIENE POLICY: In an effort to prevent the spread of contagious illnesses, personal and group hygiene should be stressed by all adults working in the school.

1. Children shall be taught and encouraged to use tissues if coughing or sneezing and to throw them away immediately.
2. Children's faces shall be kept clear of mucus and tissues thrown away immediately
3. Adults shall wash their hands after using tissues and/or diapering a child
4. Adults shall wash their hands before preparing or handling food.
5. Children shall wash hands before snack time and lunch time and after using the toilet.
6. Adults shall wash hands after helping a child use the toilet.
7. Disinfect the potty chair after its use and toilet seat as needed.
8. Disinfect diaper changing area after each change and bathroom after an "accident" (See 14 below.)
9. Wash dishes with a mixture of soap and bleach (one capful) and use a scrubber to remove food.
10. Wash your child's nap bedding weekly (stock their basket with at least one labeled underpad, pillow case, and sheet). Replace or wash soiled bedding immediately. During periods of illness, wash bedding more frequently. Keep children's bedding separated in labeled baskets.
11. Store marked bottles and lunch boxes in refrigerator when not in use. (See 15 below.)
12. Children and adults shall use paper towels only.
13. Mouth musical instruments shall not be used in the school.
14. Follow "Diaper Changing Policy".
15. Follow "Bottle Policy".

10. DIAPERS:

1. Children in diapers will be changed at least once in the morning and once in the afternoon, or as often as required.
2. Children are to arrive in disposable diapers and a marked supply is to be kept at school.
3. "Messy" pants will be bagged but not rinsed.
4. Diaper Changing Procedure: A procedure is posted in the diaper changing area. Our policy and state law asks that you follow it anytime diapers are being changed at the school, for the health and safety of our children.

11. TOILET TRAINING: Children toilet train at various ages. We encourage a child to toilet train and find that it comes easily when they decided they are ready, usually by 2 years and 9 months of age.

12. BOTTLES: State licensing requires that we adhere to the following bottle policy for the health and safety of our children.

1. Label all bottles.
2. Bottles are for nap time only.
3. Child may not walk about with a bottle.
4. Empty after the bottle is less than half full.
5. Store unused, or up to half empty, in refrigerator.
6. Never leave out even juice or water.
7. Empty bottle before return home. Since McGee's Farm Pre-School does not have the equipment to sterilize bottles, empty bottles cannot be assumed to be clean.

13. SNACKS AND LUNCH:

Snacks: McGee's Farm provides a morning snack at 10:00 a.m. and an afternoon snack at 3:50 p.m. Each snack usually contains a food from three of the four main food groups: 1. milk and milk products; 2. bread and grains; 3. protein foods; 4. fruits and vegetables. Sugar is avoided and salt is kept to minimum. Only non-meat proteins are included in our menus. Beverages are provided by the school. Weekly snack menus are posted in the kitchen; parents of children with food allergies should notify the director of any menu item to which their child is allergic.

Lunch: All children who are part of the morning program and those who stay for the afternoon eat lunch at school. Lunch is brought from home and stored in the school refrigerator. We discourage the inclusion of junk food as well as foods high in sodium and sugar in the children's lunches.

About Mealtimes: The director/teacher or a parent joins the children at their table and conducts an orderly mealtime of quiet discussion and appropriate table manners in a relaxed atmosphere. Children are encouraged to pour their own beverage from appropriate-sized containers and to help themselves to ample servings of each food. Children are also encouraged to "bus" their own dishes and to help in the general clean-up.

Serving Size: Food proportions meet or exceed the requirements as defined by state licensing requirements, Title 22, Div. 6, Section 80076.

14. CUBBIES: Each child has their own cubby where their personal belongings are kept. Cubbies have a tendency to get cluttered and we urge you to "turn it out" often.

15. EXTRA CLOTHING: Extra clothing for children (under and outer garments, bathing suits, warm clothing) should be provided and stored in the bathroom.

16. BASKETS: Children enrolled in the afternoon program each have their own basket where napping gear and nap time "cuddies" are kept. Please label sheets, blankets and pillow cases and wash every week to prevent any lice infestation or other health problems.

17. LOST AND FOUND: The lost and found box is on the front porch. Remember that labeled clothing rarely gets lost. Items not claimed after several weeks will either be disposed of or donated to worthy causes.

18. FIELD TRIPS/WALK SAFETY POLICY: Safety is always paramount in the supervision of young children and particularly important in public areas away from the school. All McGee's Farm safety policies are set by unanimous decision and apply to teachers, parents, and aides.

#### WALKS.

1. Children shall hold hands, either two children together or an adult with two or four children.
2. The group shall STOP at all curbs and check for traffic BEFORE stepping into the street.
3. Children shall be encouraged to check for traffic, but the adult in charge shall be the only one to guide the group.

#### Adult/Child Ratios

- 1:4 for field trips, or long walks
- 1:6 during neighborhood walks with director

#### CAR TRIPS

1. Each child shall have a separate seatbelt or car seat.
2. Drivers shall have adequate insurance.
3. Ratio see "Adult/Child Ratios" above

#### GENERAL

1. A periodic head count shall be taken on all trips.
2. A child shall only go on a field trip if there is a permission form on file.
3. When the entire group (school) goes on a trip and a parent does not wish their child to go, responsibility for childcare for that period rests with that parent, i.e., parent must make other arrangements for childcare.
4. Field trips shall be scheduled and posted in advance.
5. Children not regularly enrolled on a day for which a field trip is planned may attend if accompanied by an adult who will remain with the child and who is responsible for that child.

19. SHARING: On Wednesday, children may bring items from home to share that are related to the current theme. Toys brought from home (other than nap time “cuddlies”) have been found to be a problem and are best left at home.
20. BIRTHDAYS: Birthdays will be celebrated by singing “Happy Birthday” to the child at storytime. If parents wish, a birthday treat for each child at the school may be provided from morning snack time. Please do not bring items that are high in sugar.
21. BOOK CHECK-OUT: School books may be checked-out for a period of two weeks. A check-out list is kept by the director.
22. ADULT BATHROOM: Per state licensing requirements, a separate bathroom for adult use is available at the rear of the Hamill’s residence.
23. PARKING & PARKING CONTRACT: A use permit to operate a Children’s Community Care Center at this site was granted the landlord (Michael Hamill) by the Berkeley Zoning Office. The permit carries the following restriction: “That the applicant (McGee’s Farm Co-op) shall make consistent efforts to insure that double parking or other illegal parking does not occur.” We urge you not to double park or disturb our neighbors in any way by blocking driveways, etc. Presently, a preferential parking plan is in effect which restricts parking to a two hour limit. The limit is enforced on a daily basis. You may leave the program to move your car at those intervals necessary to avoid citation. Citations are stiff! Please advise the director/teacher of your whereabouts before leaving to move your car.
24. OUR LANDLORD: We rent our school building and yard from the owner of the front house: Michael Hamill, 2214 Grant Street. We encourage everyone his privacy while coming and going. He has requested that children arrive and depart by ramp-side door rather than the kitchen.
25. E-SCRIP/SCHOOLPOP: McGee’s Farm is registered with two fundraising programs that donate a percentage of various merchant sales to schools. You can sign up at [www.schoolpop.com](http://www.schoolpop.com) or [www.escrip.com](http://www.escrip.com) to have a percentage of your purchase both on and off line donated to McGee’s Farm.
26. CLEAN UP DAYS: 4 times a year, parents are expected to participate in a Saturday work day to clean up and revitalize the school. Each family is required to spend 3 hours working at each work day. Two or three weeks prior to the work day, a sign-up sheet will be posted by the Buildings & Grounds person. Families are expected to sign up for a 3 hour segment in either the morning or the afternoon. Families needing child care for those hours can try to work out an exchange among themselves.

In general, families are required to work their 3 hours on the day of the clean-up; however, some jobs such as shampooing the rug will have to be done after the end of the work day. We also realize that at times extenuating circumstances prevent families from attending the work day. If this is the case, the family will be expected to contact the Building & Grounds person (before the work day, if at all possible) to get a list of jobs to fill 3 hours. If the 3 hours of work time is not performed before the following monthly business meeting, the family will be charged a fine of \$100.00

## YEARLY UPDATES

### 1. Fee Schedule:

Fee per slot is \$75.00 with a base fee of \$75.00 per family. Slot fee includes insurance and membership in the East Bay Council of Co-op Nursery Schools. (EBC).

Drop in rate per slot is \$20.00

Lunch/flex time drop in rate is \$5.00

### Miscellaneous Fees

1. The EBC offers a consultant service for \$75.00 a year. The cost is divided by families in McGee's Farm. This optional service is voted on by the membership each year.
2. Additional fees or changes in fee schedule are voted on by member families.
3. Clean-up Saturdays – The cleanup dates will be determined for the months of October, January, April, and July at the general meetings of the co-op.

### Calendar of School Holidays

Labor Day  
Veteran's Day  
Thanksgiving Holiday  
Christmas Vacation  
M.L.K. Jr. Birthday  
President's Day  
Spring Break  
Memorial Day  
Independence Day

The school is closed the last week of August for Teacher Conference/Curriculum Week.