



VILLAGE GREEN  
NURSERY SCHOOL

[www.vgns.org](http://www.vgns.org)

**PARENT  
HANDBOOK  
2011-12**

# WELCOME TO VILLAGE GREEN NURSERY SCHOOL

## VGNS STAFF

### **Nan Sheridan:** Director

Nan's educational background includes a Bachelor of Science Degree from the University of Connecticut, specializing in Early Childhood Education as well as many hours of professional development workshops and seminars. Nan has been teaching at VGNS since 1997 working as a head teacher for both the 3 and 4 year old classes. She became director in 2005 while continuing to teach the morning classes. Beginning in September of 2011 Nan's roll changed from a teaching director to a director only position. Nan is currently a member of the Early Childhood Collaborative of Southington and the Early Childhood Professional Educator's Consortium.

### **Diane Pisko:** Head Teacher

In May of 2010 Diane received her Associates Degree in Early Childhood Education from Tunxis Community College. Previous to earning her degree, in May of 2009, Diane received her Certificate of Early Childhood Education from Tunxis Community College and has completed courses at Naugatuck Community College to earn her Head Teacher Certificate. Diane began volunteering in her children's classes at Village Green and later became an administrative assistant and substitute teacher at VGNS. She became a teacher assistant in September 2000. Diane volunteers for many committees at her church and is superintendent of Sunday school. Diane is head teacher for all classes at Village Green.

### **Cindy Harris:** Teacher Assistant and Substitute

Cindy joined VGNS as a volunteer in her daughter's class. In 2001 she began working as a substitute and as an extra hand to help the 3-year old children adjust to their first school experience. Cindy's natural ability with children and years of experience substituting at Village Green has lead to a permanent position as an assistant with the morning 3-year olds. She will also continue to substitute as needed.

### **Karen Downey:** Teacher Assistant and Substitute

Karen has a degree in Sociology from the Eastern Connecticut State University. She is currently taking Early Childhood Education courses at Tunxis Community College. Karen became involved at Village Green as a volunteer in the classroom as well as being a Room Mom and joined the staff in 2007. While a stay at home mom Karen had a Home Daycare. Karen also volunteers at her children's elementary school and town sports teams. Karen will be assisting with all classes.

**\*All teachers are First Aid and CPR certified.**

### **Dee Niland:** Administrative Assistant

Dee began at Village Green as a parent volunteer in her two children's classes. She has been the Administrative Assistant since 2002. Her duties include, collecting tuition payments, monthly newsletters, Lending Library and Scholastic Book Club coordinator, and many other projects through out the year. She volunteers many hours at her children's school, as a past co-president of the PTO and chairperson of the fall fundraiser.

## **Village Green Nursery School 2011-12 Board of Directors**

Ruth Amaio, Secretary

Karen Andres

Roxanne Bafuma, Chairperson

Janet Hanscom, Chairperson

Allison LeBarron, Treasurer

Donald Leger

Nora Matthews

Joie-Marie Mazurek

Teresa Nelson

Rich Szulczewski

The Village Green Board can be contacted by e-mail at:

[vgnsboard@gmail.com](mailto:vgnsboard@gmail.com)

## PHILOSOPHY

Village Green Nursery School is dedicated to providing a caring, supportive and developmentally appropriate environment, offering a wide variety of activities designed to reflect each child's interests and abilities. Our goal is to help children grow toward their potential, discover the joy of learning and enjoy a rewarding preschool experience.

The policies and procedures for Village Green Nursery School provide employment for staff, activities for families and an education program for preschoolers free from discrimination based on race, color, and ethnicity.

## ADJUSTMENT PERIOD

The beginning of the school year can be very difficult for a child and this period of adjustment is normal. Our staff will help guide you and your child through this potentially difficult period. Parents can help smooth the transition by keeping calm, positive, and reassuring. Children can sense a parent's anxiety and this can cause the child to feel anxious. Our Lending Library has a picture book for parents to borrow if a child is having difficulty with adjustment.

## ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

### Arrival:

Arrival time for the morning session is **9:00 a.m.** Arrival time for the afternoon session is **12:15 p.m.** We ask that you wait in the area located near the elevator until a staff member opens the door to begin each session. Preparation time for the teachers is vitally important in order for each session to be organized and successful.

### Dismissal:

Dismissal is promptly at **11:30 a.m. and 2:45 p.m.** We ask that you do not come to the classroom or into the playground area; we will bring the children to you. We ask you to be on time at dismissal because children may become confused and/or scared if the other children are leaving and there is no one there to pick them up. We understand that occasionally there will be extenuating circumstances. **Please call the office (628-6958)** if there is a possibility that you will be late. We will not allow a child to leave with anyone other than a parent unless the person picking up the child is listed on the child pick-up list. Please send a note or tell one of the teachers if someone new will be picking up your child. Your child's safety is our most important concern.

**\*Note:** Due to a recurring problem involving children continually being picked up late, the nursery school board has voted to assess any parent whose child is consistently picked up late, a **\$10 late fee for each day** pick-up is late. There will be one reminder, then a notice will be sent to the parent by our administrative assistant advising the parent of the amount due.

## BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Children are welcome to celebrate their birthday in school with their classmates. A child's birthday will automatically be scheduled into the monthly snack list. Summer birthdays are scheduled toward the end of the school year.

## CLOTHING

It is important that each child be dressed in comfortable, washable play clothes that will endure food and juice spills as well as art activity mishaps. The clothing should also be child friendly (easily removed) to encourage independence in personal skills such as toileting and dressing for outdoors.

Each child is required to carry a complete change of clothes in their backpack in case of spills, art project mishaps, or toileting accidents. **(Children must be toilet trained.)**

Please be sure your child has appropriate clothing for the season. In good weather, we will get fresh air and outdoor exercise. **PLEASE LABEL ALL OUTDOOR CLOTHING WITH YOUR CHILD'S INITIALS.**

**Closed shoes are required for all areas of the playground that are covered with woodchips. NO SANDALS, CLOGS OR ANY FOOTWEAR THAT IS OPEN AT THE TOE OR HEEL.**

## COMMUNICATION

Home/School Communication is **very important** to our staff. Parents are invited and encouraged to become actively involved in their child's educational experience. Parents are encouraged to volunteer for a variety of activities such as field trips and in-school events. We welcome you to visit, ask questions and offer comments at any time during the school year. Parents can also contact us via e-mail at [vgnstaff@gmail.com](mailto:vgnstaff@gmail.com). Monthly newsletters and calendars will be distributed in a continued effort to keep parents involved and informed. Conferences will be held once a year; however, a conference may be requested anytime during the school year.

Parents are required to complete the following forms:

**Registration Form**

**Medical Health Record Form**

**Child Information Form**

**Getting to Know You Form**

**Field Trip Information Form** (Individual field trips will have separate permission forms.)

**\*\*\*Children with allergies requiring the school to administer medication must have additional forms completed before they can attend school. These forms are:**

- **Childcare Emergency Treatment Form**
- **Administration of Medication Form**

## COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Most problems within a preschool are non-life threatening and can be resolved by:

1. Discussing the problem with the classroom teacher.
2. Discussing the problem with the program director.
3. Discussing the problem with the nursery school board of directors.
4. If the problem is not resolved, you may contact the Department of Public Health:  
410 Capitol Avenue-MS# 12 DAC  
P.O. Box 340308  
Hartford, CT 06134-0308  
1-800-282-6063

(THE SAME PROCESS WORKS FOR COMPLIMENTS AS WELL!)

## CURRICULUM

Our curriculum will follow NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) guidelines and the Connecticut State Benchmarks. It is designed to foster all areas of a child's development including physical, social, emotional and cognitive development.

Physical development involves both the child's small and large motor skills. Fine motor skills, necessary for writing, are developed while playing with play dough, cutting, using drawing materials, writing utensils and manipulatives such as beads and legos. Children will participate in activities developing large motor skills such as jumping, skipping, hopping, rolling and more. This will help develop strong, well-coordinated bodies.

Social development is fostered each day by encouraging children to: take turns, share, play cooperatively in small groups, wait for short periods of time, help others and problem-solve.

Emotional development is fostered through encouragement, learning about their own feelings and helping them to recognize how others feel. By offering choices and fostering independence, teachers encourage children in positive ways, enhance their self-esteem and help them to make decisions.

Cognitive asking children open-ended questions and encouraging conversation and communication fosters intellectual ability. Children are exposed to books and other forms of literature in order to encourage a love of reading. Children will learn about a variety of topics through active participation. Art, music, science, movement, stories, mathematics and reading concepts are incorporated into our daily themes.

## DAILY SCHEDULE

### 9:00-9:20/12:15-12:35 Arrival/Choice Time

- Learning Centers are set up around the classroom for children to explore. Children can play alone or in small groups at a variety of activities. These may include: a variety of art materials, the sensory table (sand/water table), library and/or listening center, dramatic play, blocks, science, work bench, music, and manipulatives (puzzles, pegs or other fine motor materials) for the children to choose from.

### 9:20-9:30/12:35-12:45 Clean-up Time

- Throughout the day children are encouraged to clean up any materials they have used. At this time of the day all children participate in clean up.

### 9:30-9:50/12:45-1:05 Large Group Activity

- Children gather and sit for whole class activities. Teachers and children interact, talking about the day's schedule and the daily theme. During this time a book may be read, songs sung, group games played or movement activities implemented. Activities will center on the theme and specific skills that have been targeted as the focus for the children.

### 9:50-10:30/1:05-1:45 Small Group Activity

- One teacher will work with a small group of children on a special activity. All children will have a turn to complete the activity. This activity will focus on introducing and enhancing specific skills. This activity may incorporate any of the learning areas of the classroom and will vary from day to day.

\*\*Choice Time: Children not involved in the small group activity can continue to explore the various Learning Centers that are set up around the room. They will have the opportunity to complete an activity they started earlier in the day or try something new. A limited number of children may participate in each area, and children are encouraged to explore areas that they may typically not try or engage in an activity that may be a little challenging.

### 10:30-11:00/1:45-2:15 Clean-up/Show and Tell/Snack

- Throughout the day children are encouraged to clean up any materials they have used. At this time of the day all children participate in clean up and all materials are put away for the day in preparation for snack and end of the day activities.
- **Show and Tell:** While snack is being prepared, we typically have one child present the "Mystery Bag". The child is encouraged to tell the group their clues and call on friends to guess what the item is. This is for the 4-year old class only. The 3-year old class will have the opportunity to bring in special items related to the theme on specified days.
- **Wash Hands:** In an effort to keep germs to a minimum, children wash hands before snack. This also encourages independence in personal self-help skills.
- **Snack:** Snack is provided on a rotating snack schedule by the parents. Healthy foods are required by the State Health Dept. and should include 2 food groups. Parents will be notified of any food allergies and are asked to plan accordingly. (See Snack section of Handbook for more details.)

### 11:00-11:30/2:15-2:45 Large Group Activity/Outdoor Play

- This is typically a more active group time incorporating music, movement and gross motor activities.
- **Outdoor Play:** Weather permitting we will end our day outside. Play equipment such as a sand box, crawl tube, balance beam, balls, etc. will be available. It is an opportunity for the children to use outside voices and release energy.

### 11:30/2:45 Dismissal

## DISCIPLINE

Positive guidance is the philosophy used in our program. We emphasize the use of redirection, natural and logical consequences, modeling of acceptable and appropriate behavior by the teachers, use of language to express feelings and the development of problem-solving techniques to guide children to learn self-discipline and self-control.

Our staff will:

- Speak to the children at eye level in firm, friendly voices; be consistent and patient;
- Give the child time to regain control and provide emotional and physical support to help the child regain control;
- Encourage the child to use words to express feelings;
- Set clear expectations and have realistic expectations;
- Provide constant supervision of the classroom without being intrusive;
- Give transition warnings;
- Teach self-discipline, responsibility, cooperation and problem-solving skills;
- Anticipate and eliminate potential problems; use redirection;
- Contact parents when necessary.

The staff will **not**:

- Use abusive, neglectful, corporal, humiliating, embarrassing or frightening punishment under any circumstances.
- Physically restrain a child unless it is necessary to protect the child, his/her peers or the staff.

If a child is having persistent behavior issues:

- Documentation concerning behavioral incidents will be maintained.
- Staff will contact parents and work together to form a behavioral plan for their child that will involve cooperation of both home and school. The purpose of this plan will be to foster more positive, socially acceptable problem solving skills and behavior.

(Discipline Policy continued next page)

- When necessary, the staff will provide resource information to the parents for additional services not provided by VGNS.
- In cases where the child's behavior causes injury to others or disrupts the classroom environment excessively, and staff feels that all avenues for a positive outcome have been exhausted, a report will be presented to the VGNS Board of Directors.
- The VGNS Board of Directors will review the report and formulate a final resolution, which may include dismissal from the program.
- If the Board votes that VGNS is no longer able to serve the needs of this child, a Parent/Teacher Conference will be scheduled. The Director/Head Teacher will inform the parents of the Board's decision. Additional recommendations for outside services will be offered at this time.

\*\*The state mandates that a staff person shall review the above discipline policy with each family that enrolls in Village Green. As proof, VGNS requires parents to sign a form stating a staff person has reviewed the policy and answered all questions or concerns regarding the policy.

### EMERGENCY PLAN

If one of the teachers needs to leave the school (ex. with a child in an ambulance), the church secretary would assist the remaining teacher until a substitute arrives or the teacher was able to return.

In the event that an evacuation would be necessary, the teachers will bring the children to Lincoln Lewis Terrace Elderly Housing located at 43 Academy St. (behind the church/school). If for any reason we are unable to have access to Lincoln Lewis, our second evacuation point is the YMCA on High Street in Southington. The YMCA is a designated Red Cross shelter.

A complete copy of our Emergency Plan is posted in the hall next to the volunteer board.

### FIELDTRIPS

During the school year fieldtrips to area places of interest may be planned. Parents will be notified by newsletter or special notice concerning any specifics about the fieldtrip. A fieldtrip permission slip is required and must be signed by the parent/guardian prior to the trip. Teachers will carry these permission forms along with the Fieldtrip Information Form (containing emergency information) on all fieldtrips. Parent volunteers will assist teachers on all fieldtrips.

### HEALTH INFORMATION

All children attending the nursery school are required, by state regulation, to have a completed physical form and immunization record on file. These forms must be updated yearly within 30 days of the anniversary of the previous physical/immunization forms. Parents will receive notification at least 30 days prior to the expiration of these forms to allow time for a doctor appointment to be made. **An updated health form MUST be received within 30 days of the date stated on the notice or your child will not be allowed to return to school. This is a state regulation.**

### ILLNESS

A parent should notify the school in the event a child cannot attend class due to illness. If during the course of the day, a child becomes ill, the parent will be notified and the child may need to be picked up. A child, who has a fever, off-color nasal discharge, has vomited in the last 24 hours or has a contagious disease, cannot attend school.

### LENDING LIBRARY

The Thérèse MacCallum Lending Library is available to families of Village Green. Beginning in October, the parenting section is open every day during school hours offering a selection of books dealing with a wide range of children's issues, literacy kits, and science kits. The book selection offers parenting books as well as picture books that can be read to children to help them deal with a variety of issues such as death of a pet or loved one, going to the doctors etc. Parents must sign out any materials borrowed to enable staff to keep track of materials.

Lending Library is incorporated into our daily activities. Teachers will assist children in choosing a book and sign it out. **Books must be returned on the designated day for that class.** If a book is not returned on the designated day for that class, the child will not be allowed to borrow another book until the following week (assuming the book was returned). Exceptions will be made for children that are absent on a book return day.

Library Schedule:

- 4 year old classes: select books on Wednesday; return books on Monday
- 3 year old classes: select books on Thursday; return books on Tuesday

Part of the lending library experience is teaching the children responsibility. When a child brings a book home, please encourage proper care of a book to ensure the book will be returned in good condition for another child to enjoy. After reading to your child, encourage them to put the book back into their backpack so they won't forget to return it. When arriving at school remind your child to take the book from their backpack and bring it into the classroom to place in the return box.

### NEGLECT/ABUSE POLICY

The VGNS staff are mandated reporters and are required by Connecticut State Law to report directly to DCF when they suspect, witness or become aware of abuse or neglect of a child. At arrival time, staff will take notice of any bruises, scratches, etc. and ask the child "how it happened". Teachers will keep a log of any concerns or suspicious injuries.

### PROGRAMS

**The three year-old programs** meet Tuesday and Thursday. The morning program meets from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. The afternoon program meets from 12:15 p.m. to 2:45 p.m.

**The four year-old programs** meet Monday, Wednesday and Friday. The morning program meets from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. The afternoon program meets from 12:15 p.m. to 2:45p.m.

### REGISTRATION POLICY

Children enrolled in our three year-old morning program are guaranteed a slot in the morning four year-old program. Children enrolled in our three year-old afternoon program are guaranteed a slot in the four year-old afternoon program. Registration is held in January.

### RULES OF THE CLASSROOM

General classroom rules:

\*Be kind to others

\*Keep the room neat

\* Walking Feet, indoor voices

\* Only adults open doors

## SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS & DELAYS

**Village Green Nursery School will follow the Southington Public School System with regard to school cancellations. S.P.S. delays will be handled as follows:**

Morning programs: if there is a 1 hour or 90 minute delay, school will beginning at 10 a.m. with dismissal at 11:30. If there is a 2 hour delay, the morning session will be canceled.

Afternoon program: if there is an early dismissal or afternoon Kindergarten is canceled, the afternoon session will be canceled.

\*\*If the decision is made to cancel a session, even though the Southington Public schools are open, every attempt will be made to notify you by phone and/or e-mail. The church office will be notified of any cancellations or delays. If you have any doubts, you may call the office at 628-6958.

\*\*\*Our policy is to make up snow days if there have been more than 5 snow days (M/W/F programs) or 3 snow days (T/TH programs) on the days your child attends nursery school. If necessary, snow days usually are made up in June.

Southington School cancellation or delay announcements can be heard on the following radio stations: AM-WDRC 1360, WNTY 990, WMMW 1470, WRCH 910. FM-WHCN 106, WRCH 100.5. And, WTIC 1080 AM and FM. School closings and delays are also listed on local television stations or the Southington Public Schools website: [www.southingtonschools.org](http://www.southingtonschools.org)

## SHOW & TELL

Beginning in October, the 4-year old children will each have the opportunity to bring home the “**Mystery Bag**”. Children can choose **ONE** item from home to place in the bag. Parents should work with their child to think of 3 clues to help the class guess what is in the “Mystery Bag”. The parent can write down the clues and the teachers will assist the child with the clues if needed. In order for this activity to be successful we ask that you make sure your child places **only one item in the bag**.

At various times during the year the 3-year old classes will be asked to bring in an item related to the theme being discussed. Children will have the opportunity to share what they brought with the class.

## SNACKS

Parents through a cooperative, rotating snack program, provide snacks. Each parent will be responsible for providing snack for the class approximately once every 14-16 class days, depending on the class size. Various special “snack days” will be planned into the calendar and will be provided by the program. Healthy snacks are mandated by the state. A list of recommended snacks is included below and is posted on the parent information bulletin board. When choosing snack we ask that you take into consideration any special allergies in your child's class. **We do not serve sugar-free snacks containing artificial/diet sweeteners. VGNS is a peanut/tree nut free school.**

**Snack Supply Fund:** At the beginning of the year we will be collecting money for a snack supply fund. Each family will be asked to contribute to the fund on an as need basis. The staff will use the funds to buy the spoons, cups and napkins for snack. If your snack requires plates, or bowls, we ask that you provide them. If your child is celebrating a birthday, you may bring in birthday cups and/or napkins if you choose.

**State regulations mandate that snacks be healthy and include items from two different food groups (the drink is considered 1 food group). The drink must be milk or one bottle of 100% juice . (100% vitamin C does not mean it is 100% juice.) Please prepare the snack before sending it to school (please slice cheese, fruit, etc.).**

(Snacks continued next page)

To remain in compliance with State regulations, staff will post a suggested snack calendar for the month. Parents may provide the snack listed or one of their choosing. Parents that choose to provide a snack different from the posted suggestion must cross out the suggested snack and record the alternate snack items on the appropriate calendar box for their child's snack day.

#### Snack Suggestions:

cheese and crackers	crackers (saltines, wheat thins, etc.)
mini bagels and cream cheese or butter	breadsticks
muffins (mini muffins work best)	english muffins
popcorn	pretzels
applesauce	pumpnickel bread
trail mix: cheerios, raisins, pretzels	banana bread
yogurt cups	cornbread
granola bars	biscuits
graham crackers	fruit (washed and sliced)
raw vegetables (and dip)	healthy cereals (ie, Kix, Cheerios)
oatmeal cookies	popcorn

Any item or combination of items can be used. These are suggestions. Be creative! Cultural snacks are also fun.

#### • **FOOD ALLERGIES**

- VILLAGE GREEN IS A PEANUT AND TREE NUT FREE SCHOOL
  - We do not allow snacks with peanuts or tree nuts in their natural state or peanut butter. This pertains to all classes regardless of allergies. If the items are processed in a plant with nut products, the snack will be served and the child with allergies will have a snack provided by their parent or guardian.
- If a child has allergies, families in that class will be notified. A list of suggested snacks as well as restrictions pertaining to that particular allergy will be sent home. We ask that parents please take into consideration the snack allergies when planning snack.
- **Parents/guardians of the child with allergies:**
  - Must meet/speak with the staff to discuss their child's specific dietary requirements.
  - Are responsible for checking and approving the provided snack. If it is not acceptable, the parent/guardian is responsible for providing an approved snack and the child will be seated at a separate table to avoid potential exposure to allergens.
  - Are responsible for what the child eats during school events that include family members (e.g., Holiday Sing-A-Long, Dessert for Dads, School Dance) where the parents/guardians are present.

#### **SOUTHINGTON EARLY CHILDHOOD COLLABORATIVE**

Village Green is a member of the Southington Early Childhood Collaborative. The members include parents, educators and community leaders. The mission of the group is:

**“All Southington children will enter kindergarten ready to learn.”**

To learn more about the Collaborative please visit their website at [www.southingtonearlychildhood.org](http://www.southingtonearlychildhood.org) The website also provides links to informational sights for parents.

### TUITION PAYMENT POLICY

Tuition is based on a school year that begins in September and ends in June. The 3 year old class is scheduled to attend 66 days and the 4 year old class is scheduled to attend 100 days. Snow days (3 for the 3 year-old programs and 5 for the 4 year-old programs) have been taken into account in setting the fees. In the event of an excessive amount of snow days, considerations for make-up days will be made.

1. The tuition fee is **payable** in 10 installments **beginning in August** and ending in May.
2. Payments are automatically **due on the first of the month** with a 7 day grace period. If payments are not made by the 7<sup>th</sup> of the month, a late fee of \$10 is charged and must be included with the payment. **If payment is not made by the end of the month, the child will not be allowed to return to school the following month.** Parents/guardians may contact the Administrative Assistant if extenuating circumstances exist.
3. **Checks must be made payable to Village Green Nursery School.** The **child's name should be noted on the check**, especially if the last names are different. Checks can be mailed to the school at 37 Main Street, Southington, CT 06489 or placed in the tuition mailbox outside the classroom.
4. A **check return fee of \$15** is charged for checks that are returned from the bank and are unable to be processed.
5. Families paying for a **full year** in advance will receive a **5% discount**.
6. If two or more children in the same family attend in the same year, the tuition for the oldest child would be the full tuition amount and additional children would receive a 10% discount off their monthly tuition.
7. If the child will not be attending the program for a month or more, 50% of the monthly tuition is required to hold the spot.
8. If for any reason the child is being withdrawn from class prior to the end of the academic year, one month notification must be given to the school. Payment for the month or any part thereof is due.
9. **The Tax ID number for Child Care Deductions on tax returns is: 06-6006573**

Village Green Nursery School advocates equal education for ALL children. It is the policy of the school not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religious creed, national origin, or disability in any of its programs.

### VOLUNTEERING

Our parent volunteer program is a wonderful opportunity to become actively involved in our school. Parents and grandparents are invited to spend the entire day or part of the day with us. Research shows that children whose parents are actively involved in their education do better in school. No previous experience is necessary and we do encourage parents to share any special talents with us.

### WORKSHOPS

VGNS may offer parent education workshops to parents and caretakers over the course of the year. We will also provide information regarding workshops offered by Southington area agencies. Parent education workshops offer parents and caretakers an opportunity to learn about topics such as child development, positive discipline, problem solving, self-esteem, etc. These workshops are for adults only and are held in the evening.