



explorer
parent
participation
preschool

PARENT HANDBOOK

Revised: July 2023

This handbook is to be used for guideline purposes only. It is subject to changes and updates, revised editions are published annually. The Explorer Board of Directors shall answer any questions or provide necessary clarification.

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Explorer Preschool! We are thrilled to have your family in our school community and look forward to partnering with you to provide a quality early educational experience.

Explorer's mission is to honor each child's individual ability to learn through play, and empower parents to become child advocates at home and in their community.

Our philosophy at Explorer is to provide a developmentally designed program with the intent of providing a rich learning environment for both parents and children. The children's program is based on the growing knowledge of child development. Materials and methods are research-based and children are given a choice of activities, which are supervised by the teacher and/or parents in the classroom. For parents, we offer a robust parent education program including daytime discussion with our credentialed teachers and monthly evening speaker nights. In addition, parents are trained as aides through practice and observation in the classroom and have multiple opportunities to hone their parenting skills as well as expand on their knowledge of child development.

The purpose of this handbook is to give our families information about some of the policies and procedures at Explorer. Please keep this book handy and refer to it often. Keep up to date with news and events by visiting the Explorer Preschool website at www.explorerpreschool.org.

EXPLORER PRESCHOOL HISTORY

Explorer Preschool (formally Cambrian Parents Preschool) has a long and rich history in our local community. On April 26, 1960, Explorer welcomed its first families in two bare rooms and a large weeded outdoor area. The initial budget was zero. Kathi (Murry) Levin provided the leadership as Director/Teacher and remained on the staff until 1977. Bev Tucker joined the staff in 1969 and worked with Kathi until 1977. The program continued to grow with the addition of a class for two year olds created by Konne Ainsworth. Proving that necessity is the mother of all inventions, Konne and Bobbie (Ingram) Burri put their heads together and created the afternoon Pre-K program for students who had completed the Mon/Wed/Fri class but were not yet old enough for Kindergarten. The beloved outdoor program at Vasona Park began both to save money on rent and to provide the children with a unique nature experience. The first class had just 12 children in it and despite the fact that it has grown to 24, the same spirit of discovery and excitement still fills each group. In 1977, Konne took charge as Explorer's Director. In 1980, our school (then known as Cambrian Parents Preschool) moved from the Cambrian area of San Jose to a new location on Branham Lane. At that time, the Board of Directors began a search for a new name and logo in order to truly capture the special community that it had grown. The name chosen, Explorer Preschool, represents the ideals and philosophy of our school. In 1986, Explorer moved to a new location on Union Avenue.

In 2003, we moved to Explorer's fourth home at the current Booksin Ave. location. There we commenced building a new outdoor classroom that was dedicated in April 2004. Teacher Konne guided the school until her retirement in 2020. During her long and illustrious tenure, our class offerings were further developed and she shaped and guided Explorer Preschool into the wonderful and rich program it is today.

Plans for an updated play yard were put into motion in 2019 but the project was paused during the difficult pandemic years. Finally in the summer of 2022, Explorer's play structure and outdoor classroom underwent a complete renovation. The Yard Committee, composed of teachers, parents and board members, utilized Explorer funds and took advantage of California State Emergency COVID grants for Early Childhood Education centers to fund a new nature inspired play structure, updated water features, a sensory garden, and new outdoor library and reading area. It was unveiled just in time for the start of the new school year. Although our school has moved locations, developed different play yards, and changed its name, Explorer has always had the community support and excellent programs which continue to thrive today.

Explorer's current teaching staff, many of whom started at Explorer as former Explorer parents and board members, continue to uphold the beloved traditions our program

began since its inception over 60 years ago. Konne now serves as Explorer's Director Emeritus and Annie Deckert, beloved Explorer teacher of over 25 years, is Explorer's Director. Our school continues to welcome new children as well as children of Explorer alumni.

Explorer is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and is a proud member of the California Council of Parent Participation Nursery Schools (CCPPNS). We are also licensed by the State of California (#434406736).

Affiliation

Explorer Preschool currently leases its facilities from Lincoln Glen Church. The preschool is not affiliated with the church, its denomination, or any other religious group.

The Explorer Lead Teaching Staff

Annie Deckert teaches Explorer's 2's classes and Together Time for Parents and Toddlers classes. Annie was a participating parent at Explorer for 4 years before joining the staff in 1995. She has a Master's Degree in Educational Psychology, a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education, a California Adult Education Teaching Credential, and a California Child Development Program Director permit. In addition to teaching at Explorer, Annie teaches college child development classes. In her work with parents and toddlers at Explorer, Annie strives to create a developmentally appropriate learning environment, so that each child will learn through play and positive relationships. She believes parent education is one of the most powerful tools for creating positive change, and her goal is to help Explorer parents learn to effectively support their children's development.

Jenell Carroll came to Explorer in 2013 as a parent and was able to experience each class Explorer has to offer at least once with her two sons. In 2017, Jenell began substituting in all classes and, in 2018, she began teaching 5's Club and MWF. Before coming to Explorer, Jenell taught primarily 2nd grade for seven years after receiving her multiple subject teaching credential from SJSU in 2003. Jenell has a BA degree in Liberal Studies from Westmont College and recently began accumulating additional early childhood education units as she shifts her career path from elementary education to early childhood. She is eager to continue her education journey as her career continues to grow.

Rima Ramchandra started her Explorer journey as a parent in the 3's-5's class, and made the transition from parent to teacher in 2023. Rima will begin teaching the PreK class in September 2023 and Assistant Teach two mornings a week in the 3's-5's

class. Rima has a Masters in Education with a specialist in Early Childhood from Melbourne, Australia. She has over ten years teaching experience in the preschool setting, and has always focused on play as a foundation for learning.

PRESCHOOL CLASS OFFERINGS

MW 2's and Fri 2's

9:00 – 11:00 am (Mon/Wed OR Fridays only)

Age: 2 years old by Sept. 1st

Lead Teacher: Annie Deckert

3s-5s

9:00 – 11:30 am (Tues/Thurs OR Mon-Thurs)

Age: At least 3 years old by Sept. 1st

Lead Teacher: Jenell Carroll

Assistant Teachers: Rima Ramchandra and Kathy Wingo

Pre-K (4 Day)

12:30 – 3:00 pm (Mon-Thurs)

Age: 4 years old by Sept. 1st

Lead Teacher: Rima Ramchandra

Assistant Teachers: Annie Deckert/Jenell Carroll

ENRICHMENT CLASS OFFERINGS

In addition to our licensed preschool programs, we offer several enrichment programs throughout the school year. Our enrichment programs are not part of our licensed preschool and are stand alone but still offer many opportunities to be part of our larger preschool program.

Together Time

9:00 – 10:30 am (Tues OR Thurs)

Age: 12-24 mo by Sept 1st

Lead Teacher: Annie Deckert

Assistant Teacher: Paula Oakes

Lunch Bunch (add-on extended day option)

11:30 am – 12:30 pm (Mon/Wed, Tues/Thurs, OR Mon-Thurs)

October-April

Age: At least 3 years old by Sept. 1st

Lead Teacher: Annie Deckert

5's Club

8 classes (1x weekly in Spring or 2-3x weekly in Summer)

Dates/times vary by session

Age: 4 years by Sept. 1st (Kindergarten eligible for Fall)

Fives Club is an optional enrichment class for children eligible to enter Kindergarten in the fall of the next school year.

Summer Camp

Times and dates vary by age group and are offered in June.

Information about camp is generally available around March. Offerings will be publicized on our website and through our weekly e-newsletter.

Explorer's school year runs from September through May. Children remain in the same class with the same teacher(s) and classmates for the entire school year.

STAFFING AND SUPERVISION FOR PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS

CLASS	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2s (mornings)	Children: up to 16 Teachers: 1 Parent Volunteers: 4-7		Children: up to 16 Teachers: 1 Parent Volunteers: 4-7		Children: up to 16 Teachers: 1-2 Parent Volunteers: 4-7
3-5s (mornings)	4 DAY OPTION Children: up to 24 Teachers: 2 Parent volunteers: 5-7	2 OR 4 DAY OPTION Children: up to 34 Teachers: 2 Parent volunteers: 5-7	4 DAY OPTION Children: up to 24 Teachers: 2 Parent volunteers: 5-7	2 OR 4 DAY OPTION Children: up to 34 Teachers: 2 Parent volunteers: 5-7	
Pre-K (afternoons)	Children: up to 24 Teachers: 2 Parent volunteers: 5-7	Children: up to 36 Teachers: 2 Parent volunteers: 5-7	Children: up to 24 Teachers: 2 Parent volunteers: 5-7	Children: up to 36 Teachers: 2 Parent volunteers: 5-7	

Children must be continuously supervised by sight and sound by adults. The teacher is responsible for ensuring that adequate supervision is maintained at all times.

Ratio: Explorer preschool maintains a ratio of a minimum of 1 adult for every 5 children in all classes.

Explorer is licensed by the State Of California Department of Social Services.

Required adult-child ratios by licensing:

Twos: 1:6

Preschool: 1:12

Explorer is Accredited by the National Association for Education Of Young Children (NAEYC).

Required adult-child ratios by NAEYC:

Twos: 1:6

Preschool: 1:10

PRESCHOOL DEFINITIONS

Listed below are phrases frequently used at Explorer. It is helpful to understand them as they appear throughout our school website, communication, and this parent handbook.

Class work days – These are the days when a parent is scheduled to assist in the classroom as a working parent along with other working parents and the Teacher of the class. Working parents arrive 15 minutes before the beginning of class to help set up and may stay up to 15 minutes after class to help cleanup.

Culmination – Culmination serves as the May Daytime Parent Education Class and is generally held as an evening dinner at a class member’s home. It is a time of reflection on the growth of each child and the growth of the class as a whole.

Double Parent Family– A double parent family is a family with two children enrolled concurrently in *different* preschool classes at the school. Double parent families attend all meetings for their respective children’s classes and work as scheduled in each class. Parents of multiples and/or different age siblings who are enrolled in the *same* class are not considered a “Double Parent” family (see “Twin Parent” definition below). A family is not considered a double parent when one child is enrolled in a preschool class and another child is a participant in an enrichment class (e.g. Together Time).

Class alias – The main form of inter-class communication regarding class events involves sending email to all class members through a Google class alias. Email addresses are used for school business and shall not be used for solicitation purposes.

Maintenance Workday – Families participate in the maintenance of the school and yard by attending Saturday morning maintenance day. Either parent may attend the maintenance day but due to licensing regulations, children cannot attend.

Parent Room – The parent room is located near the back gate and next to the backdoor of the toddler/2s classroom. It is the onsite communication center at school. Each teacher and board member has a labeled mailbox for school communications and items may be dropped off for them there. There are also several bulletin boards used for posting class-specific and school-wide information, a parenting library, and current copies of school pamphlets and brochures.

Parent Education Classes (PECs) - PECs are an essential component of cooperative schools and aim to provide families with valuable information and education on child development and common parenting concerns. Each parent is expected to participate in monthly classes, also known as Daytime PECs, and school-wide PECs, or Evening PECs, in order to make the most of their experience at Explorer. The PECs combined with in-class work as Working Parents contribute to a parent’s knowledge of early childhood development and trends in education. The Parent Education Classes also increase knowledge of individual children and their needs and improves one’s ability to parent appropriately and effectively.

Refundable Deposit – This term refers to the annual deposit billed per family, paid at the time of enrollment. The deposit will be refunded at withdrawal or the end of each school year, provided all preschool requirements have been met.

Substitute – This is a person arranged in advance to fill in for a regularly scheduled working parent in the classroom. A person interested in being a substitute for pay (\$35 per class session) or for a traded workday should notify the Class Representative.

Twin Parent – This is a parent with *more than one child enrolled in the same class*. For the 3s-5s program, this may include different age siblings as well as twins. Scheduling will depend upon class enrollment; however, a twin parent’s *typical* class workday rotation looks like:

MW2’s	1.5 times as for a parent with one child.
Fri 2’s	1.5 times as for a parent with one child.
3s-5s (2 days)	1.5 times as for a parent with one child.
3s-5s (4 days)	Work one day per week per child.
Pre-K	Work one day per week per child

Working Parent (also known as Designated or In-Class Working Parent) – This term identifies the participating parent(s) (or approved family member/nanny/au-pair) in the classroom. All in-class working parents have the required TB test, immunizations, and Health Form (LIC 503) on file with the school.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- 1) Regular preschool hours are:
 - a) Morning Sessions:
 - i) 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. (Together Time)
 - ii) 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. (2's classes)
 - iii) 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. (3s-5s)
 - b) Afternoon Session:
 - i) 12:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. (Pre-K)
 - c) 5s Club and Summer Camp Enrichment program hours vary; please refer to our website for session days and times.
- 2) Parents who are scheduled to work in the classroom shall arrive 15 minutes before class begins to assist with set up and expect to stay 15 minutes after class ends to assist with cleanup. For the Together Time program, caregivers attend each class with their child and therefore do not need to arrive early.
- 3) Parents park in the North Parking Lot off Booksin Ave near Koch Lane. Please watch for traffic when crossing the parking lot and hold your child's hand to ensure their safety.
- 4) Per licensing regulations, parents are not to keep cars idling in the parking lot, unless in extreme weather conditions to maintain a safe engine temperature.
- 5) Per licensing regulations, all children must be signed in and signed out by an approved caregiver each day they attend school. The adult's signature must include first initial and full last name.
- 6) Only children who are fully enrolled in the preschool may attend class. Due to licensing restrictions, unenrolled siblings may not attend.
- 7) Children shall be dressed appropriately for the day's weather as well as prepared for both indoor and outdoor play. Children should wear comfortable and washable clothes. Paint, glue, and other "messy" activities are included daily. Avoid flip-flops or crocs which pose a slip hazard. Please label all personal items such as clothing, shoes, water bottles etc. Sunscreen and insect repellent shall be applied prior to class by the parent, if appropriate. Due to licensing restrictions, these items may not be brought to school or stored in children's backpacks.
- 8) Plan to bring your child to school at the start of class and be on time to pick your child up at the end of class. Children's trust is built through the reliance and reassurance that their caregiver will be present when class is dismissed and other

parents are picking up their children. Arriving more than five minutes after class ends constitutes being tardy; excessive tardies may result in termination.

- 9) Only authorized caregivers may pick up children. “Authorized” persons are those listed on the child’s Identification and Emergency Information form (LIC 700) and/or the pick-up/drop-off list maintained for each class. Please notify the Teacher in advance if someone other than the usual caregiver will pick up your child. If car trouble or an unexpected emergency occurs, please call the school at 408-723-0779 (rings in the Big Kid class near the Literacy room) prior to the end of class to inform the Teacher who from their “authorized” list will be responsible for the child after dismissal.
 - a) If car trouble or an unexpected emergency occurs, please call the school at 408-723-0779 (rings in the Big Kid class near the Literacy room) prior to the end of class to inform the Teacher who from thei “authorized” list will be responsible for the child after dismissal.
- 10) Key information is distributed at the class and all-school orientations. This information, whether delivered electronically or hard copy, should be kept in an easily accessible location for reference during the year. This information typically includes the class roster, school year calendar, and the “Where to Find the Answers” sheet. Explorer also maintains a website at www.explorerpreschool.org, which contains school-wide information and is updated regularly throughout the year.
- 11) Animals in the classroom: Explorer provides children with the opportunity to observe and discover some of our natural world in the classroom. The science room and 2’s classroom may have a variety of class pets. In the past, we have had hermit crabs, crawdads, rats, tarantulas, guinea pigs, rabbits, and/or chickens. From time to time, teachers or parents may bring in other animals to visit the class as part of the scheduled lesson plans. It is important to let the children develop their own reactions to the animals and not take on an adult’s fear or reluctance to interact with any of the animals. Parents assigned to the science room may provide daily care to the animals and the opportunities for children to interact with them. If you are not comfortable with this task, it is acceptable to ask another working parent to switch workstations. **PROPER HANDWASHING PROCEDURES MUST BE FOLLOWED after handling animals.** Always instruct children to wash their hands when they are done interacting with the animal, and visually observe them doing so.
- 12) Explorer Preschool has a strict **NO SMOKING** policy for the entire facility. Smoking and/or vaping are not allowed on campus at any time including during adult meetings where children are not present.

- 13) No firearms are allowed on the premises.
- 14) Hot beverages like coffee and tea shall NOT be brought into the classroom when children are on campus.
- 15) As a non-profit organization, Explorer Preschool relies on the generosity of our community to provide the best programs for our children. Because we realize that our community is a giving one, the preschool employs the following philanthropy guidelines:
 - a) During the year, the teachers may engage in a charitable project as part of the class curriculum. This may be a canned food drive, “penny brigade,” etc. These are used as teachable moments in the classroom, and participation is voluntary.
 - b) The Social Team may create a “drive” in conjunction with a school social activity, such as a book or toy drive during the annual Winter Social. Again, this is used as a teaching moment for our children, and participation is voluntary.
 - c) For the above-mentioned activities, Explorer’s focus is on charitable causes that benefit children.
 - d) Explorer cannot participate in activities outside these parameters, and the membership as a group shall not be solicited for support in any activities outside these guidelines.

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

Explorer's curriculum is a developmental-based program focused on the development of the whole child (social, intellectual, emotional, and physical growth). Our teachers utilize a variety of materials to create a rich learning environment with developmentally appropriate materials and carefully planned open-ended activities. Each class experiences large blocks of uninterrupted child-directed time and are encouraged to choose activities that interest them. Choice is an important part of our curriculum and helps ensure individualized learning that fits each child. While some children may specialize in one type of activity, they may be others who are more general in their interests. As each activity is considered to be educational and appropriate, our teachers do not insist that they engage in activities that do not interest them. Our philosophy is that children learn through active and child-initiated play, direct contact with concrete objects, repeated positive experiences, and most of all, they learn through interactions with trusted adults and peers. A [printable curriculum guide is available](#) on our website.

What your child is learning while playing may not be evident to the casual observer but every lesson and activity is thoughtfully crafted by our teachers as an invitation for developmentally appropriate learning. The importance of play is not to be underestimated. Through play, children develop their cognitive, physical, literacy, and social skills. They practice getting along with their peers and adults, protecting their rights and developing empathy with the feelings of others. In addition, children develop the tools and vocabulary necessary to effectively handle their own feelings in emotionally healthy ways.

Working parents are scheduled through a rotation of parent jobs that may include art, snack, dramatic play, music and movement, science, observation etc. Our teachers create the lesson plan for each day and provide materials, help, and guidance to parents as they implement the day's activities.

Art – The development of self-concept, fine motor skills, and spatial concepts necessary for academic success are a by-product of a successful art program. We encourage free use of art materials in many forms. It is helpful to have art materials organized to enhance maximum development of artistic and creative abilities, but producing a model for the child to copy is discouraged. Our school's general philosophy toward creative media is to leave the children free to work at their own pace. This enables the children to progress in their own way, eliminating the frustration that can occur when expectations are beyond their capabilities.

Snack or Cooking – Nutritious snacks are essential for young children's optimal growth and development. The energy provided by healthy foods ensures that children

will be ready to fully participate in the day's learning opportunities. Snack time provides a variety of learning opportunities. Children experience the richness of different cultures through diversity in food and food customs, develop healthy eating habits, and build vocabulary and social skills as they communicate with peers and adults. Our teachers also provide opportunities for children to practice emerging independence by using child-sized containers and utensils, allowing preschoolers to set tables, pour beverages, serve themselves and clear their places.

Creative and Dramatic Play – Make-believe, dress-up, block building, and playing games all encourage a child's development of language, thought processes, and social skills. When children engage in pretend play, they are actively experimenting with the social and emotional roles of life. Through cooperative play, they learn how to take turns, share responsibility, and creatively problem-solve.

Music and Movement – Children naturally enjoy music and will begin reacting to music at an early age. As they get older, dance provides a fun and creative outlet for releasing energy. When children participate in music and movement activities in a group, they also develop and refine their social skills. They learn to work as a team, they learn to share and they learn how to be creative in a group environment. Music and movement instruction has been shown to improve children's memory, cognitive development, learning skills and expressive ability. It is important that young children are given every chance to learn to use their bodies effectively. Singing and musical instruments, besides being fun and enjoyable, help the young child develop many pre-academic skills.

Outdoors – Bikes, sand, water, music and exposure to the natural environment expand the child's knowledge of their world. Motor skills are practiced through climbing, running, and active play. Although outdoor play is most frequently associated with large muscle movement, opportunities for developing social skills are numerous. At Explorer, even activities that are traditionally thought of as "indoor activities" are often offered in the outdoor environment as well including art, writing, and book reading. Being outdoors enhances learning in all subjects and domains.

Science – First-hand exploration is the keynote of the child's science experience, both at our indoor school and outdoor classes at Vasona Park. The child's cumulative knowledge of the world grows as they are exposed to natural and man-made objects. The child learns to compare, contrast, classify, and to use these objects in play as well as in arts and crafts.

Observation – Children reveal their true selves through play. As adults, we can learn a great deal about how they think and feel through thoughtful observation. By observing many children in different settings, not only can we become more objective about our own children, but also learn to understand more about children's behavior in general.

GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE POLICY

Physical punishment, psychological abuse or coercion, threats, derogatory remarks etc. are never used as a form of discipline in the classroom. The goal of our program is to encourage children toward gaining greater self-control and self-discipline (e.g. solving social problems, taking turns, helping each other, planning together, going to a self-selected cool off or calm down activity when needed etc). Explorer practices Positive Discipline, based on the principles originated by Dr. Janet Nelson (<https://www.positivediscipline.com>).

Teacher Training In Guidance And Discipline Methods

All educators at Explorer must have training and experience in positive guidance and discipline skills, and demonstrate competence in using these skills in the classroom.

All new staff members (substitute teachers, assistant teachers, lead teachers, directors) are informed of every aspect of this policy as part of New Teacher Orientation. This policy is reviewed and discussed routinely at staff meetings, and referred to when handling classroom situations. In order to ensure that our educators are well versed in positive discipline techniques, our Professional Development Plan suggests several opportunities for training:

- Formal trainings presented by the Positive Discipline Association
- Workshops and seminars presented at professional conferences or online
- Staff meeting agenda items related to reviewing and discussing our guidance and discipline policy, and to studying positive discipline principles in depth
- College courses centered around guidance and discipline topics.

Note: Director, Lead, and Assistant Teacher contracts include a Professional Development allowance to offset the cost of continued education and development.

Parent Training In Guidance And Discipline Methods

As in-class volunteers, parents and caregivers are required to use positive discipline techniques in the classroom. Explorer's parent education program offers ongoing opportunities for parents to expand upon their knowledge or practices of positive guidance and discipline. Strategies for parents and caregivers are discussed and practiced throughout the year in both the class specific and all-school parent education classes.

In order to ensure that our parents and caregivers are competent practitioners of positive discipline techniques in our classroom and at home, Explorer's parent education program offers opportunities each year for parents to learn or to expand their learning on positive guidance and discipline. Some of these learning opportunities for parents will be part of Explorer's Parent Education Program requirements for parents.

This Guidance and Discipline Policy is included in Explorer's Parent Handbook, and all members are expected to read it in preparation for their role as Parent Volunteers.

Prioritizing Relationships

Explorer's guidance and discipline philosophy is based on the understanding that the key to appropriate and effective guidance is not punishment, but mutual respect. This approach fosters the development of problem solving and personal regulation skills, rather than relying on external or authoritarian control.

We also understand that the underpinning of self-regulation in children is an unconditionally positive relationship with a stable and supportive adult. Therefore, teaching staff and parent volunteers must strive to get to know each child as an individual and show respect and warm regard toward each child. Many have heard the phrase, "Connect before you correct" which means that making strong connections with children must take priority and it then becomes the foundation for supporting the child as they work on through their challenging behaviors and improve their self-regulation.

Ensuring Safety

The following safety rules apply to all classes:

- Everyone will refrain from hurting themselves or others
- Everyone will refrain from purposely damaging equipment or materials
- Everyone will refrain from interfering with the rights and privileges of others
- All children are under adult supervision at all times

Judgment-Free Zone

Explorer Preschool is a safe community and judgment-free zone. Our Teachers are dedicated to partnering with parents to work in the best interest of all Explorer children. We believe that all parents are doing their very best and that the support from the school community is an essential part of nurturing positive growth. Remember that each child is in the process of working on what they are ready to learn at the moment. The teachers are observing, helping, and guiding in ways that may not be immediately apparent. If there is problematic behavior, it is highly likely that the teacher is already aware of it and is working on it with the child and parent, even though they may not be able to discuss it with others due to confidentiality. All families are asked to refrain from passing judgment on children or other parents. This is critical for maintaining Explorer's supportive and accepting atmosphere.

Prohibited Practices

Explorer does not, under any circumstances, use punishment as a form of discipline. Teachers and parent volunteers are prohibited from using any form of physical punishment, psychological abuse, and/or coercion when working with children.

Examples of physical punishment: Shaking, hitting, spanking, slapping, jerking, squeezing, kicking, biting, pinching, excessive tickling, and pulling of arms, hair, or ears; requiring a child to remain inactive for a long period of time.

Examples of psychological abuse: shaming, name calling, ridiculing, humiliation, sarcasm, cursing at, making threats, or frightening a child; ostracism, withholding affection, seclusion.

Examples of coercion: Rough handling (shoving, pulling, pushing, grasping any body part); physical restraint (forcing a child to sit down, lie down, or stay down) except when restraint is necessary to protect the child or others from harm; physically forcing a child to perform an action (such as eating or cleaning up).

Other prohibited practices include the use of physical or mechanical restraints as well as seclusion.

Mechanical restraint: “the use of devices as a means of restricting a student’s freedom of movement.” (H.R. 7124, 2018)

Physical restraint: “a personal restriction that immobilizes or reduces the ability of an individual to move the individual’s arms, legs, torso, or head freely, except that such term does not include a physical escort, mechanical restraint, or chemical restraint.” (H.R. 7124, 2018)

Seclusion: “the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or area from which the student is physically prevented from leaving, except that such term does not include a time out.” (H.R. 7124, 2018)

This rule is non-negotiable: There are NO circumstances in which it is permissible for adults to engage in the above prohibited practices when working with children.

NOTE: Physical escort, as defined below, should not be used except when necessary to protect a child or others from imminent danger of serious physical harm.

Physical escort: “the temporary touching or holding of the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder, or back for the purpose of inducing a student who is acting out to walk to a safe location.” (H.R. 7124, 2018)

Ongoing Challenging Behaviors

If a child exhibits, over time, a documented and repetitive destructive or aggressive behavior that requires additional support and intervention, then the teacher and parent(s) will meet to form a “Cooperative Action Plan” to further support the child.

Challenging behavior is described as any behavior that (1) interferes with children's learning, development and success at play, (2) is harmful to the child, other children, or adults, [or] (3) puts a child at high risk for later social problems or school failure." (Kaiser & Rasminsky, Challenging Behavior in Young Children (2nd Ed.), Pearson Education Inc., 2007, p. 8).

Examples of challenging behavior: Physical aggression (hitting, biting, shoving, whacking with toys), relational aggression, verbal bullying, tantrums, whining, testing limits, refusal to follow directions or observe classroom rules.

A “Cooperative Action Plan” will include written objectives for improvement in the behavior, and may include interventions such as recommended reading for caregivers, referrals outside agencies such as mental health counseling or an outside parent education class, increased supervision requiring a caregiver to attend every class and/or field trip, and/or other plans agreed upon by the parent(s) and Teacher.

A follow-up meeting will be held six weeks after the initial meeting to evaluate and/or modify the action plan. If the objectives are ineffective or not met, further consultation may be planned and would include another staff member and the Vice President.

If, as the year progresses, a child exhibits a documented and repetitive destructive or aggressive behavior that requires additional support and intervention, then the Teacher and parent(s) will meet to form a “Cooperative Action Plan” to further support the child. A “Cooperative Action Plan” may include interventions such as recommended reading for caregivers, referrals outside agencies such as mental health counseling or an outside parent education class, increased supervision requiring a caregiver to attend every class and/or field trip, and/or other plans agreed upon by the parent(s) and Teacher.

Separation, Suspension, Dismissal

If a child’s behavior during class is considered dangerous for the child or for others, in rare circumstances, the teachers may decide that the child needs to be temporarily separated from other children or sent home in order to ensure the safety of the child and the class. This occurs very rarely and teachers will exhaust every possible positive approach before separating the child from the rest of the group. If a child does need to be temporarily separated from the group for safety reasons, an adult will remain with the child, will maintain a positive interaction with the child (no scolding or berating,) will play or read with the child, and will offer comfort to the child if needed until the situation is resolved or the parent arrives. Teachers and parents will observe the “Judgment-Free Zone” philosophy, and will acknowledge that the child and their parents are doing the best they can at this time. All

teachers and parents will maintain the role of being supportive of the child and parent as part of the Explorer Community.

It is possible there could be exceedingly rare circumstances in which all efforts to ensure that behavioral objectives for the child are unmet, even after implementation of a cooperative action plan, and at least one 6 week follow up. The teachers and director will meet with the parents to discuss further options to help the child, and to consider the question of whether or not the child's needs can be met by Explorer's program.

Explorer stands firmly alongside each of our families in a partnership of respect and common purpose. Our goal is always to promote healthy development & growth for all children, and provide support for parents. It is never Explorer's goal to remove children and their families from our program. Explorer teachers and Director will consider every possible intervention to help children and parents, and to ensure safe behavior in class.

If deemed necessary after extensive attempts at intervention, continued membership may be reviewed by the Board of Directors. Conditions leading to dismissal may include situations where parents are unwilling to work with the teaching staff, it is determined that remaining in the program is not in the best interest of the child, and/or other situations given careful consideration by the Board of Directors. This decision will be made together by parents, teachers, director, and board. If dismissal is decided to be the most appropriate measure, Explorer will offer assistance to the family in accessing services and an alternate placement.

Explorer complies with all federal and state civil rights laws, in all situations.

Positive Discipline Background And Resources

The following description of positive discipline is taken from the Positive Discipline website (<https://www.positivediscipline.com/about-positive-discipline>). Other useful resources include the **Positive Discipline Blog**: <https://www.positivediscipline.com/blog> and **Aha! Parenting Blog by Dr. Laura Markham**: <https://www.ahaparenting.com/read/use-positive-discipline>

Positive Discipline is a practice developed by Dr. Jane Nelsen and based on the work of Alfred Adler and Rudolf Dreikurs. It is designed to teach young people to become responsible, respectful and resourceful members of their communities. Positive Discipline teaches important social and life skills in a manner that is deeply respectful and encouraging for both children and adults (including [parents](#), [teachers](#), childcare providers, youth workers, and others).

Recent research tells us that children are hardwired from birth to connect with others, and that children who feel a sense of connection to their community, family, and school are less likely to misbehave. To be successful, contributing members of their community, children must learn necessary social and life skills.

Jane Nelsen gives the following criteria for effective discipline that teaches:

Five Criteria For Positive Discipline:

1. Is Kind and Firm at the same time. (Respectful and encouraging)
2. Helps children feel a sense of Belonging and Significance. (Connection)
3. Is Effective Long-Term. (Punishment works short term, but has negative long-term results.)
4. Teaches valuable Social and Life Skills for good character. (Respect, concern for others, problem-solving, accountability, contribution, cooperation)
5. Invites children to discover how Capable they are and to use their personal power in constructive ways.

The Positive Discipline Parent Education and Classroom Management models are aimed at developing mutually respectful relationships. Positive Discipline teaches adults to employ kindness and firmness at the same time, and is neither punitive nor permissive.

- The tools and concepts of Positive Discipline include:
- Mutual respect. Adults model firmness by respecting themselves and the needs of the situation, and kindness by respecting the needs of the child.
- Identifying the belief behind the behavior. Effective discipline recognizes the reasons kids do what they do and works to change those beliefs, rather than merely attempting to change behavior.
- Effective communication and problem solving skills.
- Discipline that teaches (and is neither permissive nor punitive).
- Focusing on solutions instead of punishment.
- Encouragement (instead of praise). Encouragement notices effort and improvement, not just success, and builds long-term self-esteem and empowerment.

Unique characteristics of the Positive Discipline Model also include:

- Teaching adults and students through experiential activities. Creating opportunities to practice new skills and to have fun learning by doing.
- Classroom discipline programs and parent education programs that are consistent. Parents, teachers, and childcare providers can work together to provide a secure, consistent environment for children.
- Inexpensive training and ongoing support so members of communities can teach each other Positive Discipline skills.
- Certified trainers across the country who can work with schools and communities.

SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS

Parent Room

Explorer maintains a Parent Room (between the back door of the toddler/2's classroom and the back gate). Each Teacher and Board member is assigned a "Mailbox" for receiving notices and documents from parents or committee members. The Parent Room also serves as a safe and convenient way to distribute items, such as purchased Explorer Wear, or collect donated materials, such as for Children's Education projects.

Website

Explorer maintains a web site at www.explorerpreschool.org. Visitors to the website are able to access information related to the school calendar, current parent handbook, current fundraisers etc. It is a best practice to visit the website regularly for updated documents, schedules, and school information.

Email

Explorer uses email as its primary form of communication with members. Email may come from the teachers, class representatives, or board members. For example, the weekly school-wide e-letter updates come from the Secretary. Please add these email addresses to your safe senders list so as not to miss out on any important school messages.

Please remember to notify your Class Representative and Membership Chair of any changes in your contact information throughout the year.

Because Explorer publishes its members' contact information within its class roster lists, it is necessary to provide guidelines for its proper use. Please report any inappropriate use of contact information to the Secretary or Vice President.

Explorer Email Guidelines

- **Respect Privacy.** Contact information is provided to help you communicate with other Explorer parents. Do not share emails or phone numbers with outside parties without the consent of the owner or a reasonable expectation that the owner wants their address given.
- **Be brief and limit distribution to intended audiences only.**
- **Avoid "Spamming."** Please do not use the email aliases for solicitation purposes.
- **Be mindful of perceived tone.** Email information does not carry a lot of emotional context. Thus, emotional expression in emails can come across as highly exaggerated. In an emotionally charged situation, it is better to

pick up the phone. Likewise, don't use all capital letters to emphasize a point as it can be perceived as yelling.

Social Media

Explorer understands the ubiquity of social media and requests members adhere to behavioral guidelines that respect differences among our families' participation in social media. We recognize that some families use social media extensively, while others do not participate at all.

Social media is used to highlight fun happenings at Explorer, publicize events to prospective families, share about our exciting fundraisers, and give fun ideas and tips geared towards parents. We **do not** use Social media to relay important information to current families about Explorer Preschool activities. Communication about our classes, their schedules, rosters, and other pertinent information will be shared primarily by email or on our website.

Explorer maintains three official online presences:

- Our official website (<http://www.ExplorerPreschool.org>)
- A Facebook business page (<https://www.facebook.com/explorerpreschool>)
- An Instagram page (<https://www.instagram.com/explorerpreschool/>)

You may also choose to join the board-approved Facebook group, *Explorer Community*. *Explorer Community* is the only Facebook group that can carry the Explorer name. It is a closed group with a Board-appointed group administrator. (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ExplorerCommunity>)

You own your (family's) digital footprint. Each family is a valued member of our Explorer Preschool community. We encourage you to share your family's preschool experiences in your own communities in ways that are aligned to your comfort with social media and in accordance with Explorer Preschool's guidelines.

Explorer's Social Media Guidelines:

- **Respect and protect privacy.** Do not post/share pictures of classmates or their parents, unless you have permission. For children, permission must come from the child's parent(s). Do not post any information that includes Personally Identifiable Information.
- **Follow our approved photo-sharing practices.** Each class will have a designated photo sharing site. These are private forums for classmates to collect and share photos for use in the year-end Memory Books.
- **Protect community interactions.** Explorer members are prohibited from creating external groups. Non-sanctioned sites include: Facebook Groups (whether public, private, or secret), Yahoo Groups, mobile messaging apps outside of text/SMS messaging, any photography sharing or gallery sites.

- **Be responsible.** Mistakes may occur. Please be responsible and sensitive to the needs of our community and address any issues that are raised. If you realize or are made aware that you have over-shared, please modify your post(s) and/or practices so that you stay within the Explorer guidelines.

SUPPORTS AND SERVICES AVAILABLE TO FAMILIES

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-Teacher conferences are a valuable tool for reflecting upon the child and parent's school experience that year. It allows both parent and teacher to identify the child's strengths as well as areas for continued growth. Throughout the year, teachers may use both formal and informal conferences to enhance communication with parents.

At Explorer, we deeply value the partnership between teachers and families and our teaching staff are readily available via email or phone should a parent have a question or concern outside of school hours. Formal conferences are held mid-year annually and include a developmental assessment. A conference can also be scheduled at any time should the parents or teachers feel the need for one. Information discussed during both formal conferences and informal parent-teacher discussions are kept confidential. Assessments are shared with the parent in a sensitive way, helping the parent fully understand the Teacher's concerns. Teachers may use the support of outside professionals and translators, if deemed necessary and appropriate. If a translator would help facilitate your conferences and discussions, please contact the Director to arrange one as needed. If parents need materials translated, Explorer will make every reasonable effort to help within the budget.

Support from the Vice President

The Board Vice President (VP) serves as the main point of contact for when help is needed for non-education related issues. Parents are to go directly to the VP with all non-education related grievances, and to contact teachers first for all education-related grievances or issues. For non-educational related grievances, the VP will brainstorm ways to resolve the issue. For educational-related issues, the teachers will work together to resolve the issue. If the family seeking support is not satisfied with the result, the next step would be to request a meeting with the Director and the President together to address the situation.

The VP is also able to assist families with accessing services such as parental leave or financial aid as well as asking the Board of Directors to grant exceptions (via Board motion) to our regular school policies on a family's behalf. In addition, the VP may also help mediate concerns related to non-participation of parent requirements. The VP will conduct an annual comprehensive program evaluation and share results with program staff, families, and Board of Directors. As a member of the preschool, you are welcome to reach out to the VP with questions or concerns at any time at Vicepresident@explorerperschool.org.

Santa Clara Valley Council

The Santa Clara Valley Council (SCVC) is an association of cooperative preschools in Silicon Valley. SCVC serves as a vehicle for the exchange of information and services between cooperative preschools. In addition, it provides many services to all member schools:

- Annual networking tea for parents and staff
- Speaker nights for parents
- Annual statewide co-op preschool convention for parents and staff
- Representation in the California Council of Parent Participation Nursery Schools (CCPPNS), which provides state-level advocacy/representation
- Web hosting and publicity
- Grants and loans
- Joint IRS-mandated ad published in The San Jose Mercury News
- Greatly reduced group insurance rates for each school

SCVC meets on a monthly basis and membership families are welcome to attend. Please email Explorer's SCVC Representative for more information at scvcrep@explorerpreschool.org.

Financial Aid Program

Short-term financial aid is available to families based on need. The Financial Aid Committee is composed of the President, Vice President, and the Director. The Treasurer will be consulted during the evaluation process so that the Financial Aid Committee is aware of the funds available. Families receiving financial aid must fulfill all of the regular duties and responsibilities of the school. All inquiries and participation are kept confidential. Please contact the VP at Vicepresident@explorerperschool.org for more information on Explorer's Financial Aid policy.

ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES

1. Admission and Continued Membership

1.1. To apply to Explorer Preschool each school year, families shall complete and submit an application online during the designated application period (see timeline below) AND submit payment of a non-refundable application fee per family.

1.2. Application dates shall be set each year by the Membership Chair. In a typical year, there are three application periods: Priority Application, Open House Lottery, and Open Applications (“first come/first serve”).

- The first application period (“Priority Application”) lasts for one to two weeks and occurs prior to Open House. The Priority application period is open to Currently Enrolled Preschool Families, Together Time Families, Alumni families returning to Explorer, and members of the Lincoln Glen Church community. This period provides eligible families the opportunity to apply early for Explorer’s fall classes.

- **Eligible applications must be completed within the designated priority application period to qualify for early application. Applications received *after* the Priority Application period will be processed in the lottery if submitted before Open House or first come/first serve if submitted after the lottery.**

- The second application period (“Open House Lottery”) begins on the day of Open House. New families wishing to join Explorer Preschool are welcome to apply online on the day of Open House. If the amount of applications exceeds the number of current class openings, applications received on the day of Open House shall be placed in a lottery for the remaining class placements. The lottery shall take place within 48 hours of Open house and families will be notified of the results via the email address submitted on their application. Families who do not receive an immediate class placement from the lottery shall be placed on the class waitlist in order of lottery results.

- There may be some years where a lottery is deemed unnecessary (e.g. low number of applications). In this situation, Explorer reserves the right to skip the “Open House Lottery” and

instead process all incoming applications on a first come, first serve basis as described below (“Open Applications”).

- The third application period (“Open Applications”) begins immediately after the Open House lottery. Applications will be processed “first come, first serve” and any family applying during the “Open Application” period shall either be placed into a class (if space is available) or added to the waitlist in the order their application is received.

1.3.If a member family does not fulfill its membership requirements within the school year’s due dates, the Board may vote to decline the family’s application for the subsequent year.

1.4. For mid-year admission or inter-class changes, members joining a class or transferring from one class to another may only begin on the 1st or 15th of the month. Inter-class changes are limited to space availability and follow the waitlist order. All Inter-class changes are managed by the Membership Chairperson and require Teacher approval.

2. Class Placements

2.1.Explorer Preschool’s classes were designed with a progression of the curriculum in mind. Children move from 2s into 3s-5s, and finally into Pre-K. No class is truly a prerequisite for the next and families may enter the school at any age level.

2.2.Age requirements for each class are posted on the Explorer website under [class listings](#). Our teachers plan their child and parent curriculums to be specific to the age and developmental stage of each class grouping. Therefore, we ask that families please adhere to our established age groupings in order to provide an optimum experience for their family.

2.3.Children already enrolled in a public or private kindergarten program are not eligible for concurrent enrollment in Explorer’s preschool program.

2.4.In the instances in which a child meets the age eligible requirements for more than one class (e.g. MW2s and F2s or 3s-5s and PreK); we strongly recommend indicating both a 1st and 2nd choice class on the application. This allows for a placement into a class, should your preferred class reach its maximum enrollment. If placed in your 2nd choice class, you have the option to be placed on the waitlist for your 1st choice class should a space open up at a later date.

2.5. Other than during the “Priority Application” period, there will be no preference in enrollment provided to current or alumni Explorer families.

3. Enrollment Process

3.1. A family must file all required forms by their due dates in order to become a member of Explorer Preschool. All forms must be complete and approved in order for members to maintain their place in a class. **Due to licensing regulations, families may not attend class until all required forms have been received and verified by Membership and/or Health and Safety Chairperson(s).**

Required forms are as follows:

- Explorer Preschool Application for Admission
- Explorer Preschool Enrollment form
- Tuition Contract (Admission Agreement)
- Physician’s Report (LIC 701)
 - Child’s physician must sign this form. An up-to-date copy of the child’s immunization record must be attached. Child’s TB skin test is required only if any risk factors are present and/or if a parent tests positive in their TB test. Risk factors are detailed on the physician’s report
- Health Screening Report – Facility Personnel (LIC 503)
 - This form needs to be completed for each family’s adult(s) who will be working in the classroom. The form requirements include a general medical examination by a qualified physician or physician’s assistant and a TB skin test (or chest x-ray for positive TB). The form must be signed by the physician’s office with TB test results or TB risk assessment form attached.
 - All adult volunteers must also submit proof of Measles and Pertussis immunization before being allowed to work on campus. Measles and Pertussis immunization may not be declined.
 - All adult volunteers must provide annual proof of Flu vaccination. The Flu vaccination may be declined each year.
 -
- Child’s Pre-Admission Health History (LIC 702)
- Consent for Emergency Medical Treatment (LIC 627)
- Notification of Parents’ Rights (LIC 995)
- Personal Rights (LIC 613A)

- Identification and Emergency Information (LIC 700)
- Explorer Preschool Parent Handbook Agreement (provided in Fall)
- Certificate of completion for the [Basic IPM](#) course for all in-class volunteers.

REQUIRED IMMUNIZATIONS FOR EXPLORER PRESCHOOL AND ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS

Table A contains the list of California Immunization requirements for the Explorer Preschool program. There are no vaccine requirements for the Enrichment Programs.

Table A: California Immunization Requirements for Pre-Kindergarten¹

Age When Admitted	Total Number of Doses Required of Each Immunization ^{2,3}			
	18 months through 5 years	3 Polio	4 DTaP	3 Hep B
On or after the 1st birthday: 1 Hib ⁴ and 1 MMR				

¹ Reference: [17 CCR, section 6025](#)

² Combination vaccines (e.g., MMRV) meet the requirements for individual component vaccines. Doses of DTP count towards the DTaP requirement.

³ Any vaccine administered four or fewer days prior to the minimum required age is valid.

⁴ One Hib dose must be given on or after the first birthday regardless of previous doses. Required only for children who have not reached the age of five years.

A conditional admission to school may occur if the student has received one dose of each required vaccination and any subsequent doses that are due according to **Table C** (below). The guidelines found in the [California Code of Regulations \(CCR\) Title 17, section 6035](#) will be followed for conditional admission to the preschool.

TABLE C: CONDITIONAL ADMISSION SCHEDULE FOR PRE-KINDERGARTEN

Before admission a child must obtain the first dose of each required vaccine and any subsequent doses that are due because the period of time allowed before exclusion has elapsed.

DOSE	Earliest Dose May be Given	Exclude if not Given by
Polio #2	4 weeks after 1st dose	8 weeks after 1st dose
Polio #3	4 weeks after 2nd dose	12 months after 2nd dose
DTaP #2, #3	4 weeks after previous dose	8 weeks after previous dose
DTaP #4	6 months after 3rd dose	12 months after 3rd dose
Hib #2	4 weeks after 1st dose	8 weeks after 1st dose
Hep B #2	4 weeks after 1st dose	8 weeks after 1st dose
Hep B #3	8 weeks after 2nd dose	12 months after 2nd dose and at least 4 months after 1st dose

A child may be admitted if they have a medical exemption (temporary or permanent) for a required immunization if the school has received documentation of all other required immunizations in [17 CCR Section 6025](#). Beginning January 1, 2021, all new medical exemptions must be issued through CAIR-ME. Medical exemptions can only be issued by an MD or a DO licensed in California and must meet applicable Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), and American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) criteria.

The Health and Safety Chair shall maintain a list of all students not completely immunized, including students with exemptions or who are admitted conditionally. The list shall include the immunizations not yet received for each student. If a student who is not completely immunized against a particular communicable disease may have been exposed to that disease, the Health and Safety Chair in combination with the Director shall determine whether the student is at risk of developing or transmitting the disease and, if so, may require the exclusion of the student from school until the completion of the incubation period or, if infection is suspected or occurs, until completion of the period in which the disease is communicable.

As of January 1, 2016, the school is no longer allowed to receive a personal beliefs exemption to a currently required vaccine for any student.

PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

Below are the requirements for participation and continued membership at Explorer Preschool. Each family member is responsible for being knowledgeable of this information.

4. In-Class Parent Participation

- 4.1. The Class Representative will schedule each working parent on a rotating basis in each class for which they have a child enrolled. Schedules are first distributed at Orientation and then periodically after that.
- 4.2. A working parent may be scheduled to work extra class sessions per month when required based on scheduling needs, special occasions, or as a substitute for an approved leave of absence. Schedules are provided in advance and it is the family's responsibility to review the schedule and know which days they are assigned to work in the classroom.
- 4.3. Work cards, describing the duties and responsibilities of each working parent position, are kept in the classroom for use during class. Working parents are responsible for knowing and following work card information.
- 4.4. As quickly as possible, working parents should learn where things are kept, the daily schedule, routines, and the names of the children in order to assume responsibility in the group.
- 4.5. In order to provide a safe and well supervised classroom environment, working parents shall arrive 15 minutes prior to the start of class unless otherwise instructed by the Teacher: 8:45am for the morning classes, and at 12:15pm for the afternoon class.
- 4.6. Working parents who are late to their scheduled work shift create a safety concern. Any parent who arrives more than 15 minutes late to work in the classroom is subject to the following:
 - 1st offense: Notice from Teacher
 - 2nd offense: Report to Vice President, phone call
 - 3rd offense: Report to Vice President, written letter of notice
 - 4th offense: Membership is subject to termination by a vote of the Board

- 4.7. Working parents should wear comfortable appropriate clothing that is easy to move in and supportive shoes when working in the classroom. An apron will be provided for additional protection from spills and other incidentals.
- 4.8. For safety reasons, please refrain from using personal cell phones for communication including texting, emails, and calls while working in the classroom.
- 4.9. The daytime emergency number (408-723-0779) rings on the phone in the Big Kid Classroom (Room 1) by the literacy room. It must always be answered by a parent or teacher during class time.
- 4.10. If unable to fulfill your scheduled work shift, please arrange for a substitute working parent to cover your classroom shift.

5. Working Parent Substitutes

- 5.1. It is the responsibility of the working parent to arrange a paid substitute or trade workshifts with another school parent for any absences on your scheduled workday.
- 5.2. The Class Representative distributes to each class member a copy of the workday schedule which lists members in the class who are willing to be a paid/trade substitute. In addition, each class will have a list of Designated Working Parents and Substitutes outside of the class who are approved to work based on having their TB Test, Proof of Immunization, Health Form, and current Basic IPM Certificate of Completion on file with the Health & Safety Chair.
- 5.3. The working parent shall either pay the Substitute compensation of \$35 per class session or trade a workday with them.
- 5.4. In the event that a parent misses a workday in the classroom and does not find a substitute, the parent shall be fined \$35 for the unfulfilled workshift. The Teacher will notify the Vice President when parents are absent on assigned workdays, and the Vice President will notify the parent.
- 5.5. For workshift absences on daytime PEC days, please refer to Section 11.7 under [Class Orientations and Daytime Parent Education Classes \(PECs\)](#).

6. Child Pick up

6.1. Parents are expected to promptly pick-up their child(ren) when class is over. Arriving five minutes after class ends constitutes being tardy. Excessive tardies are a safety concern and may result in membership termination. Any parent more than 5 minutes late to pick up their child(ren) from school is subject to the following:

- 1st offense: Notice from Teacher
- 2nd offense: Report to Vice President, phone call
- 3rd offense: Report to Vice President, letter of notice
- 4th offense: Membership is subject to termination by a vote of the Board.

7. Non-Designated Working Parents in the Classroom

7.1. Licensing requires every in-class working parent to have a current, physician signed, health screening form on file **prior** to attending any class session. Advance approval from the Teacher is required for anyone other than the enrolled child's designated working parent(s) to work in a classroom on a short term basis. The non-designated working parent must have a physician completed health-screening report (LIC 503) including TB test results and immunization requirements on file.

7.2. The Teacher, working parent(s), and non-designated working parent, shall agree in advance the expectations to be met during the non-designated working parent's classroom participation.

7.3.

8. Visitors in the Classroom

8.1. Other family members and children are welcome to attend class celebrations such as Holiday/Cultural Celebrations and Completion/Graduation Programs. The teacher will inform families of the dates/times of these events in advance. During these family activities, any visiting children must be supervised at all times.

8.2. Our licensing agency requires any visitor that would like to stay for an entire class session to have completed health documentation on file with the school prior to visiting. The required documentation includes the Health Screening form (LIC 503) signed by a physician, current TB test results, current Basic IPM Certification, and proof of immunization requirements.

9. Non-Explorer affiliated Volunteers

9.1. Due to licensing restrictions, we are unable to allow unaffiliated volunteers of any age in our classrooms during school hours.

9.2. At times, we may have volunteer opportunities available at our social events that take place outside of school hours. Please contact our Social Chair (social@explorerpreschool.org) for more information. Any volunteer at a social event outside of school hours must complete an [Explorer Volunteer Waiver Form](#). Volunteers shall not be left alone with children at any time and must be supervised by another parent or member of the teaching staff.

9.3. Occasionally our Teachers may host college students studying Early Childhood or student teachers in the classroom to observe Explorer's program. These invited guests do not work alone with children and must be with, and supervised by, teaching staff at all times.

10. Extended Caregiver Participation

10.1. The Extended Caregiver Participation option allows parents to share their in-class working responsibilities with other adults who regularly care for their child such as a non-parent family member (e.g. grandparent, aunt, uncle etc) or a nanny/au-pair. Parents are still required to fulfill all other school participation requirements including PEC attendance and maintenance shifts and team assignments (if applicable).

10.2. Classroom work shifts provide parents a deep and enriching opportunity to work alongside our teaching staff and learn hands-on about child development. In order to support each parent's ongoing growth and education, we require parents to work a minimum of their family's assigned classroom work shifts.

- **Fri 2's:** At least 2 workdays per year
- **MW 2's:** At least 3 workdays per year
- **3's-5's 2 day:** At least 2 workdays per year
- **3's- 5's 4 day:** At least 3 workdays per year
- **PreK:** At least 3 workdays per year

10.3. **In order to prepare for working in the classroom, the Extended Family Caregiver(s) AND parent(s) must jointly attend any class specific orientation(s) held in September and the culmination PEC at the end of the year.**

- Parents are expected to attend monthly daytime and evening PECs in order to maximize learning and fully take advantage of

the educational opportunities Explorer has to offer. See Section 14 of the Parent Handbook for a detailed description of PEC requirements.

- We strongly encourage non-parent caregivers to also attend daytime and evening Parent Education Classes (PECs). PECs offer our families a valuable opportunity to expand upon their skills, gain a deeper understanding of child development, and feel more confident and prepared for working with children.

10.4. Families with “Extended Caregiver Participation” status must designate their own long term caregiver(s). If for any reason, the Extended Caregiver is unable to work their scheduled shift, it is the family’s responsibility to arrange a suitable substitute to fulfill their shift (either shift trade or pay the \$35 sub fee). Substitutes may be another Explorer parent or an approved external Explorer substitute.

10.5. All adults working in the classroom must be in compliance with all required health forms, immunization requirements, and TB testing prior to working in the class.

10.6. Due to licensing requirements, nannies, au pairs, or similar non-relatives working in the class **must be a legally paid employee of the family** (including but not limited to Workman’s Comp and insurance).

10.7. Due to licensing requirements, any nanny, au pair, or similar non-relative adult working in the class (not applicable to 5’s club or summer camp) **must be fingerprinted with a LIC 9163 Request for Livescan fingerprinting** form. Clearance must be received and processed by our Health and Safety team prior to working in the classroom. Live scan is a biometric technology that permits digitally scanned fingerprints to be electronically transmitted directly to the California Department of Justice and Federal Bureau of Investigation instead of using ink and a fingerprint card. This technology allows criminal background checks to be processed usually within 72 hours. Any fees associated with completing Livescan fingerprinting are the responsibility of the family.

10.8. The option to participate in the “Extended Caregiver Participation” must be indicated on your enrollment application. The Membership Chair and/or Board Vice President will then follow up with these families to arrange a schedule of assigned classroom work shifts prior to the child’s first day of school.

10.9. “Extended Caregiver Participation” is valid for one school year and must be renewed each year.

10.10. If a family is not in compliance with the terms of this agreement as outlined in the “Extended Caregiver Participation” Option above, then the Member is subject to losing their Membership Status by a vote of the Board.

11. Non-Participation Families

11.1. Non-Participation Families are members who fulfill all school requirements (e.g. team assignment, maintenance work days, PECs) except working in the classroom and do not have a long-term substitute working in the classroom.

11.2. Non-Participation Families pay double the monthly tuition amount in exchange for not working in the classroom. They are not required to find a substitute to cover their work shifts.

11.3. In order to request Non-Participation status, please email the VP at Vicepresident@explorerpreschool.org with your request. The VP will work with the family to bring the request to the teachers and Board.

11.4. A limited number of partial and/or non-participating member spaces are available per class, each requiring Teacher and Board approval.

12. Class Orientations and Daytime Parent Education Classes (PECs)

12.1. Class orientation provides important information about the class, structure, and expectations and attending is critical to each family’s success in the program. All families are responsible for reviewing orientation information and understanding the expectations of the class.

12.2. Families must attend the mandatory class orientation and the first day of school. Orientation counts as the first PEC of the year. **Not attending the Class Orientation may result in a family losing their placement in their class.**

12.3. If a family is unable to attend Orientation and/or First Day of Class: Advance written notice and approval from the Teacher and Parent Education Chair are required. **If the family does not follow this step, Explorer Preschool reserves the right to drop them from any enrolled class(es) and they shall forfeit their non-refundable September tuition and enrollment fees.** Explorer will notify the family first via e-mail and then the phone number on file if there is no response.

12.4. Daytime PECs are run by the lead classroom Teacher and cover a range of topics along with discussion on upcoming class events. They are held during

class time while a substitute Teacher and the scheduled working parents stay with the children. Important class specific information is shared with parents during the daytime PECs. Parents are responsible for being aware of all information presented at these meetings. If not in attendance, parents shall read the minutes distributed by the Class Representative.

- If you are scheduled as “off” for working in the classroom and there is a daytime PEC during the day you would normally work, you must attend the daytime PEC, or it’s considered a PEC miss.

12.5. Families take turns providing snacks and/or beverages to one daytime PEC (per enrolled class) per school year. The Class Representative will assign families and manage sign ups. If unable to fulfill these requirements as scheduled, the parent shall arrange a trade with another family.

12.6. In May, the Culmination evening is considered the May Daytime PEC and attendance is required. Advance written notice and approval from the Teacher is required to miss the Culmination PEC. In the event that a family misses the Culmination, a designated make-up project may be assigned by the Teacher. Failure to attend the Culmination PEC or complete the make-up assignment will result in loss of a family’s refundable deposit.

12.7. Children are not permitted at Orientations or Parent Education classes. Babysitting must be arranged prior to the meeting. Newborns/infants are an exception.

12.8. If you are a scheduled working parent in the classroom on the date of a Daytime PEC and you are unable to work, you must find a substitute to work your classroom shift.

12.9. If you are scheduled as “off” for the daytime PEC and you normally work that day, then you must attend the PEC or it’s considered an absence.

- If the substitute is an external substitute (not a working parent of a currently enrolled family in the class), your absence from that PEC day will be excused.
- If your substitute is another working parent in the classroom and they are missing the Daytime PEC, it will count as a PEC miss for the family originally scheduled to work in the classroom. There shall be no penalty for the substitute family.
- When Daytime PECs occur, scheduling may require you to work one extra shift in the classroom in any given month. This allows for all

parents to be able to attend Daytime PECs on a rotating schedule for various months.

13. All-School Orientation and Nighttime Parent Education Classes (PECs)

- 13.1. Nighttime PECs are scheduled in advance throughout the year and are noted on the class calendar, class work schedule, and master calendar available on our website. These are school-wide classes, and topics vary from year to year. There is also a portion of each Nighttime PEC dedicated to school business (“Business Meeting”).
- 13.2. The first Nighttime PEC is the September “All-School Orientation.” Attendance is required. Advance written notice and approval from the Teacher and Parent Ed Chair are required if unable to attend.
- 13.3. Attendance at the January Nighttime PEC is optional. Attendance at this particular PEC can be used as a make-up or banked as an extra PEC attended to be used later as a make-up should you need to miss any PECs greater than the allotted amount. *See section 14 below for PEC requirements.*
- 13.4. Children are not permitted at the Orientations or Parent Education classes. Babysitting must be arranged prior to the meeting. Newborns/infants are an exception.
- 13.5. Nighttime PEC snacks are organized by the Parent Education team and paid for by the snack fee (paid with enrollment fees). The intent of having refreshments is to make PEC events more comfortable as well as to provide something for parents who come directly to the school from work or other commitments and may not have had a chance to eat dinner.

14. Parent Education Class (PEC) Attendance and Make-ups

- 14.1. Parent education is a cornerstone of our program and parents are expected to regularly attend monthly Daytime and Evening PECs in order to maximize learning and fully take advantage of the educational opportunities Explorer has to offer. **Attendance is required at:**
- Your child(ren)’s class orientation
 - All-School orientation in September.
 - The annual evening business meeting in April (following the monthly PEC)
 - Your child(ren)’s class culmination celebration in May
 - At least 75% of the remaining class and all-school PECs (*e.g. attend 9 out of 12 scheduled daytime/evening PECs*)

for families beginning in September with 1 preschool program enrolled child.)

14.2. Advance written notice and approval by the Teacher and Parent Education Chair are required if a family cannot attend any of the mandatory meetings (Class Orientation, All-School Orientation, April business meeting, or Class Culmination). A specific alternative make-up option will be assigned by the Teacher or Parent Education Chair.

- **Failure to complete the make-up assignment(s) within the designated time frame denotes not fulfilling parent education requirements and will result in loss of a family's refundable deposit.**

14.3. At least one parent must attend the Daytime and Evening PECs; however, both parents are invited and encouraged to attend if able.

14.4. Roll is taken via a hardcopy or QR code online attendance sheet at the end of each Daytime and Evening PEC. Parents are responsible for making sure they sign off on their attendance at the end of each Daytime and Evening PEC. In order to help with tracking, parents will be notified via email after each PEC absence.

- In order to accurately reflect attendance, families with more than one (1) child attending Explorer must sign the class attendance sheet for all classes their children are enrolled in at the end of all Nighttime PECs.
- When signing out on PEC attendance sheets, families must only sign for their attendance. Signing out on a PEC attendance sheet for another family is prohibited. Membership is subject to termination if a family asks others to sign out for their PEC attendance or if a family signs out other families not in attendance.

14.5. If make-up PEC classes are needed, options shall be approved by the Parent Education Chair and completed within 30 days of the missed PEC. Attendance at the nighttime January PEC may also be used as a make-up. Make-up options vary and will be at the discretion of the Parent Education Chair. Generally options include attending an outside parent education lecture, reading a book related to children/parenting, attending a board meeting (not applicable for current board members) etc. Please contact the Parent Education Chair (parent_ed@explorerpreschool.org) for more information.

- 14.6. For families on Parental Leave, parents are excused from attending any scheduled daytime or evening PECs that occur **within the first thirty (30) days of the birth, foster, or adoption of a child**. For families choosing to take their parental leave after the first thirty days, excusal from PECs during that time is up to the discretion of the Classroom Teacher and Parent Education Chair. See [Parental Leave](#) for more information.
- 14.7. Granting exemptions to missed PECs due to emergencies (e.g. hospitalizations or a death in the family) is at the discretion of the Teacher, Vice President, **and** Parent Education Chair.
- 14.8. Membership status will be reviewed and may be subject to termination by the Board if a family repeatedly misses PECs and/or make-ups are not completed within the specified timeframe.
- 14.9. Failure to fulfill the Parent Education requirements will result in loss of the refundable deposit.

15. Fundraising Fulfillment

- 15.1. Throughout the year, a variety of school fundraisers are planned to generate funds to support school improvements. All families are encouraged to participate in school organized fundraisers in order to support Explorer.
- 15.2. Explorer relies on the generosity of our membership's donations to help fund the school. We strongly encourage all families to make a suggested minimum donation of \$180 per school year. The fundraising committee will provide directions on how to donate and reminders throughout the year.
- Explorer is a 501c3 organization (FEIN 94-1483367) so your donation may be tax deductible.

16. School Maintenance Requirements

- 16.1. All Explorer Preschool families participate in maintenance work days to maintain the inside of the school and yard. Workdays are generally held monthly on Saturday mornings. They last approximately three hours each and typically run 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
- 16.2. All Explorer Preschool families contribute to the cost of a professional cleaning service of the school. This fee presently stands at \$40 per enrolled student or \$80 max per family for the current school year.

- 16.3. Families enrolled in the MW2s, 3s-5s and Pre-K classes participate in three (3) hours of maintenance per year. For families with children enrolled in one of these classes, please sign up for one maintenance day shift (three hours each).
- 16.4. There is no maintenance hours requirement for families enrolled in the Fri2s class, but the fee still applies.
- 16.5. There is no maintenance requirement for Together Time families as it is an enrichment program.
- 16.6. Board Member families complete their annual Maintenance requirement by participating in one individual clean up day during summer break and one one point five (1.5) hour Board maintenance day in August before school begins. Board members who do not fulfill this requirement during the summer will instead participate in one regular school maintenance day.
- 16.7. Either parent may attend the Saturday maintenance work day; however, due to licensing requirements, children cannot attend. While it is preferred that parents of Explorer students participate in the maintenance work days, we understand that circumstances may arise that require families to send another family member (e.g. grandparent, aunt, uncle etc.) to work your shift. If you would like to have a non-Explorer affiliated family member attend in your place, please contact the Maintenance chair(s) in advance for approval. Participants must be 18 years of age or older.
- 16.8. The opportunity to sign up for your preferred maintenance work day will be available online at the beginning of the school year. If a family does not sign up for their maintenance work day by September 30th, date(s) will be auto-assigned and the family will be notified via email of their scheduled maintenance days.
- 16.9. Changes can be made to assigned maintenance day until September 30th. After that date, it is a family's responsibility to attend. If a family becomes unable to work their scheduled day, they must either trade days with another family, send another adult family member to work in their place, or pay another Explorer family \$50 to work the maintenance shift. Once a substitute has been arranged, the family shall e-mail the Maintenance Chair to update the sign up. Please do not make any self-initiated changes to the maintenance sign up after this date, unless instructed to do so by the Maintenance Chair, or by the maintenance team member tracking maintenance participation.
- In the event of an emergency (e.g. serious illness or injury): It is the responsibility of the family to contact the Maintenance Chair (Maintenance@explorerpreschool.org) as soon as possible.

Circumstances will be reviewed and a decision will be made on a case by case basis by the Maintenance Chair(s) and/or Board.

16.10. If you are unable to fulfill your entire three (3) hour shift by arriving late and/or leaving prior to the completion of your scheduled maintenance day, the missed time may need to be made up on another maintenance day at the discretion of the Maintenance Chair. In the event that you are running late, or if you must leave early, please notify the maintenance host upon arrival and/or prior to leaving. Circumstances will be reviewed and a decision will be made on a case by case basis by the Maintenance Chair(s) and/or Board.

16.11. Failure to fulfill the Maintenance Requirements will result in loss of the annual refundable deposit and the member's status may be reviewed by the Board.

As a co-op school, Explorer relies on each family's maintenance day participation to maintain the safety and cleanliness of our school. It is critical that parents follow through with their scheduled commitment and attend their assigned maintenance day shift(s).

- **If at the end of the school year, the maintenance hours are still not fulfilled, the family's refundable deposit will be retained even if the fine has been paid.**
- **Withdrawing families are still responsible for completing scheduled maintenance requirements prior to their withdrawal date. Failure to complete may result in the loss of the family's refundable deposit.**

17. Team or Board Member Participation

17.1. Each preschool member family is required to fill a position in the school as a Board member, Team Chair, or Team member. These positions are essential to the day to day functioning of a co-op preschool.

- Fri 2's families are exempt from the team participation requirements in return for paying a higher tuition rate per class.

17.2. Team Participation

- The Board President shall place membership families on a school team taking into consideration the family's team preferences and space availability. There may be times when a family's help is

needed on a team not selected as a preference (e.g. such as when there is a need for special skills or when the selected teams are full etc).

- Team members will be notified of their placements by their Team Chair in early August.
- Team Members are expected to attend any meetings held by their Team Chair and fulfill the expectations of members on their assigned team. If unable to attend a scheduled meeting, team members must communicate their absence to the team chair in advance.
- The Team Chair(s) will make the determination as to if a family is participating in a way that supports the success of the team. If a Board Member feels a family is not participating as expected (e.g. failing to attend meetings, not following through with assigned action items etc), they will communicate expectations with the family in a timely manner. If a family continues to not support or participate in the team, the Vice President will work with the family and Team Chair to mediate.
- **Failure to fulfill the Team member participation requirements will result in the loss of the refundable deposit.**

17.3. Board Participation

- Board appointments last for one (1) year and run from June 1st through May 31st of the following year.
- Board members are expected to attend monthly Board meetings and fulfill the expectations of their respective position. Board members who miss more than three (3) Board meetings during their 12 month appointment and/or fail to fulfill their assigned duties will be subject to dismissal from the Board.
- Board members are elected in the Spring of the preceding school year. Board Nomination announcements will be made in the school e-letter to inform the membership of when the Board nomination time period will begin and end. All positions are considered open and all nominations will be reviewed by the Nominations Committee. A Board nomination does not guarantee a Board position.
- Board positions are not limited to in-class working parents. Any parent within our membership is welcome to nominate themselves or a classmate for a specific role during the designated board nomination

period. Interested parents may nominate themselves or a classmate for more than one position.

- The Vice President will review all submissions and follow up with nominated candidates. During the Nominations meeting in early spring, the Nominations Committee will meet and put together a prospective board slate. Prospective board members will be contacted that evening and invited to join the slate.
- The Membership shall vote to accept or decline the prospective Board slate during the Business meeting directly following the April All-School PEC.
- The first Board meeting following elections is in May of each school year, and is attended by both outgoing and incoming officers.
- **Failure to fulfill the board member participation requirements will result in loss of the refundable deposit.**

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

18. Application Fees

18.1. A non-refundable application fee, payable per family, is paid annually and is due when the application for enrollment is submitted. Refer to the school website for the current application fee rate.

19. Annual Tuition

19.1. Tuition is based on an annual fee that has been divided into nine monthly installment payments for your convenience of payment. Refer to the tuition contract, Financial Synopsis (provided to each family at orientation), or the Explorer website for current class fees.

19.2. Tuition, payable in advance, is due on the first of each month and is considered delinquent on the 10th, regardless of the day of the week. Accounts will be marked delinquent after this date and a cumulative late fee will be assessed. Delinquent accounts will be reviewed by the Treasurer each month.

19.3. Absences from classes do not result in a reduction of tuition. From time to time, forces beyond Explorer Preschool's control may necessitate canceling school for one day or more. Tuition covers the cost of running the school over the entire school year and no refunds will be provided except in extreme circumstances.

19.4. Tuition is payable via automated bank transfer (ACH) through the Jovial parent portal OR by check mailed to the school's P.O. Box address:

Explorer Preschool
% Treasurer
P.O. Box 24786
San Jose, CA 95154

20. Tuition for Mid-Year Admissions

20.1. A full month's tuition is required if a child begins class on or before the 15th of a month. A half month's tuition is required if a child begins class after the 15th of the month.

20.2. Together Time families admitted after January 1st are prorated and only pay the second tuition installment for the class to cover the remainder of the year.

21. Refundable Deposit

- 21.1. A refundable deposit, billed per family, is due upon the child's enrollment. Provided all preschool requirements have been met for the year, the deposit will be refunded in full at the time of withdrawal or at the end of the school year (by or around June 30th).
- 21.2. The annual refundable deposit may not be applied toward any outstanding tuition or fundraising buyout balances at the time of withdrawal.
- 21.3. Failure to fulfill school requirements will result in loss of the refundable deposit and the Board will review the family's membership status.

22. Santa Clara Valley Council (SCVC) Fee

- 22.1. The SCVC fee, billed per family, is due upon the family's enrollment and payable each school year.
- 22.2. The SCVC fee is prepaid with enrollment fees and is non-refundable for members withdrawing on or after September 30th.
- 22.3. The SCVC fee is not prorated for members who add during the school year.

23. Snack Fee

- 23.1. A snack fee, billed per family, is due upon the family's enrollment and payable each school year. The snack fee covers evening refreshments (food and beverage) served at the monthly evening all-school PECs.
- 23.2. The snack fee is prepaid with enrollment fees and is non-refundable for members withdrawing on or after September 30th.
- 23.3. The snack fee is not prorated for members who add during the school year.

24. Materials Fee

- 24.1. A materials fee, billed per child, is due upon the child's enrollment and payable each school year. Refer to the [Explorer website](#) for current materials fees.
- 24.2. The materials fee is paid with enrollment fees and is non-refundable for members withdrawing on or after September 30th.
- 24.3. The materials fee is not prorated for members who add during the school year.

25. Reimbursements

- 25.1. Any personal expenditures of money on the school's behalf must be pre-approved, including the dollar amount, by the Team Chairperson of the team whose budget will be charged.
- 25.2. **Expenditures over \$200 must be approved by the Board of Directors in advance.** Reimbursement requests must include the date of the approved Board motion.
- 25.3. Reimbursement and check requests are completed online only. The link to the form is available from the Co-Treasurer or on the Explorer website under the "Resources" tab.
- 25.4. Reimbursement requests must be submitted to the Co-Treasurer within 60 days from the date of purchase. The Co-Treasurer shall fulfill approved requests within 14-17 days.
- 25.5. If more than 90 days have elapsed from the date of purchase, the reimbursement request is subject to Board review and approval.
- 25.6. All reimbursement requests must be submitted online to the Co-Treasurer **no later** than May 15th regardless of the time elapsed from the date of purchase. This is to allow sufficient time to process reimbursements before the books are closed at the end of the school's fiscal year.

TAKING LEAVE AND WITHDRAWAL

26. Parental Leave

- 26.1. Families who have a newborn, foster a child of any age, or adopt a child of any age during the school year are eligible to take six weeks of parental leave from their in-class workday duties. In the event of a c-section, birth families are eligible for up to 8 weeks of parental leave from their in-class workday duties.
- 26.2. The six weeks of parental leave must be taken consecutively and within four months after the birth, foster, or adoption occurs.
- 26.3. Families may choose the start date of their leave, however, they must notify the Vice President at least one (1) month prior to the leave start date to allow for working parent schedule adjustments to be made.
- 26.4. Parents shall contact the Vice President to request parental leave. The Vice President shall work with the family, Teacher, and Class Representative to coordinate the request.
- 26.5. After Parental Leave is approved, the family is responsible for continued communication with the Teacher and Class Representative about their Parental Leave Plans.
- 26.6. Parental Leave for families attending summer camp is subject to board approval and must be submitted to the Vice President by May 1.
- 26.7. The family on parent leave is not responsible for scheduling substitutes for their work shifts during the parental leave. The Teacher and Classroom Representative will ensure there is appropriate classroom supervision by assigning shifts to other classroom working parents to fill in as substitutes for a family on parental leave.
- 26.8. If a holiday occurs during the leave, it shall count as part of the six-week leave period; extra time will not be given.
- 26.9. Families are excused from attending any scheduled daytime or evening PECs that occur **within the first thirty (30) days of the birth, foster, or adoption of a child**. For families choosing to take their parental leave after the first thirty days, excusal from PECs during that time is up to the discretion of the Classroom Teacher and Parent Education Chair.

- Parents on leave are encouraged to continue attending any scheduled Parent Education Classes, where the presence of infants is an exception. Babysitting arrangements must be arranged for any other children.

26.10. Families on Parental Leave are still responsible for fulfilling any duties related to their team assignment, fundraising, and maintenance requirements while on leave. They shall continue to read any class specific and school-wide emails as well as Daytime PEC notes so that the family is up to date on class events and school activities.

26.11. The enrolled child may continue to attend class while the parent(s) is/are on Parental Leave.

26.12. For licensing and safety regulations, newborn babies shall not accompany parents to school during their class work shifts. Newborns, infants, and non-enrolled siblings may only be present in the class at pickup, drop off, and during holiday activities where families are invited into the classroom. If a parent is scheduled to work in the classroom, they must arrange childcare for any children that are not enrolled in the class.

27. Emergency Leave

27.1. Short term emergency leave from school responsibilities (such as classroom workshifts, team participation, and maintenance days) may be granted at the discretion of the Board in cases of extreme emergencies such as hospitalization or death in the family.

27.2. The Class Representative and the Vice President will arrange short-term substitutes during a family's emergency leave. The Class Representative makes long-term arrangements for substitutes if necessary.

27.3. During a family's Emergency leave, tuition is paid and the enrolled student may continue to attend classes as scheduled.

27.4. Emergency leave cannot be granted in the case of illness of the enrolled preschool child.

28. Extended Leave of Absence

28.1. A member may be granted a leave of absence up to 30 days at the discretion of the Board. A leave of absence longer than 30 days requires Board approval for each additional 30 days. There are two options for a leave of absence:

- **Option A:** The family continues to pay tuition to reserve their enrollment in a class. The family is required to fulfill all requirements including arranging for substitutes on their scheduled workdays, participation in PECs and fulfilling team assignment obligations.

- **Option B:** The family notifies the school of the period they will be absent. Provided that they have fulfilled all work requirements up to the date of absence, the family will be removed from the class roster and placed at the top of the waiting list for their class. The child may return and re-enroll provided that there is space in the class. Tuition shall be suspended during this leave of absence. There will be no application fees required upon the return. Re-enrollment cannot extend into the following school year and this option for a leave of absence cannot be granted in the month of May.

29. Withdrawal Procedures

29.1. Withdrawal from Explorer Preschool is defined as a student exiting the class in which they are currently enrolled, and forfeiting the student's position in any future classes for which they may be registered.

29.2. If you do not intend to fully exit Explorer, see options for taking a [Leave of Absence](#)

29.3. A family needing to withdraw shall contact the Membership Chair at Membership@explorerpreschool.org. The Membership Chair will enlist the help of the Vice President to support the family with their request to withdraw. A "Notice of Withdrawal" form will be provided by the Vice President and the family is responsible for the completion and return of the form to the Vice President.

29.4. Due to the amount of administrative effort required to process mid-year withdrawals, there is a non-refundable \$50 processing fee due *per student* at the time of submission of the "Notice of Withdrawal form" for withdrawals after October 1. The Notice of Withdrawal form may be found in the Jovial Family Portal under the Forms Library. Payment can be made via check or via the Jovial family portal through billing after submitting the form. Please note that this fee cannot be paid out of the annual refundable deposit.

29.5. Withdrawal effective dates may only take place on the 15th of the month or on the last day of the month (this does not apply for Together Time families).

29.6. The form must be submitted to the Vice President a minimum of fifteen (15) days prior to the Effective Withdrawal Date.

- **Example A:** In order to withdraw with an effective date of February 15th, a family must deliver a completed Notice of Withdrawal on or before January 31st.
- **Example B:** In order to withdraw with an effective date of March 1st, a family must submit a completed Notice of Withdrawal on or before February 15th.

29.7. After submitting the “Notice of Withdrawal” form and paying the non-refundable \$50 processing fee, the family continues to be responsible for the following commitments until their Effective Withdrawal Date:

- 1) Working all scheduled workdays or arranging for paid substitutes, attending all PECs (daytime and evening)
- 2) Working or arranging for paid substitutes for any scheduled maintenance days
- 3) Upholding any team obligations

29.8. Due to the Holiday Break, withdrawals are not processed during the month of December. Therefore, all “Notice of Withdrawal” forms for those wishing to withdraw on November 30th must be submitted no later than November 15th. December tuition is non-refundable.

29.9. The last effective date to withdraw during the school year is April 30th. Therefore, all notices of withdrawal forms must be submitted to the Membership Chair no later than April 15th. May tuition is non-refundable.

29.10. Any member who, at the time of withdrawing, did not give the proper and timely Notice of Withdrawal, pay all tuition fees, pay any/all fines due, or fulfill Parent Education requirements or other school obligations, shall not be allowed to re-enter Explorer Preschool at a later date without approval by the Board of Directors.

30. Tuition and Refunds upon Withdrawal

30.1. When the withdrawal of a member becomes effective on the last day of the month, tuition is paid in full for that month.

Example: A family with an effective withdrawal date of January 31st is responsible for the full payment of January tuition.

30.2. When the withdrawal of a member becomes effective on the 15th of the month, one-half month of tuition is paid.

Example: A family with an effective withdrawal date of February 15th is responsible for payment of one-half of February's tuition.

30.3. September tuition is prepaid with enrollment fees. September tuition is non-refundable after the minimum payment for the school year has been made.

30.4. The SCVC fee, Snack fee, Cleaning fee, and Materials fee will be refunded for members who withdraw before September 30th.

30.5. If a family withdraws from Together Time before the first day of class, their first installment, cleaning fee, and materials fee, minus a \$100 fee, will be refunded. If a family withdraws from Together Time after the first day of class but before October 31, their second installment and materials fee shall be refunded. Please note that absences from class do not result in a reduction of tuition.

31. Termination

31.1. If for any reason a family is not fulfilling the requirements set forth in the Parent Handbook of Explorer Preschool, family membership will be subject to termination. The issue of termination will first be reviewed by the Executive Board. Then, if warranted, the full Board will vote on terminating a family's membership.

31.2. A family whose membership has been terminated will be ineligible to reapply to the school for a period of one year following the termination. Thereafter, a family may petition the Board for permission to be readmitted. The Board of Directors will decide, on a case-by-case basis, if the family is to be allowed re-admittance. There will be a three-month probationary period where all school responsibilities must be met. The family will be re-evaluated at that time.

32. Sickness Policy and Procedure

32.1. The goal of the sickness policy is to prevent the spread of communicable illnesses among children and adults at the school. While it is not possible to fully prevent all illnesses, the incidence and severity can be greatly reduced by taking proper precautions.

32.2. It is critical to the health of our school community that children and parents stay home if they are experiencing any symptoms of illness. If you are unsure

about whether your child is well enough to participate in our full programmatic offerings, please keep them at home.

32.3. The Teacher may send a working parent and/or child home for the protection of the other school children and working parents. If a child exhibits symptoms of illness while at school, parents will be notified and asked to promptly pick their child up.

32.4. Please notify your Teacher via email if your child will be absent. **If you or your child has contracted a contagious disease (other than a cold), please notify the Health and Safety Chairperson immediately to start the exposure notification in your class.** There may be additional notification systems in place (e.g. an absence reporting form) in use as well. Please follow any additional absence procedures as shared by your teacher for the year.

32.5. If you are a parent scheduled to work in the classroom but are ill, please refer to our section on [Working Parent Substitutes](#).

32.6. Explorer Preschool takes the health and safety of our children, families, and teachers very seriously. Some aspects of our program are subject to change depending on community conditions and the recommendations of the CDC, CA Department of Public Health, and local county guidance. The Board of Directors may make changes to our health and safety protocol requiring further safety measures to protect the welfare of our school community. Detailed updates to our health policies will be shared with families during class orientations, via the e-newsletter, and/or posted on our website.

32.7. The following are common childhood or seasonal illnesses. This information is for reference only and does not replace consultation with a doctor. The descriptions are short summaries of various contagious diseases and are not a complete list. As always, please discuss any and all symptoms or illness with a pediatrician for official diagnoses and treatments.

- Cold or Flu: There are many different kinds of viruses that can cause upper respiratory infections. Symptoms of a cold/flu include cough, fever or chills, body aches, fatigue, and sore throat. Cough: A wet, wheezy cough (with mucus secretion), which can spread a bacterial or viral infection. Congestion and/or a runny nose: whether clear or colored discharge, that is not allergy related may be contagious and should be monitored. Be aware that a cold or flu virus is contagious before symptoms appear and is most contagious when symptoms first appear. Because it can be difficult to determine whether these symptoms

are attributed to cold, flu, or COVID-19, immediate COVID-19 testing is strongly encouraged. **Children and/or adults may return if at least 24 hours have passed since resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications; other symptoms have improved; AND with a negative COVID test OR a healthcare provider has provided documentation that the symptoms are typical of their underlying chronic condition (e.g., allergies or asthma) OR a healthcare provider has confirmed an alternative named diagnosis (e.g., Streptococcal pharyngitis, Coxsackie virus), OR at least 10 days have passed since symptom onset.**

- COVID-19: Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. Symptoms for COVID-19 may include fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, and/or diarrhea. Because it can be difficult to determine whether these symptoms are attributed to cold, flu, or COVID-19, immediate testing is strongly encouraged. **Because COVID-19 guidance is ever changing, please refer to Explorer’s updated guidance available on our website for our most [recent protocol](#).**
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough): Onset 7-10 days after exposure. Early symptoms may include a tight, night cough, which becomes more severe within 1-2 weeks. Children may vomit or make whooping sounds during severe coughing episodes. **Children may return to school after 1 week of treatment with antibiotics.**

Streptococcal Infections

- Strep Throat: Onset 1-4 days after exposure. Includes fever, sore throat and may also include abdominal pain. **Child/adult may return to school after 2 days of antibiotic treatment and normal temperature.**
- Scarlet Fever: Similar to Strep Throat, but the child also has a fine rash on face and body. The rash is rough and may feel like sandpaper. **Child/adult may return to school after 1 day of antibiotic treatment and normal temperature.**
- Impetigo: A Strep Infection of the skin that causes itching, oozing or crusting. Often begins around the mouth and nose and

spreads quickly. **Child/adult may return to school after treatment.**

Rashes

- Chicken Pox: onset 2-3 weeks after exposure. Symptoms may include fever, irritability and itchy rash. The rash resembles small blisters which appear first on the trunk, then on the face. **The child may return to school 7 days after onset of the rash and if all the blisters are dry (crust over).**
- 'Fifth Disease' (Erythema Infectiosum): onset about 1-2 weeks after exposure. A mild illness that starts with a bright red blotchy rash on the face that resembles 'slapped cheeks'. Rash may come and go and spread to the rest of the body for up to 3 weeks. **Child may return to school after the rash is gone.**
- Scabies: Onset 2-6 weeks after exposure. Symptoms include rash occurring around fingers, wrists, elbows, waist, thighs, or ankles. This is a highly contagious disease. Consult your physician for diagnosis and treatment. **You may return to school after treatment has begun.**
- Measles, Mumps and Rubella: All Explorer children are required to have their MMR vaccination. Yet, younger siblings may not have received their vaccine. If your child has a rash or a fever you should keep them away from other children or adults until you have contacted your physician. **A child with rubella or measles may return to school 5 days after onset of rash and absence of fever. Children with mumps may return after the swelling is gone.**

Other

- Infectious Diarrhea: **Children and adults may return to school after treatment and when diarrhea has ended.**
- Meningococcal Meningitis: Onset usually 2-5 days after exposure. Symptoms include fever, vomiting, headache, sleepiness, irritability or a stiff neck. This is a very serious illness; consult your physician promptly if symptoms occur. **Child/adult may return to school only upon the authorization of their physician.**
- Head Lice: The primary symptom is itching of the scalp or back of the neck. Sometimes nits (small white or light brown eggs) can be seen on

the hair shafts. Lice may spread from person to person after close contact. Lice do not jump or fly. **Children/adults may return to school after treatment is completed.**

- Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis): Can be bacterial or viral. Eyes are red and crusted with mucus discharge. There are many causes for this disorder. Consult your physician for treatment. **Children/adults may return to school when infection has been treated.**
- Hand, Foot, Mouth Disease: Onset 2-3 days after exposure. Symptoms include sudden onset, sore throat, pain, fever, headache and blister-like lesions inside the mouth and possibly the palms of hands and soles of feet. **Children/adults may return to school after fever subsides and sores are healed.**
- Ringworm:

Of the body: A fungal disease which appears as a flat, spreading ring-shaped infection on skin other than the scalp. As the infection grows larger, the center often clears, leaving normal skin. Onset 10-14 days after exposure. **Infected persons should not attend school until medical treatment is started.**

Of the scalp: A fungal disease which begins as a small, flat infection and spreads in a circular manner leaving scaly patches of baldness. Moist raised inflamed infections may develop, which become painful and leave a discharge. Onset 10-14 days after exposure. **Infected persons should not attend school until treatment is started.**

33.Health Forms

33.1.It is the responsibility of each working parent member to submit all required health forms to the Health and Safety Chairperson. These forms must be on file prior to attending any class session.

33.2.In the event a substitute working parent, such as a non-working parent or another approved substitute, wishes to visit and work in the classroom, they must submit and have on file all required health forms prior to working in the classroom. All forms and records must be kept up-to-date.

34.Injury Policy

34.1. For Minor Injuries: the working parent should notify the Teacher at the time of injury.

Working parents must wear disposable gloves found in the first aid kit, located above the bathroom sink, before washing or dressing the wound.

Wash the wound with soap and water only. Apply a clean bandage/band-aid.

Apply an ice bag or ice wrapped in a paper towel as needed, to reduce swelling.

Fill out an Injury Report, located at the sign-in book in each classroom, before the end of the school period. The Teacher will share the form with the pick up parent. The child's parent will review and sign the Injury Report and return it to the Teacher.

34.2. For Serious Injury: first assess the injury and the surrounding area to insure that no further injury is caused to the child or others. Notify the child's parent (if the parent is working at school). Notify the Teacher who will administer emergency first aid (first aid kits are located above the bathroom sink).

In the event of serious injury, a Teacher or designated working parent will attempt to contact parents immediately using their Emergency contact form. If the parent(s) is/are unreachable or was reached but fails to pick up a seriously injured/ill child before immediate medical attention becomes necessary, teachers may call 911, as needed. **The child's parents/guardians are responsible for any costs related to necessary medical treatment.**

In all events, the working parent must fill out an Injury Report before the end of the school period. The teacher will speak to the child's parent about the injury. The child's parent will review and sign the injury report and return it to the Teacher.

35. Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect

35.1. Per California's Penal Code §11166: "a mandated reporter shall make a report whenever he or she, in his or her professional capacity or within the scope of his or her employment, has knowledge of or observes a child whom the

mandated reporter knows or reasonably suspects has been the victim of child abuse or neglect."

35.2.All Explorer employees are mandated reporters and must report suspected child abuse or neglect. The 24 hour hotline for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect in Santa Clara County is 1-833-SCC-KIDS (1-833-722-5437).

35.3.Parent volunteers, while not mandated reporters, are encouraged to report any suspected cases of abuse and neglect. Free trainings in the identification and reporting of child abuse and neglect are available online:
<https://mandatedreporterca.com>

35.4.If an Explorer employee feels it is warranted, they may choose to discuss an intended report with the Director; however, discussion with the Director is not required in order to make a report. **Discussing the matter with the Director does not mean that the reporting requirement has been satisfied, a report must still be filed.**

36.Medication Policy

36.1.All medication must be brought to school in its original container listing: doctor, dosage, name of drug, and child's name (including EpiPens).

36.2.The form "Parent Consent for Administration of Medication" must accompany the medication. Contact the Health & Safety chair for more information.

36.3.Student medication is stored out of reach of children in a locked container. The container is located inside a high cabinet. Medicine is readily available to teachers for quick access.

36.4.Teachers will be trained on how to properly administer medication prior to the potential need for the medication. Teachers will document when and if any medications are given.

37.Diaper Changing Policy

37.1.Proper procedures are posted in the bathrooms and diaper-changing area. Every working parent, to minimize the spread of germs, is required to follow these important policies and be familiar with the changing and cleaning procedures.

37.2.Children shall use disposable diapers if needed, unless cloth diapers are required for health reasons.

- 37.3. Used diapers are to be self-contained and sealed in a plastic trash bag. Diapers are taken to the outside dumpster immediately and are not accessible to children. **Do not throw diapers away in the indoor trash bins.**
- 37.4. After a diaper is changed, disinfect the area by spraying the disinfectant solution (in a labeled spray bottle located in the bathroom cabinet) and wipe dry with a clean paper towel. (Return disinfectant bottle to cabinet when finished).
- 37.5. Children with diapers shall be checked frequently.
- 37.6. Diapers are to be changed in the designated changing area and at all times, caregivers must keep one hand on the child to prevent falls.
- 37.7. Nothing shall be stored or placed atop the diaper changing table.
- 37.8. Parents serving food shall NOT change diapers.

38. Proper Hand Washing Policy

- 38.1. Handwashing procedures are posted in the bathrooms and diaper-changing area. Parents are informed about hand washing procedures and the importance of not spreading germs. **All parents, volunteers, and teachers are required to follow these important policies, in order to minimize the spread of germs.**
- 38.2. All children are required to wash hands when entering school (before getting started), after toileting, and before making or having a snack.
- 38.3. Everyone is required to wash hands after doing the following:
- Handling pets
 - Working at the water table
 - Helping a child with toileting or nose wiping
 - Cleaning
 - Handling the trash
 - Changing a diaper
- 38.4. Proper hand washing procedures are followed using liquid soap and running water and scrubbing for at least 20 seconds.
- 38.5. When handling blood or helping with toileting and using gloves, hands must still be washed after gloves are removed.

38.6. The hand washing sink is ONLY used for hand washing. The kitchen sink is used for food preparation.

39. Special Needs and Allergy Policy

39.1. Explorer staff will work with families to make reasonable accommodations for a child's special needs.

39.2. Parents of children with special needs, including allergies, must fill out an Individual Care Program form.

39.3. **Explorer is a NUT-FREE school.** To ensure the safety of all students, please do not bring any nut products or food items containing peanuts or tree nuts onto the Explorer campus.

39.4. Child food allergies by class shall be posted in each classroom and those foods shall not be served during snack.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

40. Shelter-in-Place Instructions

40.1. “Shelter-in-Place” is a lockdown that has been called because there is a situation/threat in the neighborhood that requires everyone to get inside. Shelter-in-Place procedures are as follows:

- Get everyone inside immediately. The Teacher(s) will ring the bell and bring everyone inside. Roll will be taken.
- The Teacher(s) will lock both gates and doors to the classrooms.
- The Teacher(s) will ask parents to turn off lights and close all blinds.
- The Teacher(s), or Parent designated by the Teacher(s), will contact the police by calling 911.
- The Teacher(s) will contact the church and nursing home by phone.
- The Teacher(s) will keep everyone informed and will contact Class Representatives if information needs to be disseminated to parents not in the classes.
- Parents will be expected to follow the Teacher’s instructions and stay on-site until the emergency is resolved.
- **IMPORTANT: Everyone must stay inside until the Teacher declares the “ALL CLEAR”.**

41. Earthquake Instructions

41.1. Earthquakes usually strike without warning. The Director/Teachers, as time permits, will accomplish the following actions:

If inside the school building:

- Children and staff immediately take the Civil Defense Protective Position under desks, furniture, and turned away from windows. Civil Defense Protective Position means drop to your knees, clasp both hands behind the neck, bury face in arms, make body as small as possible, close eyes and cover ears with forearms.
- Take cover under a sturdy desk or table, stand in a doorway, hall or against inside walls. Safe areas also include the center of the building, alongside an inside wall and away from glass and high-stacked items.
- Try to avoid glass and falling objects. Move away from windows where there are large panes of glass and out from under heavy

suspended light fixtures. Do not run outdoors; you may be hit by falling debris or live electrical wires. Do not run. Follow Teacher's instructions.

- The Teacher(s) may indicate whether or not it is necessary to leave the building when the earthquake is over. Special consideration should be given to exit routes. (See Figure 1. Evacuation Map, below)
- Everyone must stay indoors until otherwise instructed.

When outside the building:

- Move away from buildings and take Civil Defense Protective Position.
- Go to clear areas and stay away from walls, utility poles, and downed wires.
- Do not return to buildings for any reason until they have been deemed safe by emergency crews.
- Do not light any fires after the earthquake.
- Avoid touching electrical wires which may have fallen.
- Render first aid if necessary.
- Everyone must stay outside until otherwise instructed.

41.2. Actions to be taken after an earthquake:

- Take Roll
- Be prepared for aftershocks.
- Immediately check for injuries.
- Do not use matches, lanterns or other open flames. Rely on a flashlight or glow stick as your light source.
- Extinguish all fires (if possible).
- Do not use the phone unless it is an extreme emergency.
- Teachers will direct working parents to emergency supplies (including emergency first aid kit) located in outside sheds at the school.
- Shut off utilities, if necessary. Notify the utility company (PG&E) of any break or suspected break in the gas main.
- The Director and Explorer School Board will determine the advisability of closing the school. If necessary, the Director will try to procure the advice of a competent authority regarding the safety of the building.

42. General Fire Safety

42.1. All fires must be reported immediately to the Teacher.

- 42.2.All Teachers and working parents must know the location of all fire extinguishers.
- 42.3.Tampering with fire extinguishers is forbidden.
- 42.4.Fire extinguishers, sprinklers, or fire exits will not be blocked by supplies, toys, etc. at any time.
- 42.5.Open flame is prohibited in all areas where flammable materials are used or stored.
- 42.6.In consideration of the health and safety of all teachers; working parents and children, **no smoking** is allowed on or directly outside the school grounds.
- 42.7.Fire drills will be conducted on a monthly, class-rotation basis with the MW2's, Friday 2's, 3s-5s, and PreK classes.
- 42.8.Evacuation maps are posted by the main door in each classroom. It is the Teacher's and working parents' responsibility to study the map and understand how it would be followed in case of an emergency. *See below - Figure 1. Evacuation Map.*

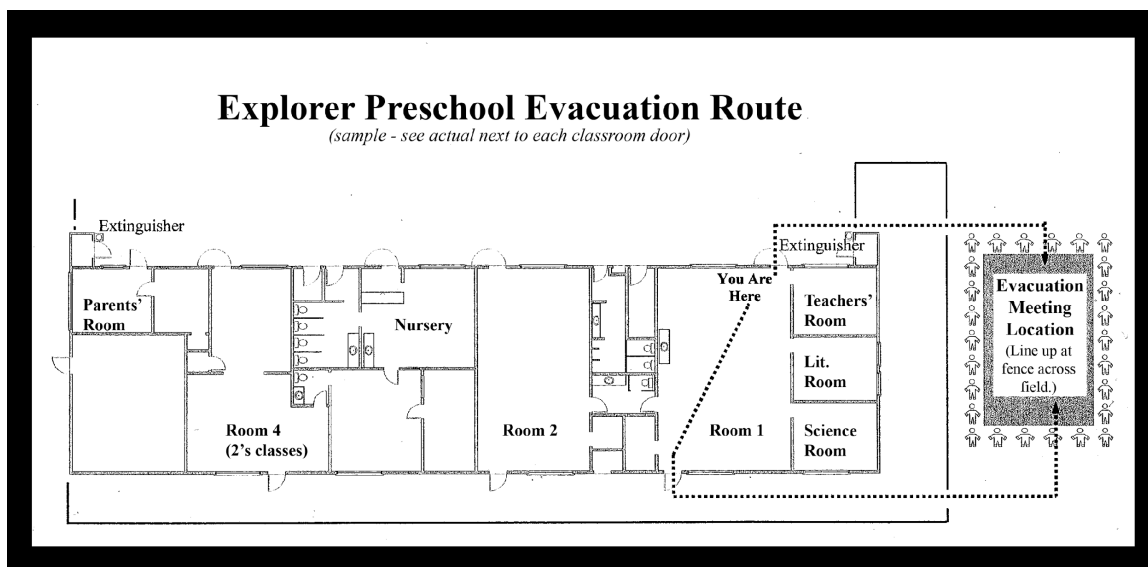


Figure 1. Evacuation Map

43.Fire Emergency Procedures

43.1.Report all fires to the Teacher. The Teacher will initiate the following procedures if necessary:

- Call 911 (to contact emergency services for the fire department or medical help). A landline phone is located in Room 1.
- Teacher will set off the fire alarm.
- Evacuation of the building following evacuation procedures on the map. Children must evacuate in a single file, quietly and quickly. No running.
- Meet at Evacuation Meeting Location (See Figure 1. Evacuation Map).
- Teachers will take roll and make a list of missing children. Render first aid if necessary.
- Teachers, working parents and children should not return to the building for any reason until the fire department officials declare the area safe.

44.Immediate Threat Procedures

44.1.Teacher (or parent as directed by a teacher) blows a whistle to signal an immediate threat. Whistles are located with Emergency Procedure form and class list next to each entry door and outside next to the shed.

- Get everyone inside immediately. Parents get children inside to the nearest enclosed location: Big Kid Bathroom, Toddler Bathroom, Closets if needed.
- Teacher(s) or parents lock all doors from inside.
- Parents close blinds and turn off all lights.
- Parents lock doors inside bathrooms and/or closets.
- Teacher(s) calls 911.
- Teacher(s) take roll and confirms locations.
- Parents keep children calm and quiet.
- Teacher(s) communicates with 911.
- Teacher(s) communicate with families.

45.Medical Emergencies

45.1.All medical emergencies will be reported immediately. Medical emergency number must be called and the location of the emergency given.

45.2. Person who is reporting any emergency must stay on the telephone line until released by the answering party.

46. Earthquake and Fire Drills

46.1. Earthquake and fire drills will be performed periodically throughout the school year. Please consult the Health and Safety Manual for details about these drills.

47. Safety Hazards

47.1. Explorer performs routine safety hazard checks to identify any safety problems or issues. For more information about safety hazards, please consult the Health and Safety Manual.

48. Severe Weather & Power Outages

48.1. In the event of severe weather that inhibits safe participation in class or transportation to class, families will be notified by email and phone prior to the start of class. A note will also be posted on the gate should it be safe to do so. Examples of severe weather include flooding and very poor air quality.

48.2. In the event of a power outage prior to the start of class, families will be notified if class is canceled by both email and phone. If safety is not an issue, class may proceed without any power.

48.3. In the event of a power outage during school hours, classes will resume as scheduled. If there is a safety concern associated with the power outage, families will be notified by phone to pick up their child.

Emergency Procedures for Explorer Preschool

School Address: 2700 Booksin Ave, San Jose CA 95125

San Jose 911 from a cell phone: 408-277-8911

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Fire Procedures</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Pull Fire Alarm *Identify Nearest Exit *Evacuate Children *Check Inside Areas While Evacuating *Gather on Fence Nearest the Parking Lot *Call 911 *Teachers Take Roll and Communicate with Fire Department *Teachers Communicate with Families 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Earthquake Procedures</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Assist Children Under Tables Indoors *Drop, Cover, Hold On *Get Children to an Open Space Outdoors *Kneel or Sit, covering Head and Face *When Shaking Stops Assess Injuries *Teachers Decide whether to Evacuate or Shelter in Place *Call 911 if needed *Shut off Gas if needed *Emergency Supplies Gathered if Needed *Teachers Communicate with Families
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Shelter In Place Procedures</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Teachers Ring Bells to Gather All Inside *Adults Lock All Doors from Inside *Adults Turn off Lights *Adults Lower Blinds in All Classrooms *Teachers Confirm Doors are Locked *Adults Help Teachers Settle Children Inside *Teachers Take Roll *Teachers Communicate with 911 *Emergency Supplies Gathered if Needed *Teachers Communicate with Families 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Immediate Threat Procedures</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Whistle is Blown Signaling Immediate Threat *Adults Get Children Inside to Nearest: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Big Kid Bathroom Toddler Bathroom Closets if Needed *Adults Lock All Doors From Inside *Adults Pull Blinds and Turn off Lights *Adults Lock Doors in Bathrooms/Closets *Call 911 *Teachers Takes Roll and Confirm Locations *Adults Keep Children Calm *Adults/Teachers communicate with 911 *Teachers Communicate with Families

TRANSPORTATION POLICIES

49. Transportation

- 49.1. Explorer is not liable for the safety of the children regarding transportation to and from school. The health and safety of all children in a car is the driver's responsibility.
- 49.2. Cars used in transporting children to and from school must be adequately insured (public liability, property damage, medical reimbursements for passengers, etc) and drivers must possess a valid driver's license and have current insurance.
- 49.3. Per California State Law: Children under 2 years of age shall ride in a rear-facing car seat unless the child weighs 40 or more pounds OR is 40 or more inches tall. The child shall be secured in a manner that complies with the height and weight limits specified by the manufacturer of the car seat. (California Vehicle Code Section 27360.) Children under the age of 8 must be secured in a car seat or booster seat in the back seat. Children who are 8 years of age OR have reached 4'9" in height may be secured by a booster seat, but at a minimum must be secured by a safety belt. (California Vehicle Code Section 27363.)

50. Field trips

- 50.1. Parents are notified about an upcoming field trip one month in advance. Work shifts will follow the class schedule and the designated snack parent will bring snacks.
- 50.2. The Teacher will carry a first aid kit, sign-in sheet, and the children's emergency forms.
- 50.3. Carpooling is not required but encouraged. The preschool does not assume responsibility for arranging or maintaining carpools; all arrangements must be arranged in advance between carpooling families.
- 50.4. It is recommended that Carpool information for passenger children and drivers be on hand in the car. (See Appendix A: "[Carpool Information Form](#)")
- 50.5. Parents are responsible for proper fastening of car seats and following car seat requirements.

50.6. If a child is to be picked up by someone other than the person known to the preschool, the person must be an “authorized” pick up and the teacher must be notified in advance.

BY-LAWS OF EXPLORER PRESCHOOL, INC.

Revision date: August 1997

ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this corporation shall be Explorer Preschool, Inc.

ARTICLE II – LOCATION

The principal office for the transaction of the business of this corporation shall be located in San Jose, Santa Clara County, California.

ARTICLE III – PURPOSE

The purpose of this corporation shall be:

- To provide a preschool program for children under the supervision of a trained director.
- To attempt to help each child develop healthy and desirable personal characteristics in accordance with his age, abilities, and interests.
- To attempt to aid parents in understanding children, deriving enjoyment from their children, and effectively rearing their children.

ARTICLE IV – POLICY

This shall be a non-profit corporation.

There shall be no discrimination against any person by reason of race, religion or creed.

ARTICLE V – MEMBERSHIP

Type of membership:

Participating

This class of membership shall be open to the parents or other persons responsible for the general care and welfare of a child enrolled in Explorer Preschool, Inc.

Membership is contingent upon members fulfilling the activity and financial requirements of members, as stated in the Participation Requirements and Financial Obligations of Explorer Preschool, Inc.

Members are entitled to one vote per family.

Members may hold office, inspect the organization's books and attend meetings of the Board.

Non-Participating

This class of membership shall be open to a maximum of 2 families per class already enrolled in Explorer Preschool, Inc.

Membership is contingent upon members fulfilling the activity and financial requirements of non-participating members, as stated in the Participation Requirements and Financial Obligations of Explorer Preschool, Inc. (no classroom workdays, tuition is doubled).

Members are entitled to one vote per family.

Members may hold office, inspect the organization's books and attend meetings of the Board.

ARTICLE VI – BOARD

The powers of this corporation shall be exercised by the Board, which shall determine the policies and conduct the business of Explorer Preschool, Inc., in a manner consistent with the By-Laws. Decisions of the Board are subject to review and approval by a majority of the participating membership present at a regular preschool Business meeting.

The members of the Board shall be duly elected by a majority of the membership for a term of one year.

The members of the Board shall be the President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary and the various chairpersons as approved by the membership, the teachers and Director.

The Board shall ordinarily meet monthly.

All members of the Board shall perform their duties as specified in Board Job Descriptions. New offices may be created and filled at any meeting of the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE VII – PRESCHOOL DIRECTORS

The Preschool Director shall be a person professionally qualified to teach in and direct a preschool.

The Preschool Director and Assistant Director(s) shall be hired and rehired by a majority vote of the Board.

The Preschool Director and Assistant Director(s) contracts shall be reviewed annually at the February meeting of the Board and the Preschool Director and Assistant Director(s) are to be notified of the Board's decision by the first meeting in April.

The Preschool Director shall prepare the children's preschool program and the Parents' Educational evening program in collaboration with the Adult Education chairperson. The Preschool Director shall administer these programs.

The Preschool Director and Assistant Director(s) shall have a voice but shall not have a vote at business and Board meetings.

ARTICLE VIII - MEETING AND ELECTIONS

Meeting: Meetings will be scheduled according to Board approval.

Elections: Elections shall be held annually.

The nomination committee shall be composed of the Vice President, Director, Teachers, and two members in good standing appointed by the President and precluded from serving on the board in the year they are nominating for. New officers will be voted on by the Membership in April and begin their term in June.

ARTICLE IX – DISSOLUTION

Explorer Preschool, Inc. may be dissolved by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of all participating members.

In the event of dissolution, all outstanding obligations shall be met, after which all remaining assets of the preschool shall be given to the Santa Clara Valley Council of

Parent Participation Nursery Schools, Inc. for distribution to the new or needy cooperative nursery schools in Santa Clara County.

ARTICLE X – AMENDMENTS

These By-Laws may be amended by a majority of the Board of Explorer Preschool, Inc. provided, however, that the Board show cause to notify of its intent to adopt or change a By-Law, to be posted on the preschool bulletin board at least one week prior to the Board's vote. Such action shall be ratified by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the membership at the general meeting following the Board's action.

STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATORY POLICY

Explorer Preschool Inc, of San Jose, California is non-discriminatory in its admissions and operations policy. The school admits students of any race to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities made available to students at this school and this school does not discriminate on the basis of race in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, Financial Aid program, and other school administered programs.

BOARD JOB DESCRIPTIONS

An asterisk () denotes committee chairperson.*

President

Committees: *Executive Board, *Contracts, *Hiring, *Budget, Financial Aid, Nominations

Duties:

Conducts "Board Training" for incoming Board of Directors
Prepares agenda, facilitates and presides at monthly board meetings
Facilitates business portion of evening PEC meetings
Serves as a community representative
Works with director as liaison with the owner of the school building
Prepares teachers' contracts
Prepares lease agreements
Works with Treasurer and Budget Committee to review annual budget
Appoints families to teams
In conjunction with the Vice President, fills Board vacancies (which are then ratified by the Board)
Keeps file copies of all corporate papers, contracts and other pertinent documents
Maintains Board Handbook
Maintains Teacher professional growth records
Collaborates with teaching staff and Vice President to plan, research, and implement new programs
Handles and distributes all mail
Schedules the school's use of rooms by coordinating with the church office
Serves as an ex-officio member of all committees, except where presiding
Writes letters of referral at the end of each year for teaching staff and Board members as requested
Serves, upon invitation, as advisory member of the board for 12-24 months following term of office

Vice President

Approx. 5 team members (6 in accreditation** years)

Committees: *Member Relations, *Nominations, *Financial Aid, Executive Board, Budget, Hiring, Contracts

Duties:

Serves as liaison between Board, Teachers, and Members
Oversees Class Representatives
Responsible for Orientation Folders and distributions at Orientation
Administers Planning and Member Relations
Conducts annual comprehensive program evaluation and shares results with program staff, families, and Board of Directors.
Coordinates family emergency aid
Performs duties of the President in their absence
Supports President with filling Board vacancies
Evaluates special projects as suggested by the Board
Aides Membership Chair with withdrawals
Coordinates Board Nominations for the upcoming school year
Serves, upon invitation, as advisory member of the board for 12-24 months following term of office

Secretary

Approx. 1 team member

Committees: Executive Board, Secretarial, Website, E-Letter

Duties:

Prepares minutes of all meetings and distribute to Board members
Creates and sends monthly invitations to Board members for monthly meetings via Evite
Creates and maintains the Master Calendar
Creates and maintains Board and teacher mailboxes
Maintains copier, submits copier counts, orders toner cartridges, and renews copier contracts
Manages and proofreads weekly e-letters
Maintains and updates annual Parent Handbook
E-mails messages on behalf of Staff/Board Members/Committee members to Board and classes
Manages the website, renews the annual contract with web host, submits requests for tech support
Manages Explorer Google Account and Google for Non-profits status
Creates web pages and forms on the Explorer website as needed and ensures that the general content is up-to-date
Creates and maintains Board email accounts
Creates and maintains Class email aliases for all class offerings
Manages and maintains Explorer's Mailchimp e-letter account and alumni mailing list
With support from the Treasurer/Co-Treasurer, renews and negotiates the school's phone and internet contract

Treasurer

Approx. 2 team members

Committees: *Budget, Executive Board, Financial Aid, Hiring, Contracts

Duties:

Processes payroll and retirement account submissions
Facilitates annual budget meeting
Attends and gives guidance in annual contract meetings
Prepares annual budget
Oversees preparation of annual tax returns and other filings related to school operations
Manages investments in accordance with established investment policy
Main point of contact for bank contacts

Co-Treasurer

Committee shared with Treasurer

Committees: Executive Board, Budget, Contracts

Duties:

Keeps financial records in applicable formats (written, digital, etc.)
Collects and verifies reimbursement requests
Pays bills, writes/distributes checks using QuickBooks Online
Communicates regularly with accountant about payroll (including payroll taxes), retirement accounts, and tax forms
Completes and returns payroll and insurance forms as required
Follows up with vendors to clarify any billing issues
Attends annual budget and contract meetings
Attends treasury committee meetings (as determined by current year's committee)
Communicates regularly with Treasurer regarding expense tracking in QuickBooks

Parent Education

Approx. 4 team members

Committees: *Parent Education

Duties:

Books speakers for monthly evening Parent Education Classes (PEC)
Facilitates evening Parent Ed. Meetings: promotes speakers, takes notes, set up/tear down, parent feedback/evaluation development and tracking, etc.
Tracks attendance for all Parent Ed. Meetings and works with members not in compliance with make up opportunities
Maintains and promotes the parent library
Keeps members informed about additional available opportunities for parent education/development

Business Manager

Approx. 1 team member

Committees: *Purchasing, *Budget, *Capital Improvement

Duties:

Purchases office supplies, copier paper, art and some maintenance supplies as per inventory
Purchases supplies as per Teacher and chairperson requests
Organizes and stocks the teachers' room and art cabinets
Updates inventory several times throughout the year
Restocks supplies in work areas as needed

Children's Education

Approx. 9 team members

Committees: *Children's Education

Duties:

Supports the teachers by organizing many of their prep activities such as preparing materials for class projects, cleaning toys, making photo copies, creating child name tags, cooking up batches of play-dough, etc.
Organizes and manages care for school pets (e.g. food supplies, veterinary visits, arranging care during school breaks etc.)
Manages school's Scholastic book club account

Fundraising

2 Co-Chairs, Approx. 10 team members

Committees: *Fundraising, Budget

Duties:

Plans, organizes and executes fundraising projects for the year
Educates the school membership on fundraising requirement and tracks each family's fundraising requirement fulfillment
Provides volunteer opportunities for membership to work off fundraising requirement
Gathers donations throughout the year for annual spring auction
Executes the auction portion of the annual spring auction
Attends Budget Committee meeting in March

Health and Safety

Approx. 1-2 team members

Committees: *Health and Safety

Duties:

Prepares state health report (immunization totals)

Keeps records of membership past and present at school prior to their admission to the school
Notifies the membership of any communicable disease present at school
Helps administer and record fire and other emergency plans
Handles disaster plans and inventory of survival supplies
May arrange optional screenings: e.g. vision, speech and hearing or CPR classes
Makes sure all members have up-to-date health records available to school prior to their admission to the school and in full compliance with state law
Responsible for monthly smoke and carbon monoxide detector checks and first aid kit restocks

Maintenance

Approx. 4-5 team members

Committees: *Maintenance

Duties:

Organizes and records maintenance workdays and schedules parents' participation
Maintains safety by regularly checking play yard equipment
Plans, develops and implements indoor and outdoor repairs and improvements
Maintains school vacuum cleaners
Oversees garden maintenance

Membership

Approx. 2 team members

Committees: *Membership

Duties:

Handles all admissions and withdrawals
Conducts or arranges all school tours with prospective members during academic year
Keeps waiting lists current
Oversees school phone and checks messages during academic year and vacations
Disseminates information to Board and general membership as to membership status
Prepares and distributes enrollment documents to new and returning families
Coordinates Summer school and Fives club enrollment
Manages Jovial database input of all new families and updated contact information for current families
Responsible for all membership enrollment documentation

Publicity

Approx. 6-8 team members

Committees: *Publicity

Duties:

Orders and sells all Explorer logo items (t-shirts, hats, sweatshirts etc.)
Handles all school publicity/advertising with local publications
Coordinates Open House and all associated publicity
Coordinates fall class pictures
Maintains supply of school stationary, business cards, brochures
Sets up Shutterfly photo sharing website ("Sharesite") for each class
Coordinates and places group order for year end memory books
Coordinates and attends ad-hoc community outreach programs (Christmas in the Park, Las Madres Education Fair, local parades etc.)
Hosts and manages contents of online social media sites (Facebook and Instagram)
Responsible for annual history book

Santa Clara Valley Council Representative

Committees: Santa Clara Valley Council

Duties:

Attends SCVC meetings and serves as liaison between our school and other CCPPNS schools
Reports relevant information to Explorer Board
Fulfills council position (such as president, treasurer, events chair) for SCVC

Social

Approx. 8-12 team members

Committees: *Social

Duties:

Plans and publicizes social events: Summer Park Playdates, Back to School Fall Picnic, Holiday Party, Spring Auction, Spring Social, and Ice Cream Social for the last PEC at the end of the school year

****Accreditation**

When: Every 5 years. Last completed in 2022, next is 2027.

Duties (Performed by the Director, President and Teaching Staff):

Contacts National Association Education of Young Children (NAEYC) to obtain re-accreditation packet
Ensures that enough money has been budgeted in the school budget to cover all the costs
Completes re-accreditation as per the instructions
Includes the organization for the completion of all surveys by the teachers, director and general membership
Returns the required documentation to NAEYC by the date requested
Is available at school for a whole day (date determined by NAEYC) to work with the representative from NAEYC to assist in the final on-site evaluation
Completes follow up documentation as requested by NAEYC within 12 months of the final evaluation

APPENDICES FOLLOW

APPENDIX A: OPTIONAL CARPOOL INFORMATION FORM

Carpools are optional and arranged privately between families. Explorer Preschool assumes no responsibility or liability for carpooling and does not participate in the scheduling or organization of carpools. For families who do wish to use a carpool, the use of a child information sheet is recommended for each child in the carpool. This should be kept with the driver in the event of an emergency.

Current CA car seat laws: Children under 2 years of age shall ride in a rear-facing car seat unless the child weighs 40 or more pounds OR is 40 or more inches tall. The child shall be secured in a manner that complies with the height and weight limits specified by the manufacturer of the car seat. (California Vehicle Code Section 27360.) Children under the age of 8 must be secured in a car seat or booster seat in the back seat. Children who are 8 years of age OR have reached 4'9" in height may be secured by a booster seat, but at a minimum must be secured by a safety belt. (California Vehicle Code Section 27363.)

Child's full name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Any known allergies: _____

Emergency contact information for parents/guardians:

Name & Relationship	Daytime Phone
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Insurance Information:

Carrier: _____

Policy/Group number: _____

Preferred emergency treatment plan (specific hospital/doctor):

Attach a recent photograph of the child

APPENDIX B: FOOD GUIDE FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

Nutritious and fresh foods are provided by the scheduled snack parent each school day. At least two different food groups must be served for snack and recorded in the classroom food log.

The following foods are choking hazards and CANNOT be served to children: Hot dogs (whole or sliced into rounds), whole grapes, nuts, popcorn, raw peas, hard whole pretzels, chunks of raw carrot or meat larger than can be swallowed whole. Food shall be cut into ½-inch square for toddler/2's, according to each child's chewing and swallowing capability. No sweetened beverages are allowed, children may have water at snack time.

Preparing, Serving and Storing Food

Parents who are ill are asked to stay home and shall not prepare or distribute food.

Hand washing is required after restroom use, sneezing, coughing, or after performing any cleaning activity.

All produce (such as vegetables and fruits) must be washed thoroughly before eating.

Put perishable foods into the refrigerator or freezer immediately.

All food should be properly labeled. Throw away expired food immediately.

Keep hot foods hot (above 135 °F) and cold foods cold (below 41 °F).

Keep liquids hotter than 110 degrees out of the reach of children to prevent scalding.

Keep cold foods cold by pre-chilling ingredients for salads.

Cool rapidly by storing food in small batches in individual containers; cover loosely so that heat can escape quickly.

Do not keep food in the "danger zone" (between 41 °F and 135 °F) for more than 4 hours.

Handle food with utensils; clean, gloved hands; or clean hands. (Bare hand contact with food during preparation should be limited.)

Transfer reheated food to hot-holding equipment only when the food reaches the proper temperature.

Use only cooking ranges, ovens, steamers, and microwave ovens to reheat foods. Use hot-holding equipment only to maintain temperature and not for rapidly heating food.

Never use plastic or styrofoam containers, plates, bags, or wraps when microwaving children's food and beverages.

When cleaning and sanitizing, use clean water, free of grease and food particles.

Keep all cleaning chemicals away from food and food-related supplies.

APPENDIX C: COOPERATIVE ACTION PLAN

Child's name: _____ Date: _____

Meeting Participants:

Description of observed behavior(s):

Behavioral Objectives:

School Action Plan:

Home Action Plan:

Follow up meeting date: _____

Parent(s) Signature(s): _____

Teacher Signature: _____

Director Signature: _____