

**TREE TOWN COOPERATIVE NURSERY SCHOOL  
235 SOUTH KENILWORTH AVENUE  
ELMHURST, ILLINOIS 60126**

**HANDBOOK**

**630.279.8778**

**[www.treetown-coop.org](http://www.treetown-coop.org)**

**Barbara Baker, Director**

***"Children need models more than they need critics"***

## Hours of Operation

Monday, Wednesday, Friday A.M. 4's (8:30-11:00)	Marcy Rohman
Monday, Wednesday, Friday A.M. 4's (8:30-11:00)	Colleen Sutherland
Tuesday, Thursday, A.M. 3's (8:30-11:00)	Marcy Rohman
Tuesday, Thursday, A.M. 3's (8:30-11:00)	Colleen Sutherland

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Wednesday 2's (9:00-11:00)	Karen Unger/Sarah Lestina
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Teacher Helpers – Barbara Baker and Anne-Marie Mitchell

Tree Town Cooperative Nursery School is a non-profit, nondenominational organization, established in 1968 to serve the needs of preschool children. It is licensed by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). The school admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school.

## PHILOSOPHY

The cooperative preschool is unique among early childhood programs. It is organized and administered by the parents through an elected parent board, and is operated under the guidance of qualified teachers. \* Teachers and parents share in planning and carrying out the educational program.

From its inception, Tree Town has been committed to the cooperative philosophy because of our conviction that both parent and child benefit when parents are genuinely involved in the school. Also, the school is continually responsive to the needs of children and parents. It is hoped that our parent cooperative may provide the stimulus and the means whereby children; parents and teachers can grow together.

The goals of the program are to provide the kind of environment that will allow children to:

- Develop a healthy self-image
- Learn to cooperate with others
- Develop confidence and self-control
- Express themselves creatively  
through play, art, music, language and science.

The curriculum is developmentally appropriate with an emphasis placed upon the hands on approach.

Our philosophy is **LEARN BY DOING.**

- *A more detailed description of the governing structure of the school is contained in the Constitution and By-Laws, which are on file at the nursery school.*

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### *APPLICATION AND REGISTRATION PROCEDURE*

Children from two to five years of age may be registered. (Minimum age is two as of September 1 of the registered school year.) The Parent Board approves specific registration procedures annually. Children need to be toilet trained before starting in the three and four year old programs. These

classrooms do not have a DCFS approved changing station. A changing station is located in the two's room.

Persons interested in registration information should call the school for the name of the current registrar. Registration information will be sent upon request and appointments for prospective parent to visit the school will be scheduled. Prospective parents are required to visit the classroom and inform themselves of their responsibilities to the parent cooperative before registering their child.

Registration forms should be completed and returned to the registrar with the **non-refundable** registration fee. This fee is refundable only if a place has not been made available by September 15 of the registered school year. Priority enrollment will be given to current and former members of the cooperative prior to accepting new family registration. Alumni priority ends when new family registration begins. Parents will be notified of class placement as soon as possible.

Children shall be enrolled for one full school year or the balance of a year.

**No child will be admitted to the program without the required forms from the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services and the DuPage County Health Department on file.**

All information kept on file at the school for children, parents and staff are confidential and will only be released upon written request by appropriate persons.

## **TUITION**

The Nursery School Board based on the requirements of each year's budget determines tuition. Tuition is paid in three equal installments April 1, October 1 and February 1. Tuition payments are not refundable. Tuition may also be paid in full at the beginning of the year. Alternative payment plans may be arranged through the Treasurer.

A \$20.00 **late fee** will be assessed for 1-7 days and a \$50.00 late fee after 7 days unless alternative arrangements have been made with the Treasurer prior to dates due.

**Please make checks payable to: Tree Town Cooperative Nursery.** Payments may either be mailed to the Treasurer's home or placed in the

tuition box located in the Tree Town Staff Office. (Any expenses incurred by the school due to insufficient funds will be passed on to the check payer.)

#### *PROLONGED ABSENCE*

Parents are responsible for tuition payments through prolonged absences. Extenuating circumstances may be called to the attention of the Parent Board for consideration

#### *WITHDRAWAL*

Children are enrolled in the nursery school for an entire school or balance there of. Parents are responsible for tuition for this same time period until the vacancy can be filled. Parents may withdraw a child from nursery school prior to the end of the school year and receive tuition reimbursement only in the following cases:

- Serious or prolonged illness
- Permanent move of the family from the community
- Mutual agreement between the parent and the Parent Board in the event of an unsatisfactory adjustment of the child to the school or of the parent as a participant.

In such cases, withdrawal shall take effect upon one month's notice to the registrar and the treasurer. This month's tuition will be retained and any remaining tuition will be refunded.

In all fairness to members of the Association, repeated failure to fulfill the above participation requirements will result in termination of membership.

#### *PAT COLLINS SCHOLARSHIP FUND*

The Pat Collins Scholarship Fund has been established to assist families needing extra financial support. If you wish to request an application or additional information about the fund please contact the treasurer.

#### *CLASSES*

The Parent Board will determine attendance days and times for each class annually. The school will follow the same calendar as the Elmhurst Public Schools-Unit District 205, with the exception of opening, closing and some Institute days. The nursery school begins classes on the Monday following Labor Day and closes the Friday preceding Memorial Day.

*HEALTH*

Appropriate medical forms for the child, the parent helper or the designated helper must be on file at the school prior to entering the program. A child absent for five consecutive days due to illness must present a doctor's certificate for readmission. The teacher reserves the right to send the child home for health reasons. If your child contacts a communicable disease, please notify the teacher.

*MEDICAL EMERGENCY PROCEDURES*

The teachers are trained in First Aid and CPR and will administer first aid as necessary. Where more extensive treatment is necessary, the school will contact as follow:

- Emergency Medical System  
(EMS 911)
- Parent or Guardian
- Emergency Number on File

Tree Town Cooperative Nursery School Association, its employees and Parent Board cannot be held liable for damage or injury to a child, parent helper or designated helper.

**GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE POLICY**

The following Guidance and Discipline policy is based on the cooperative philosophy of Tree Town.

**The Child**

Children...

- Are expected to develop cooperative behavior when working in the group.
- Should consider others and take turns when selecting equipment or materials.
- Children should be allowed to solve their own difficulties whenever possible to permit them to learn by experience.

- Are expected to demonstrate age appropriate self-control. Repeated physical aggression towards others is not allowed.
- Are expected to follow classroom safety rules.

### **The Parent Helper**

Parent helpers...

- Are expected to model appropriate classroom behavior.
- Should allow children to solve their own difficulties by talking through the situation.
- Should intervene when a child's behavior endangers himself or others.
- May be asked to assist with guidance under the direction of the staff.
- Are asked to use a positive rather than a negative approach with children. For example "Let's all help to put the toys away now," rather than "Don't get out any more toys."

### **The Staff**

Staff will...

- Work with individual children to develop age appropriate social skills.
- Encourage verbal resolutions to conflicts.
- Redirect children who are not behaving acceptably.
- Remove a child from the group to help them gain control when they do not respond to redirecting separation shall not exceed 5 minutes.

- Request a conference with a parent when a child has repeatedly acted inappropriately in the group.
- Request the child's withdrawal from the program with the approval of the Parent Board if the child repeatedly demonstrates inappropriate self-control.

### **The Parent**

- The parent will work with the staff and the child to remediate inappropriate behavior.
- The parent will openly communicate concerns regarding their child to the staff.

## **CLASSROOM PARTICIPATION RESPONSIBILITY**

Both parents, either parent or caregiver designated by the parent may assist in the classroom, but at least one family helper must assist the teacher in the daily activities according to their previously selected helping days. This does not apply to families that utilize the flexible helping option.

Once the participation schedule is finalized, each family is responsible for their assigned days. Families may exchange dates and should note these changes on the schedule posted on the class bulletin board. If a parent cannot help on a given day, it is their responsibility to arrange for a substitute either by trading days or by hiring a substitute and paying that person the amount voted upon by the Parent Board at their August meeting. Payment is to be made to the substitute. A listing of those parents who have agreed to be available as paid helper substitutes can be found in the directory or by contacting the Participation Chairman.

If a parent is unable to participate on the assigned day and does not secure a replacement, he shall be subject to a fine equal to the amount of the substitute fee. In all cases, the originally scheduled family remains responsible for the water or snack for the day.

Any parent who is interested in being a paid substitute should notify the Participation Chairman. Parents may not bring unenrolled children on their participation day.

## **WEB POLLICY**

We are grateful for the help parents provide in the classroom. You are free to photograph or video classroom activities to preserve your time at Tree Town. However, photographs and video are not to be posted on the web to preserve the privacy of our students and families.

## **PARTICIPATION TIPS**

Since parent involvement is basic to the cooperative philosophy, the enthusiastic support of every member is essential to the successful operation of our school.

Display an interest in the creative work of the children, but refrain from asking what they have made. They may not know. Growth through experimentation is the sole purpose of this activity. The final result is that of personal satisfaction to the child. Adults should neither attempt to direct nor arrange the project for the child. It is the process that is important not the product.

Give encouragement and suggestions if it seems necessary, but avoid domination of the play.

Feel free to participate with the children in singing, finger plays, games, etc.

Do not leave the classroom unattended at any time.

Remember that each child is a unique personality and is entitled to respect, appreciation and understanding.

Above all enjoy the time you have to share in the excitement of learning with your child!

•Tree Town policy is to have a smoke free environment in the classrooms and during school designated activities when children are present, including field trips.

## **CLASSROOM OPERATIONS**

Dress your child for play. Rubber soled shoes are preferred for **comfort** and safety.

Each child is asked to bring a **large school bag** with him every day. This will be used to carry items to and from school. We feel use of this bag is very important in teaching organization and responsibility.

Please put your **child's name** on school bags, sweaters, jackets, boots, mittens and any items brought to school for the day.

Please arrive at school promptly but no more than five minutes before school begins unless you are serving as parent helper. **Scheduled helpers need to arrive 10 minutes prior to the start of the class.**

The driver must **accompany children** to the classroom door.

Outside **doors are locked** 10 minutes after the start of class.

Drivers must **sign out** all children in their car pool on the class list posted on the clipboard.

Be sure your child is **picked up promptly**. If you are not picking up your child, the teacher must have written permission to release your child to another person. Car pools are formed on a voluntary basis. **DCFS requires the following statement "Appropriate authorities will be notified if 30 minutes have elapsed and the parent or emergency contacts on file have not responded to phone contact"**.

A **parent-teacher conference** will be offered twice a year. A November conference will be conducted via phone or email followed by a January

conference offered in person. Other times may be arranged upon the request of either teacher or parent.

**Show and Tell** or our “sharing” time will take place during the last class day of the week for each three and four year old class. However, your child may bring something interesting at any time. Please avoid bringing guns or other violent toys.

**Birthday's** even summer ones will be celebrated at school. Parents may bring a favorite nutritious treat to share for snack time. Please do not pass out invitations to private birthday parties at school. In lieu of goodie bags you and your child may wish to purchase a gift from our Birthday Box in honor of your child's birthday. This is optional.

Parent helpers are asked to bring water or **snack** on their assigned helping day. Helpers are required to record the snack provided on the class snack sheet posted.

Cups and napkins are provided at the school. The participation schedule will designate which item a family is responsible for. One gallon of water is a sufficient quantity. Snacks should represent **2 of the 4** following food group's dairy, protein, fruits and/or vegetables or breads/grains. The two snacks provided should come in unopened packages from the store. Examples might be raw vegetables, fruits, pretzels, yogurt, raisins, cheese, bagels, bread, crackers or occasionally muffins.

**Tree Town is an Allergy Aware Zone. Peanut products and nuts of any kind are not served.** Please read labels carefully when making selections for snacks. We also do not serve grapes or popcorn since they are considered a choking hazard for this age group.

A **directory** of all the students enrolled at Tree Town including house and email addresses along with phone numbers will be distributed in the fall. This directory will not be given to any source or persons other than our Tree Town families. All families will be included unless requested otherwise.

A monthly **newsletter** will be distributed via email for the purpose of informing parents of specific activities and events occurring at the school.

The school website [www.treetown-coop.org](http://www.treetown-coop.org) also maintains a list of monthly activities and events. Hard copies are available upon request.

Each class will have a **bulletin board** outside the classroom, which will contain pertinent class information, participation schedules and weekly lesson plans. Parents are urged to consult this information source on a regular basis. Car pool drivers need to keep each other informed of daily updates.

Tree Town maintains an Activities Board located between the two classrooms on the lower level. Information is posted that we have been asked to pass along to parents. We are willing to do this; however, this is not an endorsement.

**For the safety of our children the Facility Maintenance Policy is that classroom and area work will be done over school holidays, breaks or summer whenever possible. If the need for painting, repair, pesticide application or replacement of carpet/tile is needed, parents will be informed by written note and posted signs.**

## **STANDING COMMITTEES**

Parents are encouraged to attend all Parent Association meetings held in connection with the school.

One parent from each enrolled child's family will serve on either the Parent Board of the Nursery School (See Constitution for specific offices), or on one of the following committees:

**Publicity** Publicizes registration and fundraising events of the School as specified by the Parent Board or Teacher-Director.

**Clean up/Playground\*** Washes paint smocks periodically through the year. Maintains and launders clothing and other articles in dramatic play area. Assists in mid-year classroom cleaning (January) or cleaning of toys and equipment after school ends (May). Provides for the maintenance of play yard grounds and equipment

**Ways and Means** At the direction of the Parent Board organize and conduct the fund-raising projects for the school.

\* If necessary committee members may be called upon starting June 1 in preparation for the next school year.

Revised 8/4/11