

***Boise Cooperative  
Preschool, Inc.***

***Handbook***

## BCP Handbook

### About Boise Cooperative Preschool

#### History

In 1972, a group of dedicated parents understood the importance of being involved in their children's early childhood educational experience and the Boise Cooperative Nursery School was founded. The Boise Cooperative Nursery School prided itself in its nondiscriminatory and nondenominational policies. The Co-op believed in building a classroom community where everyone was welcome. In 1973 we incorporated with the help of Attorney, John Runft. We began our 40+ year history in the First Baptist Church of Boise, moving to the First Congregational Church in 1976 due to philosophical differences. We changed our name with our new address, becoming The Boise Cooperative Preschool. We grew and flourished in this setting for 25 years, becoming a well-known and respected school. In 2002, for fire code reasons, we moved to our current location at Trinity Fellowship Church.

We were granted 501c status in 1979, enabling us to run our preschool as an official nonprofit corporation. A board of directors consisting of current BCP parents runs the preschool in accordance with our corporation bylaws that govern us. Our teachers are our only paid staff. Parent volunteers handle all administrative duties, and the tuition costs reflect the expenses of running our school. Four half scholarships are available on a need basis. All funds in excess are put back into the school.

In 2015, we were required by the City of Boise to hire two part-time assistant teachers to fulfil a licensed student/teacher ratio.

#### Philosophy

Boise Cooperative Preschool is a developmental preschool, which values the importance of all aspects of human development – social, emotional, creative, physical, cognitive, and verbal. As a cooperative, teachers and families work together to create a classroom community where children are nurtured and supported in their exploration and discoveries. We emphasize the process of learning through play and interaction with others, rather than focusing on a specific result. Our curriculum and materials in the classroom are designed to support our philosophy. Our school depends on the work of many people, each contributing in their own unique way. Together, we strive to provide our children with a safe, stimulating, and fun environment away from home. Every family belonging to the Boise Cooperative Preschool is valued and supported.

Excerpt from our original handbook in 1973:

Nursery age children are creative, if someone responds positively to their efforts to find truth about their world. You don't have to stimulate their creativity, but you do have to give encouragement and guidance the most sensitive and alert guidance and direction. As a parent or nursery teacher, one must provide a relationship in which it is possible for one thing to lead to another. One must be willing to become part of their world and go with them along untried pathways.

It is our goal, whenever possible to provide a program in which our children can discover and express themselves through creative experiences. They will be encouraged through art, music, nature, share, stories, and situations... but, above all, by response to their ideas and respect for their ability to discover for themselves the delightful world around them.

\*\*Original handbook archived with the president's files if you would like to take a look.

#### Setting the Stage for a Successful Learning Team

Our goal is to set the stage with a safe, interesting, and fun environment; dedicated teachers; loving parents; and eager young minds.

Our Goals for You:

- To observe your child in relation to a group of youngsters of approximately the same age.
- To achieve objectivity concerning your child.
- To learn new techniques of communicating with your child.
- To talk about your child's growth with a trained educator as well as with other parents.
- To work creatively with a group.

Our Goals for Your Child:

- To make a happy transition from home to school.

- To learn to respect and get along with others.
- To feel secure with adults, both teachers and other parents.
- To develop self-confidence and self-esteem.
- To share – both objects and adult attention.
- To learn some acceptable ways of expressing emotion.
- To develop problem-solving skills.
- To experience growth in verbal expression.
- To explore creative materials such as clay, paint, and water.
- To develop an interest in living things.
- To take responsibility for personal care.
- To improve his/her ability to finish what is begun.
- To help clean up and put away materials used.

### **Family Responsibilities at the Cooperative**

By enrolling your child in the Boise Cooperative Preschool you have initiated a rewarding and enriching experience for both you and your child. You have also become members of the Boise Cooperative Preschool Corporation, a private non-profit educational organization.

BCP is operated and managed solely by the volunteer efforts of the parents who are its members. Our only paid staff is the teachers. It is vital to the success of our school that our members fulfill their responsibilities. The Boise Cooperative Preschool depends on the members running the school through working on committees, serving on the Board of Directors, helping out where help is needed, and generally using their unique talents and energies.

As members of BCP your minimum obligations are as follows:

- Serve as a helper on your scheduled days, published in the monthly newsletter and on the website. Arrive 15 minutes early on your helper days. Pay for using the emergency helper if necessary.
- Serve on one school committee or serve on the board of directors.
- Attend one housekeeping session per year – the classroom is thoroughly cleaned once a month by a different group of families.
- Accompany the class on at least one field trip per year for 3/4s; two field trips for the 4/5s.
- Turn in required school and teacher evaluations, usually handed out in January.
- Attend the orientation meeting prior to the first day of school and the two annual membership meetings, held mid-October and mid-April. (At membership meetings, a new group of board members are confirmed by member vote. They are usually held in conjunction with other scheduled events such as the Harvest Party in the fall and the Art Show/Fundraiser in the spring.)
- Pay registration, tuition, and fees when due and payable. Tuition is due by the 1st of each month and is considered late after the 5th. PLEASE DO NOT PAY WITH CASH!
- Abide by the by-laws of the corporation (copies are available online in the member section.)

### **General Information**

#### *Arrival and Departure Procedures*

##### Arrival-

Please arrive for class on time. The door to the building is to remain locked. If you are the first to arrive, ring the doorbell and the teacher will open the door for you. Parents that are waiting in the hall can let others in. Please take your child to the restroom before class starts. If you are early, please wait in the hallway until the teacher opens the door. The teachers need this time to set up the day's activities and to instruct the helpers. When it is time for class to begin, the teacher will open the classroom door. You may help your child put his/her coat in a cubby and find his/her name tag. Bring your child to the circle rug and begin your goodbye routine with your child. We feel strongly that each child deserves a warm greeting and welcome to class; therefore, this is not an appropriate time for parents to have a discussion with the teacher. Your questions and comments are encouraged, and your concerns are important. Please call, text, or email the teacher with any questions or suggestions you may have, or you may request a conference. If you arrive after class has started, ring the doorbell and someone will let you in. Quietly put your child's belongings in his/her cubby and then have him/her join the rest of the children on the circle rug.

### Departure-

Please arrive to pick your child up on time. A late fee of \$15 will be assessed if you are more than 5 minutes late picking up your child. Pick up your child around the back of the church at the playground. Remember to check your child's file folder for artwork and other handouts before leaving. If someone else is picking your child up from school, you must notify the teacher. Children will not be released to anyone other than their parents unless prior arrangements have been discussed with the teacher. Members in car pools should also notify the teacher. Anyone not known to the teacher will be asked to show identification before the child is released.

### Birthdays-

Parents are welcome to sign-up as Helper to bring the regular snack on the child's birthday. Please do not bring sugary birthday treats or drinks! Students can bring a small special token or sticker to pass out to his/her friends on their birthday. Please let the teacher know in advance if you plan to bring something for your child's birthday. Student will get a toy from the prize box and get their very own paper crown. To avoid hurt feelings, please do not bring party invitations to distribute at school. Children whose birthdays fall during the summer months are invited to celebrate their half-year birthdays during the school year or in May.

### Board Meetings-

Board Meetings are held monthly and at the discretion of the President. The dates will be announced in the newsletter or posted to the online calendar. Any member of BCP is welcome to attend whether to address a specific concern or just to observe. Minutes of the meetings will be posted on one of the bulletin boards inside the classroom and on the website.

### Bulletin Boards-

Important notices are posted on the bulletin boards. The one outside the classroom has parent information, board meeting dates/times/locations, and helper sign-up sheets. The other boards are in the classroom, which have parent information from the teachers and will let you know about upcoming field trips, monthly helper schedules, the minutes from past board meetings, and committee and class roster information. Please check all boards for notices each time you bring your child to school. You should also check the member section of the website and your email weekly for up-to-date information.

### Clothing-

Dress your child appropriately for the weather, including coats, hats, boots and mittens in winter. Even in winter, the children usually spend some time outdoors playing. Label all outerwear with your child's name. The children wear smocks when painting and working with other art media. However, it is still not always possible to keep paint off clothing. Our paint is washable, and we have found that an immediate washing or soaking usually will remove it. Even so, play clothes are recommended. Additionally, there are extra clothes for potty accidents inside the storage closet in the classroom.

### Committees-

Each family must serve on a committee. See the last page for a list of committees and a brief description of what each does. We depend on parent/guardian participation to keep tuition low so failing to do the work of your committee is the same as not paying tuition. If you miss your committee meetings or fail to do your committee work you will be charged a \$25.00 fee. After a second incidence your family will be asked to leave the school. We don't want to kick anyone out so please, if you're having trouble, communicate with your committee head.

### Cubbies-

Each child has a cubby (small storage area) in the classroom. These cubbies are used for storing his/her outerwear and other belongings.

### Field Trips-

Field trips will be announced in advance. The teachers and the teacher support committee plan one field trip for the months of October, November, January, February, March, April and May. For the month of December instead of a field trip we do a charity drive for needy families. The 3-4's class and the 4-5's class don't go on the same field trips each month. Parents are responsible for transporting their child to and from the field trip. We strongly recommend that parents are present for field trips. If you are unable to

attend please make arrangements with another parent to be responsible for your little one during the field trip time. If there is a cost for the field trip the school will pay for the students, teachers and the helpers. All other costs for parents and siblings will not be covered. The helpers still bring snacks on field trip days. If a special need or circumstance arises talk to the teacher.

#### File Folders-

Mail is received and distributed in file folders. When distributing mail, please write the name and class session of the address on each piece of mail (e.g. Joan Smith 3/4 AM). Be sure to check your child's file folder each time you pick your child up.

#### Library-

Reading to preschool children is one of the best ways to inspire them to learn and explore. The preschool has an extensive library of children's fiction and non-fiction books, books on tape or CD, and a parent resource section. A complete list of indexed library materials is online in the member section of the website. You are welcome to check out books for your child during the school year. Checkout procedures are as follows:

1. Write your child's name and class (3/4AM, for example) on the library card in the inside back cover of the book. Place this card in the small wooden card checkout box on the middle bookshelf.
2. Books can be checked out for two weeks at a time. You will receive a reminder notice to return the book if you keep it longer than two weeks.
3. When you return books, simply place them in the returned books box on the middle shelf. The library committee will take care of returning cards and re-shelving the books.
4. Books on display are unavailable for checkout.

#### Newsletter-

Each month the school publishes a newsletter. In this you will find letters from the teachers and the president along with special announcements and other general information about the school. The newsletter will be posted on the bulletin board and on the website. If you do not have an email address, the newsletter will be copied and distributed in your child's file folder.

#### Parent Concerns-

Throughout the school year, you may have questions, comments, or concerns regarding your child or the preschool in general. If your concerns are with your child, the curriculum, or a classroom issue, we prefer that you speak first with your child's teacher. Please do not engage the teacher in discussion during class time but instead, arrange for a conference at another time. Bi-annually, you will have an opportunity to schedule conferences with the teacher to discuss the progress and development of your child in the classroom. If you feel you would like to consult with someone else, please speak with the Teacher Support Chairperson or President. If your concern is with the preschool in general, please refer to the "Frequently Asked Questions" section near the end of this book to see to whom to address your questions. Parents are always welcome at monthly Board Meetings, or if you'd prefer to write a note, you may leave it in the appropriate board member's file folder. Remember, this is your school; feel free to ask questions, make comments or suggestions and express concerns.

#### School Closures-

If Boise School District closes schools due to weather or an emergency, then BCP will also be closed that day.

#### Siblings-

**DO NOT BRING SIBLINGS ON YOUR HELPER DAY!** Please make other arrangements for siblings on your helper day. If, due to illness or other emergency, your plans for the student's sibling fail, it is your responsibility to find a replacement helper. Contact someone else in your class to trade with you, or as a last resort, use the emergency helper for your class (look on the committee list). It is a good idea to have more than one family member cleared with a background check for those that anticipate ongoing schedule conflicts.

Parents with newborn siblings are allowed to bring their baby on their helper day if they can be contained in a sling, backpack, car seat, etc. and are not yet mobile. Siblings beyond this baby stage may not accompany their parent since their mobility and vocal abilities prove to be too distracting for both the parent and the class.

On non-helper days, you may make arrangements with the teacher to bring a sibling to class (a parent must remain in the classroom during the sibling visit).

Visitors-

We welcome outside visitors to our school anytime; however, advance notice must be given to the teacher, and without a background check they can only stay for **30 minutes**. Parents, to prevent overcrowding, if it is not your helper day and you would like to stay for class, please ask the teacher ahead of time.

## **Money**

### Fundraising

We have a fundraising committee that organizes our fundraising efforts and sets fundraising goals with the Board of Directors. It is every family's responsibility to participate in the fundraising, because it is fundraising (and parent participation) that keeps our tuition low and our quality of education high. In the past we have had a "win lunch with your teacher" fundraiser, silent auction, bicycle rodeo, t-shirt sales and other fun events that also raise funds for the preschool. We have fundraising events that coincide with our fall and spring mandatory membership meetings.

### Tuition

The cost of attending BCP for the year is \$765 for a 3/4s and 3/4/5's student, and \$900 for a 4/5s student. That amount is divided evenly throughout the nine-month school year for easy payment. You get a 5% discount when you pay in advance for the entire year by Orientation; otherwise, the monthly tuition is \$85 for the 3/4s class and \$100 for the 4/5s class. Tuition is due by the 1st of every month. Payments received after the 5th will be assessed a \$20 late fee. Make checks payable to Boise Cooperative Preschool and include your child's name and class session on the check. Put your payment in the Treasurer's lock box in the storage room. **DO NOT PAY WITH CASH!** Do not put any other fees such as Scholastic book orders, or field trip money in the lock box; it is only for tuition and late fee payments.

### Registration

There is a \$50.00 non-refundable, yearly registration fee per child.

### Background Check

There is a \$20.00 non-refundable, yearly background-check fee for each family member who will serve as a helper in the classroom.

### Fees

If you're late, no matter what the reason, you must pay the late fees (funds will be used for general school expenses). We have an on your honor system of self-regulated fines. Fill out the slip and drop it in the box. The treasurer will place a late slip into your child's folder. Please put your late fee payment in the Treasurer's lock box in the storage room as soon as possible. It's due when you receive the invoice. If you need to make tuition arrangements in advance for special circumstances, please do so with the Treasurer. Fines are imposed for the following:

1. Tuition paid after the 5th of the month: \$20.00
2. Bounced check \$20.00 (in addition to the late fee above)
3. Not arriving 15 minutes early on your helper day: \$10.00
4. More than 5 minutes late picking up your child: \$15.00
5. Missing your scheduled housekeeping day: \$25.00 (plus a rescheduled housekeeping day)
6. Missing mandatory membership meeting (unless prior notice is given to the president): \$10.00
7. Not turning in the mandatory school and teacher evaluations: \$10.00
8. Using the emergency helper \$10.00
9. Not performing your duties on your committee, including committee meetings \$25.00

We would rather have everyone work together to make less work for us all, than use our fines as a source of revenue. Whenever a parent fails in his/her duties, it results in an additional burden on the others who support the school and our children.

### Bounced Checks, Missed Tuition

If you bounce a check, the fee is \$20.00 as noted above, in addition to the late tuition fee of \$20.00 if it makes your tuition come in after the 5th of the month. If you bounce a second check, the same fees apply, and you are then required to pay by money order for the rest of the school year. If you are 30 days behind in payment, you will be asked to leave the school.

### Security and Health

- Please enter through the front door labeled Church Office. The door is to remain locked at all times for the safety of our children and the church staff. Please ring the preschool's doorbell and someone will let you in. If you are waiting in the hall for class to begin, please open the door for parents you recognize. If an unfamiliar person comes to the door, please do not admit him/her. Let the church staff or the teacher take care of it.

- Please pick your child up around the back of the church, as we will be exiting from the playground. Only the family member who dropped off the child is permitted to pick him/her up unless prior notice has been given to the teacher.

- Official BCP Name Badges must be worn while acting as helper. This alerts any inspectors that the volunteer working has passed the mandatory background check required to work with children. This background check is done once a year and checks for criminal records going back 3 years. The criteria are set by City of Boise licensing. (The teachers go through an even more stringent licensing procedure.)

- Disposable gloves are to be worn while handling food during snack time. Please remind other helpers of this practice as well. They are in a rack by the sink.

- Bathroom policy- our bathroom facilities are down the hall from the classroom. The teacher and helpers give the children one bathroom break as a class where they have an opportunity to use the bathroom and wash their hands before snack time. If a child has to go at another time, he/she will be escorted by the teacher or a helper. Please double check that toilets are flushed and hands are washed!

- We provide the children the opportunity to serve their own water using small serving-sized pitchers and plastic cups. Proper cleaning procedures, required by the Central District Health Department, must be followed when washing any dishes that we use for snack. Washing instructions are posted above the sink. Proper cleaning procedures must also be exercised when cleaning any food surfaces. A bleach and water solution must be used when wiping down the tables we use for snack or any counter tops. The bleach/water solution is an ideal cleaning agent that evaporates very quickly and leaves behind no chemical residue.

- Illness policy – Please tell the teacher when your child is ill. You may call or text the teacher prior to school on her cell phone and leave a message. Please use good judgment and the following guidelines will be used in determining when to send a sick child home:

*Fever*- A child with a temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher will be sent home. Usually fever is a sign that the body is fighting off a an infection or a contagious disease. Fever is defined as an elevation of 1.5 degrees above the normal temperature of 98.6 degrees Fahrenheit (by mouth). A child should be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to preschool.

*Diarrhea*-A child will be sent home if there is more than one instance of loose, watery stools.

*Vomiting*-If a child vomits, the child will be sent home.

*Influenza*-A child with a fever, persistent coughing, congestion, chills or muscle aches in any combination will be sent home.

*Sore Throat*-A child with a sore throat who has not seen a doctor, will be sent home.

*Rashes*-A child with an unidentified rash that is spreading and/or getting worse over time will be sent home.

In all of these cases, the Boise Cooperative Preschool recommends that a physician be consulted. If your child is ill or possibly ill, please be thoughtful of other parents and children and keep him/her home until he/she is well.

Lice policy- BCP has a "NIT-FREE" policy; students will have to be kept at home until initial treatment has been completed.

Immunization Code- Idaho Code, Chapter 11, Section 39-1118: 39-1118. IMMUNIZATION REQUIRED. (1) Within fourteen (14) days of a child's initial attendance at any licensed day care facility, the parent or guardian shall provide a statement to the operator of the day care facility, regarding the child's immunity to certain childhood diseases. This statement shall provide a certificate signed by a physician or a representative of a health district, that the child has received, or is in the process of receiving immunizations as

specified by the Board of Health and Welfare; or can effectively demonstrate, through verification in a form approved by the Department of Health and Welfare, immunity gained through prior contraction of the disease. Immunizations required and the manner and frequency of their administration shall be as prescribed by the State Board of Health and Welfare and shall conform to recognized standard medical practices in the state. The State Board of Health and Welfare shall promulgate appropriate rules and regulation for the enforcement of the required immunization program and specify reporting requirements of the day care center, pursuant to the provision of Chapter 52, Title 67, Idaho code. (2) Any minor child whose parent or guardian has submitted to officials of a licensed day care facility a certificate signed by a physician licensed by the State Board of Medicine stating the physical condition of the child is such that all or any of the required immunizations would endanger the life or health of the child shall be exempt from provision of this section. Any minor child whose parent or guardian has submitted a signed statement to officials of the day care facility stating their objections on religious or other grounds shall be exempt from the provisions of this section.

Immunization Policy- All facilities are required to have immunization records for the following preventable diseases: Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Polio, Haemophilus influenza type b (HIB) and Hepatitis B. Boise Cooperative Preschool allows for and exemption to be filled out and put on file with the Vice President/Registrar. In the event of a reported case of one of the nine above mentioned diseases, children with exemptions will be excluded from classroom for the duration of the outbreak. Younger siblings outside of the recommended age to receive vaccines should avoid the classroom, as well.

- The first aid kit is in the cabinet above the sink.

- We are a tenant of the Trinity Fellowship Church. The church serves many organizations during the day and evenings and we need to be respectful of these groups. Please report any items that might be missing or need to be repaired to the teacher. If you attend any functions for BCP in the evenings or during the weekend, please be sure that all the doors are locked when you leave the building.

## **The Structure of Our Classes**

### Circle Time

Circle time helps children to see themselves as both individuals and members of a group. The children feel a sense of belonging, develop self-confidence, and learn to function successfully in a group of peers. Circle time gives the child an opportunity to experience storytelling, finger plays, dramatic play, group games, music, and rhythmic movements. The structure of circle time helps children learn listening skills and the joy of expression \*and language. In circle time, children learn to compromise, take turns, share, and cooperate. They learn to respect each other, and to be respected in turn.

### Free Play

Free play is an integral part of preschool education. The foundation of preschool learning is providing an abundance of suitable materials and leaving children free to use them with a minimum of guidance from adults. Adult guidance during free play should occur only for the following reasons:

1. To help children do a little more effectively what they themselves have started (such as managing paintbrushes).
2. To restore harmony within groups.
3. To preserve each child's own health and safety and those of other children.
4. To protect the rights and safety of other children.
5. To prevent destruction.
6. To enforce limits.

### Share Time

For the 4/5 students, your child's share day is the same as your helper day. If it is not your helper day, please discourage your child from bringing an item to share. Unfortunately we do not have time for every child to share every day.

The children are encouraged to bring things or people of interest. The teacher may ask the children to bring something of seasonal interest or something to correspond to a theme being developed. Children often want to bring toys, regardless of what they've been asked to bring. This is understood and accepted; however, toys that are brought to share will be put away until share time, shown, and put away again. Please do not bring toy weapons or live animals to share. Parents with special talents or items of interest are urged to share with the children at this time.



The 3/4's students will rotate a "classroom buddy" throughout the year. The classroom teacher will formulate a calendar that will allow the students to take the "classroom buddy" home at least once a year.

### Snack Time

Snacks consists of a solid food , provided by helper #1, that should be nutritious and ready to serve (avoid sugary snacks). Snack portions should be kept small and only one item is necessary. We are not trying to fill their tummies, only hold them over for class time. We have a refrigerator for storing food items. Please check the list on the cabinet above the sink for any food allergies in your child's class and bring appropriate snacks.

\*Every Wednesday (4/5's class) or every 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday (3/4's and 3/4/5's class) students will make a snack in the kitchen off of the Harvest Hall. In this instance, both Helper #1 and Helper #2 will be assigned ingredients to bring.

### Snack Ideas

- Whole Grains-Popcorn, Crackers, Rice Cakes, Pretzels, Muffins
- Protein-Cheese, Yogurt, Cottage Cheese, Hummus, Nuts
- Fruits-Apples, Bananas, Grapes, Oranges, Clementines, Watermelon, Strawberries, Mangos, Dried Fruit
- Vegetables-Carrots, Celery, Bell Peppers, Cucumbers, Snap Peas, Grape Tomatoes

### Outdoor Time

We try to play outdoors for at least 15 minutes each school day. If the weather is too cold, rainy, or snowy, the teacher may choose to remain indoors to finish up the school day. Outdoor time gives the children an opportunity to participate in more boisterous, physical play where they can let their spirits soar. We have a wonderful climbing structure that brings out the children's imaginations and develops strength and coordination. We have a large sandbox with a variety of toys. We have a huge grass area in which to run, play ball, and do group activities. Finally, we have several tricycles to develop strength and gross motor skills. In inclement weather, some toys are brought to the Harvest Hall, and the children are allowed to have more boisterous play there.

### Helper Responsibilities and Guidelines

Helpers assist the teacher with the day's activities. It is vital to the teachers that they have reliable, dependable helpers.

At the beginning of each month, a calendar will be posted on the bulletin board outside the classroom for you to sign up for your helper days for the next month. When signing up, be aware that Helper #1 brings snack for that day. Be sure to sign up early to get your choice. Those who do not sign up will be assigned a helper day. Once everyone has signed up for helper days, the calendar will be taken down and published. If all class days are not filled in, the class scheduler will assign days as needed. The current month's schedule is also posted on the bulletin board inside the classroom. Please check to see if you have been assigned any additional days.

If you are unable to help on your scheduled day, it is your responsibility to make arrangements with another parent to take your place. You may trade days or make other voluntary arrangements. If, due to an emergency, you or the teacher must ask a member of the Emergency Helper committee to take your place, you will owe that helper \$10. We ask that you pay the treasurer, and she will pay the helper. You may contact the class scheduler in advance if you have specific days or dates that you are not available.

DO NOT BRING SIBLINGS ON YOUR HELPER DAY. If your childcare arrangements fall through, either arrange a trade with another parent or utilize the emergency helper (\$10 fee due). You could, also, arrange an ongoing trade with other parents in your child's class to watch younger children on your helper days. You can use your class email list to communicate with the parents in your class.

Your child's share days are on your helper days. Don't forget to remind your child to bring something to share. See Share Time on the previous page.

### Helper Arrival Time

It is essential that helpers arrive at least 15 minutes before class begins. Arriving 15 minutes early allows time for the teacher to explain the purpose and goals of the day's project, to instruct the helpers in any last-minute preparations, and to set up other activities. The teacher is then free to warmly greet the children when they arrive. A helper who does not arrive at least 15 minutes before class will be assessed a \$10 late fee.

Helper Departure Time

Helpers should be prepared to stay approximately 10 minutes after class ends. This extra time is necessary to be sure that all the children are picked up safely and that the classroom is clean for the next class.

Interacting with Children at Preschool

The following guidelines will help you work most effectively with the children. Please read them carefully. We recommend you review these guidelines before each helper day. Defer to your classroom teacher with any questions.

In General

- On your helper day, you should show your own child he/she is someone special to you, and this is a time to share with him or her. You are also the teacher's assistant and must balance your helper responsibilities with the needs of other children.
- Do not leave the children unattended at any time.
- No one helper is to be left alone, with a child, at any time.
- If a child needs to use the restroom during class time the teacher shall escort that child to the restroom, leaving the remaining helpers in the classroom. In the event the teacher cannot take a child to the restroom, (i.e. during circle time, etc.) the helper may take the child to the restroom and also bring a "buddy" (another child).
- Health and safety are of major importance. See dangerous situations before they occur and prevent them. Show children safe ways of playing
- Be warm and friendly with all the children. Tell them your name and whose parent you are
- Reward their efforts by giving praise when you see desirable behavior. Example: "When Jenny grabbed your doll, you used your words to tell her you were mad, instead of hitting her. You did a good job."
- Allow the children to direct their own play. Free play means self-choice, not adult direction.
- Give the children the minimum help so they have the maximum chance to gain independence.
- Children are sometimes slow in making up their minds. Don't rush them into things. They may need time to watch or to shift from one activity to another.
- Treat toilet accidents in a matter-of-fact way with no reference to the accident. Put the wet clothes in a plastic bag in the child's cubby, and dress the child in dry clothes. Extra clothing is in the storage closet.
- Direct block building to an area where it does not interfere with traffic. Instruct children to carry blocks in front of them and not over their heads. Block construction should be no taller than chest high of the children playing.
- Read to the children whenever there's interest. Books are precious to us, and should be treated with respect.
- You are responsible for the children in your area when you are a helper. If you observe behaviors that are desirable, such as a child using words to solve a dispute, encourage that behavior. You might say, "Eric, you used words just now to solve your problems." If you observe behaviors that are undesirable, take appropriate action following the guidelines below. If you are in doubt or are having difficulty, enlist the help of the teacher.

When Limits Are Necessary

- Limits should be clearly defined and consistently maintained. The adult in charge should foresee and avoid problems.
- Go to the child and speak to him/her. Talk to the children at their eye level. Do not shout from across the room.
- Your voice is a teaching tool. Use only words and a tone of voice that will help the child feel confident and reassured, not guilty, afraid, or ashamed. A voice that is quiet, positive, and firm will show the child that you know your instructions will be carried out.
- Make suggestions, redirections, and corrections in a positive way. A child who misbehaves should get the message that his/her behavior is not acceptable, not that he/she is bad. Example: "Play dough is used at the table. If you want to use the play dough, you will need to stay at the table." or "Remember, hands are for helping, not hurting. You may not hit Brenda. Let's find another way to tell Brenda how you feel."
- Show the child what to do rather than admonishing him/her for what he/she has done. Instead of saying, "Don't throw blocks!" you might say, "Blocks are for building."
- Do not compare one child to another.
- If your child misbehaves (and he/she may when you are there) let the teacher help handle the situation. Ask for assistance before you or your child become frustrated. Just say to your child, "Let's ask Mrs. Russell to help us with this problem." You'll be amazed at how easy it is!

Disputes between children

- Intervene only when they seem unable to resolve their difficulties in a satisfactory manner by themselves. Suggest possible choices. Help kids recognize that when they are having a problem, they can help solve it. Example: “I see Chad and Nicky are having a problem. Both kids want the same toy. How can we solve this problem?”
- Validate feelings. Example: “I see that you’re really angry at Nicky, but you may not hit him. You may use your words in a big voice to say ‘I feel MAD!’”
- Redirect children to another activity if disputes cannot be resolved. Teachers will address certain rules and conflict resolution skills being practiced at age- appropriate levels through the I-CARE rules and will help helpers use these techniques in the classroom.

### Outdoors

- We try to play outdoors for at least 15 minutes each school day. If the weather is too cold, rainy, or snowy, the teacher may choose to remain indoors to finish up the school day. Outdoor time gives the children an opportunity to participate in more boisterous, physical play where they can let their spirits soar.
- Remind children to use both hands when climbing.
- Keep traffic going one way on ladders, slides, and planks.
- Put aside personal playthings for safekeeping.
- Do not allow bark to be thrown. Sand is to be kept in the sandbox.
- Enforce the “no bumping” rule when riding tricycles. The rule is: Stop before you bump into someone or something (doors, trees, etc.).
- Tricycles are to be ridden on the sidewalk and only with helmets.
- Anything with wheels (i.e. wagon, bikes, scooters) may only be ridden while wearing a helmet.

## Helper #1 Duties

These duties are guidelines. Be flexible and work cooperatively with the other helper and teacher. Pitch in whenever you can.

### Snack

- Bring a nutritious snack for 15 children (3/4s class), or 17 children (4/5s class) and 3 adults.
- Be aware of any food allergies in the class. The teacher has a list.
- Every Wednesday (4/5's class) or every 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday (3/4's and 3/4/5's class) students will make a snack in the kitchen off of the Harvest Hall. In this instance, both Helper #1 and Helper #2 will be assigned ingredients to bring.

### Fifteen Minutes before Class

- Find and wear your name badge. The badges are kept in the plastic containers in the class file-folder bins. Name badges are supplied for every parent with a background check. If you do not have a badge and/or background check, notify the teacher.
- Place the snack in the refrigerator (if necessary).
- Take art work off drying racks and assist other helpers with set up.
- AM Helpers, fill the paint containers, then put brushes and containers on easels.
- Help setup daily art projects and receive special instructions from the teacher.

### Greeting Circle

Help children get situated on the circle rug (help children find name tags and places to sit).

- Sit with the children while the teacher explains the day's schedule and project.
- Help the children participate.

### Free Play Time

- Painting – Let the child practice printing his/her own name when possible. If he/she is not at that level then print the child's name in the top left hand corner on the front of the page as soon as the child begins. Nameless art is hard to place... children often are not sure what is theirs. Asking the children to explain their art and offering to "title" the artwork is important to early literacy skills and really helps their parents know what it is.
- Supervise painting and art projects. Let the children do it by themselves. Allow for individual creative expression.
- When the child leaves the art table, straighten the place so it is inviting to the next child.
- Be flexible and float with the children. If they want their faces to have 6 eyes, let them.

### Clean-Up

- Help the children clean up and put toys, games, puzzles, play dough, markers, etc. away in the proper place. Look for labels on the shelves or ask the teacher.

### Circle Time

- Sit with your child until after Share Time (4/5s class).
- Clean the tables using the bleach and water mix (located in a spray bottle above the sink).
- Set out snacks and beverages family style. When setting snack on each table WEAR disposable gloves.
- If finished before circle time ends, join your child at Circle.
- After circle time, assist the teacher in taking the children to the bathroom. Make sure everyone washes hands.

### Snack Time

- Sit at the table and talk with the children. One adult to each table.
- Encourage sharing and good manners.
- Encourage the children to pour their own water.

### Outdoors

- Help children with outerwear. Ensure that coats are buttoned or zipped and hats and mittens are on. Encourage children to do as much as possible themselves. Extra coats are available (ask teacher).
- Stay inside and begin your clean-up duties. When you finish, go to the playground and supervise children.
- Sweep bark off of sidewalks.

*Final Clean-up Duties*

- Disinfect tabletops with bleach and water solution.
- Wipe up paint drips on easels and trays, and any spills on floor. Replace newspaper liners in paint trays if needed.
- PM Helper - Put lids on paints, wash brushes, and store bristle-side up in tray to dry.
- Vacuum carpeted area. Swiffer vacuum snack/art room, spot mop if necessary.
- PM helper - vacuum hallway out to the playground if dirty.
- Monday AM helper - empty vacuum cleaner dust bin, empty the swiffer and change the pad.
- Make sure everything is tidy. Do not leave a mess that will require the teacher to clean.
- Leave your name badge in the container so it will be available next time.
- Friday PM helper - mop floor (with bleach water and a soft cloth).
- Sweep up bark and pick up toys on playground.
- PM helper - make sure sand toys are put away in containers and placed in shed. Snap the cover over the sandbox.

## Helper #2 Duties

These duties are guidelines. Be flexible and work cooperatively with the other helper and teacher. Pitch in whenever you can.

### Snack

• Every Wednesday (4/5's class) or every 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday (3/4's and 3/4/5's class) students will make a snack in the kitchen off of the Harvest Hall. In this instance, both Helper #1 and Helper #2 will be assigned ingredients to bring.

### Fifteen Minutes before Class

- Find and wear your name badge. The badges are kept in the plastic containers in the class file folder bins. Name badges are supplied for every parent with a background check. If you do not have a badge and/or background check, notify the teacher.
- Place the snack in the refrigerator (if necessary).
- Place any papers to go home in folders.
- AM helper: take playground equipment out of shed and remove cover from sandbox. Scoop and discard cat poop from around the sand box and rock area if there is any.
- Assist helper #1 in preparing art project for the day (if needed).
- Receive any special instructions from the teacher.

### Greeting Circle

- Help children get situated on the circle rug (help children find name tags and places to sit).
- Sit with the children while the teacher explains the day's schedule and project.
- Help the children participate.

### Free Play Time

- Supervise play in the Circle Room. Encourage fair play and cooperation.
- Play games and read to the children if they wish. Offer guidance when redirection is necessary.
- Sit on the floor and play with the children. Allow the children to direct their own play.

### Clean-Up

- When the teacher plays the clean up song, all children and helpers will work together to put the room back in order.
- Help the children put everything away in the proper place, neatly on the shelves and baskets. Look for labels on the shelves or ask the teacher.

### Circle Time

- Help the teacher get children situated on the circle carpet.
- Sit with your child until after Share time (4/5s class).
- Fill the small pitchers with water from the built in filter attached to the cold water.
- Assist helper #1 with cleaning up the art area and setting up snack. WEAR disposable gloves. If finished before circle time ends, join your child at circle.
- After circle time, assist the teacher in taking the children to the bathroom. Make sure everyone washes hands.

### Snack Time

- Sit at the table and talk with the children. One adult to each table.
- Encourage sharing and good manners.
- Encourage the children to pour their own water.

### Outdoors

- Fill the left side of the sink with hot soapy water for the glasses and pitchers.

- Help children with outerwear. Ensure that coats are buttoned or zipped and hats and mittens are on. Encourage children to do as much as possible themselves.
- Stay inside and begin your clean-up duties. When you finish, go to the playground and supervise children

*Final Clean-up Duties*

- Wash the dishes. Follow the instructions posted above the sink. Wipe down sink and countertop.
- Finish straightening the room. Check to see that everything is put away properly.
- Clean the bathroom. Disinfect the sinks and toilets, (spray is in the cabinet above the sink).
- Take the classroom trash out to the dumpster. Take out bathroom trashes if they are at least half full.
- Make sure everything is tidy. Do not leave a mess that will require the teacher to correct.
- Leave your name badge in the container so it will be available the next time.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Discipline Policy

### Boise Cooperative Preschool Discipline Philosophy

One of the fundamental goals of a developmental preschool is to provide a safe and consistent learning environment for children to develop confidence in their skills of group dynamics and conflict resolution. Discipline in such an environment is a combination of guidance and positive reinforcement of desirable behavior as well as limitation of inappropriate behavior.

As children experience group dynamics they learn what is acceptable or unacceptable behavior. Most unacceptable behavior stems out of a need for attention or from frustration by the lack of skills to express what one needs. Therefore, most unacceptable behavior can be resolved in the classroom. This is an ongoing process and, more often than not, lapses will occur, but with less frequency and more thought.

The Boise Cooperative Preschool has developed a discipline policy that is mindful of children's varying stages of development and temperament while ensuring the right of each child to a safe learning environment. We have also purchased and are implementing a curriculum focusing specifically on such issues. The program is from The Peace Education Foundation, an international non-profit organization dedicated to teaching peace through education at age appropriate levels. The curriculum is called Peace Keeping Skills for Little Kids and includes art, music, role playing and activities which focus on the "whole child" embracing physical, social, emotional and intellectual growth and teach compassion, trust, fairness, cooperation and reverence for the human family. You will recognize it if you child talks about "I-Care Cat" or "Hands are for Helping, not Hurting".

The teacher guide is available for review and teachers will be updating helpers on concepts and strategies being taught throughout the year.

### Discipline for Routine Situations

Children learn appropriate behavior from the examples set by parents and teachers. Therefore, when interacting with children at preschool, parents and teachers shall strive to demonstrate exemplary behavior. Please refer to the "Interacting with Children" section of this handbook for some specific examples.

Children respond to and learn from positive reinforcement. Therefore, desirable behavior will be encouraged and praised.

As discussed above in the "Discipline Philosophy," a reasonable amount of inappropriate behavior is expected from children as they develop skills to resolve conflict and adapt to a group environment. To help students resolve routine conflicts, teachers may use the following proactive methods:

1. Teachers/helpers may help students manage conflict by intervening and facilitating negotiation.
2. Teachers/helpers may redirect students to other activities.
3. Take a Break -Teachers/helpers may tell the child to "take a break" and think about what they could do differently that would work better or be more constructive. Tell the child that he/she may return to the group as soon as they are ready to try again. "Taking a break" can be an effective way to deal with much of the day-to-day correction a child may need. This method makes the student responsible for changing his behavior. By including the child in the process, the children take responsibility for changing their own behavior. Taking a break" is not the same as time out. One important aspect of taking a break is that the child helps determine the length of time spent taking a break.

Occasionally, students may not respond to these proactive methods. In these cases, helpers should defer to the teacher. Teachers may use the following methods:

1. Time-Out – A student whose inappropriate behavior is not responsive to proactive methods will be told gently but firmly that her/his behavior is unacceptable, and he/she will be temporarily removed from the group and given time to regain her/his composure. The teacher will stay with the student until the student is ready to rejoin the activities of the class. While the teacher is so occupied, a helper will keep the rest of the class focused on whatever activities were already in progress.
2. Early Dismissal from School – If a student's inappropriate behavior is not responsive to time-out, the teacher may, at her discretion, call the child's parent(s) to come and take the child home for the day.
3. Parent/Teacher Conference – The teacher may request a conference with the parent(s) to discuss the problem.

**\*\*Under no circumstances will physical punishment or humiliation of any kind be used.\*\***



Discipline for Extreme Situations

Although we recognize that a reasonable amount of inappropriate behavior is to be expected, and while we value behavioral diversity among children, we cannot permit any student's inappropriate behavior to infringe upon the right of other students to a safe learning environment. Such inappropriate behavior includes, but is not limited to, repeated incidents of the following:

1. Unprovoked aggression such as hitting, kicking, biting, and spitting.
2. Deliberate destruction of property belonging to the school or other students.
3. Verbal abuses or inappropriate language.
4. Unmanageable disruptive behavior that is unresponsive to appropriate teacher intervention.

A few difficulties, by themselves, may not be cause for special discipline. Natural growth spurts (physical and developmental) and sudden changes in children's lives may cause them temporary distress, which in turn can lead to inappropriate behavior. Working together, using the methods described above under "Discipline for Routine Situations," teachers and parents can usually guide children through these challenging times.

Unfortunately, there are rare occasions when distress is more than temporary and, despite appropriate intervention, the problems persist and even worsen. In such situations, the rights of the other students to a safe learning environment are jeopardized and must be protected. The following disciplinary steps will be taken in such extreme cases:

1. Document – The teacher will document student's inappropriate behavior. The teacher will also document any conversations with the student's parent(s) regarding the inappropriate behavior.
2. Schedule a Mandatory Parent/Teacher Conference – The teacher will schedule a mandatory parent/teacher conference to discuss the situation and possible methods to remedy the situation. At this conference the teacher will give the parent(s) written notification of the child's continued inappropriate behavior and the actions to be taken agreed upon with the parents.
3. Notify the BCP Board President – The teacher will give confidential copies of the written notification to the BCP board president. If inappropriate behavior continues to occur after written notification is given at the parent/teacher conference, the BCP board president will call a special conference with the parent(s), the teacher, and the BCP board president. The special conference will be held within one week of the president's call. Until the special conference is held, the student will be suspended from school.

During this special conference the teacher, the parent(s), and the board president will mutually agree upon a course of action. If a course of action cannot be agreed upon, or if the parent(s) do not attend this conference, the student will remain suspended until a course of action can be agreed upon. (If after one month of suspension no agreement has been reached, the student will be expelled and the membership of the parent(s) will be terminated.)

After a mutually agreed upon course of action has been established, the student will be reinstated in the school and placed on a thirty (30) day probationary period. Further incidents of such behavior, or failure of the parent(s) to comply with the agreed upon course of action will result in immediate suspension until a board meeting can be held to determine whether the student shall be expelled in compliance with the procedures outlined in the by-laws.

## Frequently Asked Questions

*When is my Housekeeping day? What do I do if I need to reschedule my Housekeeping Day?*

Contact the Housekeeping Chair.

*When are my helper days?*

Contact the Class Scheduler. Helper days for any given month are scheduled during the month prior. You are allowed to choose which helper day(s) you want, but check the final schedule to confirm you got your chosen dates. Helper schedules are posted on the website, on the bulletin board in the classroom and are attached to the monthly school newsletter.

*What do I do if I am unable to help on my scheduled day?*

You can use the class email in advance to trade with another parent from your class or make other voluntary arrangements. If you have an emergency and do not have time to trade helper days you must contact your class Emergency Helper to take your place and you will owe \$10 to BCP for the class helper.

*How do I access the members-only section of the BCP website?*

Contact the Web Administrator.

*When is my tuition due/how much is it/where do I put the check?*

The tuition is due at the 1st of each month and late on the 6th. Alternatively, you can pay the full year's tuition in September, and receive a 5% discount. Write your checks to BCP and drop them in the tuition box inside the classroom storage room. If you have questions please contact the Treasurer.

*Are there scholarships available?*

Contact the Registrar. A limited number of 50% scholarships are available each year, and can be applied for at the beginning of the school year.

*I have questions regarding registration/changing classes/withdrawing from BCP.*

Contact the Registrar.

*I need a current roster.*

Contact the Registrar. Class list are accessible online in the member documents section and the bulletin board inside the classroom.

*I have questions/concerns about my child's progress in school, or anything related to teaching / curriculum.*

Contact your child's teacher:

Tara Arellano (4/5 Teacher), (c) 322-6282 arellanofamily5@gmail.com

Stacie Fischer (3/4 Teacher), (c) 440-8278 fischer\_stacie@yahoo.com

*I have concerns that I cannot discuss with my child's teacher or another board member.*

Contact the President or the Vice President.

## Committees and Directors

Each year is new and exciting at BCP because new families join and bring unique experiences, talents and resources. Our school goal is to best utilize our resources to continue to offer a fabulous experience not found at other preschools. Each family only needs to be on one committee, but please have an idea of a few you are interested in just in case your first choice is full. For a current committee list, select the current year's list under the member documents section.

**President**-Presides over and sets the agenda for all board meetings, handles any disciplinary issue, writes the newsletter, organizes an after/before school program independent of BCP, oversees city licensing for the school and is responsible for the teachers' contracts and makes sure all the By-Laws are being followed.

**VP/Registrar**-The VP is in charge of call backs to interested families, conducts school tours, files and organizes proper application paperwork, ensures background checks are cleared for all helpers, organizes the scholarship applications for the Executive Board, enrolls students for classes and ensures immunizations are up-to date on all students. Of the assistants to the registrar, we need one person, preferably with medical background, to help with student immunization records. (2 members from any class)

**Treasurer**-The Treasurer is in charge of all financial matters of the school and is one of two signers for the schools' bank accounts, makes sure all bills are paid in a timely manner, reimburses members of the school, and fills all financial reports to state and federal agencies. The Treasurer also sits on the scholarship board to determine scholarship recipients. The assistant to the Treasurer will keep track of accounts receivable and the school's budget. (1 member from any class)

**Secretary**-The Secretary takes and publishes the minutes from all board meetings, oversees the formation of parent committees, the library and scholastic committee, and the positions of class scheduler and emergency helper. (2 members from any class for Library and book orders)

**Class Scheduler**-The Class Scheduler posts the monthly helper schedules on the bulletin board for parent sign-ups, enters assignments on the schedules to be posted on the website for member viewing and copies schedules for members that do not have internet access. (1 member from any class)

**Emergency Helpers**-The Emergency Helpers fill in for a parent if she/he is sick on her/his helper day and notifies the class via the phone list in case of an emergency or class cancellation. (1 member from each class, 4 total)

**Purchasing and Maintenance**-The Purchasing and Maintenance director works with board members and teachers to purchase school supplies, keeps a running inventory of supplies, repairs and replaces playground equipment or classroom equipment. (6-8 members from any class.)

**Teacher Support**-The Teacher Support person organizes field trips throughout the year, helps the teacher with special projects when requested, distributes school and teacher mid-year evaluations and organizes a charity drive for the month of December. Additionally, the committee aids the board in the search and hiring of a new teacher, if needed. (2 members from each class, 8 total)

**Fundraising**-The Fundraising Chair assists the board member in organizing fundraising events for the school year. It is every member's job to participate in school-wide fundraising events, but the chair and committees' organize them and set fundraising goals. In the 2012-13 school year, the fundraising total was over \$6,000 for the year! (2-3 members from each class, 8-12 total.)

**Publicity**-The Publicity Director is responsible for maintaining and expanding our marketing plan including brochure distribution, public service announcements, and advertisements in local publications. The aim is to keep our enrollment at a minimum of 80% with a goal of 100% and thus helps the VP/Registrar at our annual open house by providing staff and information about our school operates to new families. Also, the committee works with the social committee on the annual art show. (1 from each class, 4 total.)

**Scrapbook/Newsletter** -This committee's chair is responsible for compiling information from the teachers and President for the monthly newsletter. Also, the Scrapbook chair takes and collects photos of children at special events and field trips throughout the year and makes a memorable keepsake for the children at the end of the school year, with help from his/her committee members. (One member from each class, or two if you know someone from your class and want to work as a team, 4-8 total)

**Social**-The Social Chair is responsible for organizing the refreshments for our two membership meetings. These are our two school-wide social events and the goal is to make them family friendly and fun, creating a sense of community within our school. The committee plans the Annual Art Show with the Publicity committee at the Spring Membership Meeting, and can choose to host a Holiday Party. (2 members from each class, 8 total)

Website Administrator-The Web Administrator updates the public and member sites, adds events to the calendars, maintains group email lists, dispenses passwords to members to gain access to the member sites and provides overall technical support.

Housekeeping-The Housekeeping Chair ensures all members attend a housekeeping day annually, instructs members on monthly classroom cleaning procedures, and maintains cleaning equipment and supplies.