



**Haddam
Cooperative**
NURSERY SCHOOL

**2017-2018
Parent Handbook**

Dear Families,

Welcome! Mark your calendars! Preschool begins the week of **September 4, 2017**.

We know that you have many choices in schools and we are so pleased that you decided to enroll in the Haddam Cooperative Nursery School. HCNS strives to provide an environment of love, acceptance, freedom, fun and learning. HCNS is child centered and encourages youngsters to grow in their knowledge about themselves and their world through hands on discovery, play, and school readiness skills. HCNS follows the Connecticut Preschool Curriculum Framework, which was developed by the state of Connecticut.

Class Times:

3 year olds

Tuesday, Thursday
9:00am – 12:30pm

4 year olds

Monday, Wednesday, Friday
Full day 9:00am – 2:30pm
Half day 9:00am – 11:30am or 12:00pm-2:30pm

HCNS is located in the First Congregational Church of Haddam at 905 Saybrook Road Haddam, CT 06438. Main phone: (860) 345-3983 Website: www.haddamco-op.org

Student Orientation

We realize that going to preschool is a new and exciting experience, so we want both children and parents to be comfortable with the new environment. In your welcome letter, Mrs. Brielmann will be inviting children to come check out their classroom on September second. Children will be invited to come into the classroom and say hello to their teachers and meet their new classmates. They will also get to see where their cubby is going to be. Health forms, if they haven't already been submitted to HCNS, can be collected at orientation. A child cannot start class until HCNS has a current health form on file.

First Day

Classes begin the week of September 4th. Some children separate easily from their parents, while others may take some time. We want both children and parents to feel comfortable in the classroom with their teachers. Teachers work with families to make sure everyone is comfortable with the separation process. Allow yourself enough time to get ready the morning of and make sure that everything is clearly labeled with your child's name. Don't forget to pack an extra set of clothes in your child's backpack just in case.

Clothing

Children need to wear practical and comfortable clothing that they can get messy! They will be active in preschool. Outdoor play in the fresh air contributes to a child's good health and overall development. Outdoor play is factored into the lesson plan. Please dress your child appropriately including a hat, gloves, boots and snow pants when needed. Be sure to label all clothing. Cubbies are provided for each child. Don't forget to always pack an extra set of clothing to keep on hand in case of any accidents or emergencies.

Sign-In and Sign-Out

Drop off: Please walk your child into the building each morning. The school doors open to students at 9:00am. Class will start promptly at 9:15am. Be aware that the classroom is busy during this time and we ask that you assist your child in finding their cubby and putting their things away. Please then step out of the cubby area to allow for other parents and children to access their cubbies. There will be a pre-typed sign in/out form listing your child's name in one column and then a place for a signature in another. This form is kept on a clipboard to the right of the cubbies (left side of the classroom as you enter the door) in the morning and then out on the playground in the afternoon. The teaching staff, for both arrival and departure, will monitor this form.

Pick up: We ask that parents be prompt in picking up their child at the end of class. It can be unsettling for a child to be the last one left in the classroom, or on the playground, and again teachers are busy cleaning up and unable to supervise children after scheduled class hours.

If you have specific questions or concerns for your child's teacher, please feel free to talk to them about it. Sign in/out is a very busy time, but teachers are available to speak with parents. Sometimes 10 minutes **after** class is preferred or a phone call, email to Marsha (mbrielmann@snet.net) or even an appointment can be set up. Whatever the case, we want to develop open communication between our teachers and parents.

Safety

Safety is our #1 concern and priority for preschool. Doors are locked during class time and a security system is in place. At the front door there is a video surveillance monitor with a call buzzer. If you arrive at school outside of drop off/pick up time, please ring the buzzer and stand in front of the camera so that the teachers can identify you. Emergency first aid kits, mandated by the state, are located on premises and will be taken with the class on each field trip. It is important that you note ANY KNOWN allergies that your child has on the registration paperwork as this information is put in their files and carried with the group when outside of the classroom. Teachers are CPR/First Aid certified.

NUT FREE NOTICE!

If there is a known nut allergy in your child's class you will be notified in advance and information will be provided on what cautionary measures the school is taking. Parents, please be considerate of children and their allergy situations in your classroom.

Snack/Lunch

Snack: The family assigned to provide snack for class will be specified on the monthly “Events” calendar. A snack, plus an alternative snack, and a drink must be provided for each child in the class. A water cooler is available as an alternative for a drink so only one drink option should be brought in. Snacks can be related to that day’s lesson plan as noted on the calendar. Nutritious snacks are encouraged. When a food/drink allergy is present you will be notified in advance. The school will provide plates, cups, napkins and utensils. Snack day is a special day for your child because they are the “bell ringer” for the day. The “bell ringer” holds a leadership role within the classroom and this gives them a sense of responsibility when helping to set up for snack and other activities including being the line leader and helping the teacher with the weather and calendar during circle time. The number of days you are required to provide snack will depend on the class size. The State requires at least a two-week notice of what will be provided. There is a snack calendar located underneath the sign in/out sheet inside the classroom where you can write in your planned snack. We ask that snack be dropped off with your child in the morning. Snack days will also coordinate with your child’s birthday.

Lunch: Depending on the class your child is enrolled in you will need to pack a lunch. Please make sure all lunch bags, thermoses and water bottles are clearly labeled with your child’s name. Please be sure to pack an ice pack in your child lunch box.

Birthdays

Each child will have the opportunity for their birthday to be celebrated at school. It may not fall on their exact birthday but will be within a day or two when possible, summer birthdays will celebrate together at the end of the school year. Next to “Snack” on the “Events” calendar will be an (*) which will signify that the snack day you are slated for is your child’s birthday celebration. The same rules for snack apply on birthdays with the addition of a sweet item (cupcakes, cake...) if you decide to provide one. If you choose to bring in themed plates, napkins and decorations on that day you are welcome to do so, otherwise these items are provided. Unless all children are invited, please refrain from handing out birthday party invitations at school. A master contact list with mailing addresses will be provided for you at the beginning of the school year. The birthday boy or girl will get to pick a gift out of the birthday bag on his/her designated birthday day. Each family is asked to bring in a wrapped, gender-neutral toy at the beginning of the school year that can be put into the bag for these occasions. A toy, craft, or similar item can be purchased for \$10 or less.

Communication

There are various ways that HCNS communicates with our families. Monthly, you will receive a letter from our Head Teacher, Marsha Briemann, which outlines events and topics of study for the upcoming month. We also distribute a monthly “Events” calendar, we have monthly board meetings (attendance is required for board members but is open to anyone who would like to attend), minutes from the meetings and our “Events” calendars are posted on our website (www.haddamco-op.org) and we keep our Facebook page updated with current information. Inside the school there is a communication board in the foyer that is divided into three sections, 3’s, 4’s and Parents Corner. On the board, sign-up sheets will be posted for parties, class activities, picnics, fundraisers and other information.

Class Lists: A master class list, containing both the 3 and 4-year-old student's information will be made available at the beginning of the school year and possibly throughout the year as changes are made. We ask that you respect the privacy of our families and only communicate HCNS matters.

Field Trips

Field trips consist of either a walking trip to the Library or a driving trip to a nearby location. Parents are responsible for getting their own child to the location of the field trip (if not within walking distance). Parents may coordinate with other parents in arranging for travel to the field trips. Teachers are not allowed to transport children. Parents are encouraged to attend but state regulations do not allow children who are not enrolled in the program to attend the field trip (i.e. siblings). Please dress children accordingly. If a trip must be postponed it may be rescheduled and if a trip must be cancelled the parent will be notified.

Absences

Please call the school at **(860) 345-3983** whenever the child will not be attending class. Please provide the following information:

- Name of the child
- Which class they are in (3's or 4's, Full Day, AM/PM)
- Reason for not attending (e.g. illness, vacation...)

There is also an answering machine at the school for you to leave this information outside of normal school hours.

When to keep your child at home: To protect the children, we ask that parents cooperate by keeping sick children at home if they have experienced any of the following symptoms within the past 24 hours. *(These are merely guidelines; please follow your instinct if you feel your child should not attend school due to an illness.)*

- **Fever above 100 degrees (F)**
- **Unexplained rash**
- **Vomiting 2 or more times in 24 hours**
- **Any drainage or discharge from eyes, ears, open sores or green fluid from the nose**
- **Tiredness that prevents normal play**
- **Headache that prevents normal play**
- **Wheezing when taking a breath**
- **Sores on the skin**
- **Signs of a newly developing cold**
- **Diarrhea that prevents normal play**

It is very important that parents report any communicable/contagious diseases to the teachers immediately so that other parents may be notified of possible exposure, symptoms and treatment. Confidentiality is respected at all times.

Notify the teacher if your child has a communicable disease, such as:

- **Chicken Pox**
- **Lice**
- **Hand, foot and mouth disease**
- **Strep throat**
- **Conjunctivitis “Pink eye”**
- **Ringworm**

It is always better to err on the side of caution and let HCNS and your doctors know of any concerns you have.

School closings

HCNS operates on the same schedule as Regional School District 17 (RSD17) for school closures due to holidays and vacations. A handout called “School closing, Delayed Opening, Early Dismissal” will be provided at the beginning of the school year outlining the school’s exact procedures for weather related closings. If severe weather develops during school, parents will be notified. HCNS does not make up or credit for any weather related closings, vacations or holidays.

Tuition

Due date: Payment is due on the 10th of the month, payable by the 15th. A \$10.00 late fee will be charged if payment is not received by this time. If payment, and the first late fee, is not received by the 20th of the month then an additional \$10.00 fee will be charged. If payment and both late fees (\$20) are not received by the 1st of the following month your child will not be allowed to attend school until payment is received.

Please remember that the annual tuition for your child is divided among 10 payments. Tuition is not pro-rated for months where there may be no school for several days (e.g. December, April and June).

If you have questions regarding tuition please contact HCNS Asst. Treasurer, Christine Lisitano: clisitano9710@gmail.com during regular daytime business hours.

Fundraising

Outside of tuition, fundraising is our other main source of income. We try to hold a few fundraisers in the fall/winter months and then hold our annual Haddam Kids Fair in the spring. Fundraisers, other than the Haddam Kids Fair/Big Fundraiser in the spring, are optional. New ideas for fundraising are always welcome.

Our History

Established in 1968, the Haddam Cooperative Nursery Association is a non-profit, parent owned and operated preschool. Cooperative is the operative term in the name of our preschool. Parents, through the school’s various committees and structures, are responsible for every aspect of the school’s operations: hiring, setting tuition and policy, purchasing supplies, fundraising, recruiting students, working side-by-side with teachers, preparing snacks and cleaning toilets.

Our Families

In choosing the Haddam Cooperative Nursery School for their children, parents elect to become a part of a committed community, playing an active part in their child's learning. In turn, the school's operations rely on parent's engaged and thoughtful involvement; the ideas and skills that families bring to the school and the exchange of ideas between parents and teachers are intrinsic to our approach. Families can elect to hold certain "parent jobs" and serve on the board. The board takes on the responsibility of the business end of the school. All of the parent participation makes the preschool a close-knit community and is effective at keeping costs down.