Grasshopper Green School

- **PHILOSOPHY**

Childhood is a time of wonder, curiosity, and investigation. We feel that all preschool experiences should be successes. Successes raise self-esteem, and a positive self-image is the one most important asset we can help your child achieve.
-Mildred W. Frazer

Vivlow & Co. does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, religion, or ethnic origin in admission, administration of its educational policies and the enforcement of enrollment policies.

- **STAFF**

A school is only as good as its teachers and we are proud of ours. Our school is staffed with well-qualified, experienced, caring people who enjoy working with children. Our teachers and aides have considerably more training than is required by the State of Virginia. Some are college graduates, while others are currently enrolled in college curriculum. Before hiring, the background and references of each applicant are carefully checked. Every employee of the school must have a criminal record check by the State of Virginia.

- **COMMUNICATIONS**

Good communication between parents and the school is essential in order for the children's needs to be met and for the school to function well. We have several ways of communicating with you.

- Our preschool teachers make use of naptime to write daily reports for all-day children. These are put out with your child's papers for you to pick up every afternoon. This "daily report" tells you how your child ate and slept, and any memorable moments or special problems that occurred throughout the day.
- Our newsletter informs you about staff members, upcoming events, special activities, and monthly themes. The newsletter also includes a school calendar with fieldtrips, class events, and school holidays. Please read these carefully, we would not send them out without a cause and a need for your attention.
- The school calendar lets you know about field trips, special events and school holidays. Please read carefully and keep for future reference.
- Please check the bulletin board for daily announcements and reminders.
- Our website is another useful tool to keep up with what is going on in the school. You can access our site by visiting http://www.grasshoppergreen.com.
- If your child receives a bruise, cut, or other small injury, the teacher or aide who sees the accident will fill out an accident report. This report will be signed by the acting Supervisor. The report will contain date, time, circumstances of accident or incident, and treatment. The parent will receive a copy of the accident or incident report at time of pickup.
- The Director or Assistant Director is always available. We are here to answer your questions, take messages for the teachers, or discuss your child's progress. If you would like to speak with your child's teacher, please contact the office and we will make arrangements for a conference or a phone call.
- Parents will be provided reports in writing semiannually regarding their child's development, behavior, adjustment and needs.
- Semiannual meetings will be scheduled in order for parents to provide their child's teacher and the center director with feedback on their child and the center's program.

Please let your child's teacher or someone in the Office know of any significant changes in your child's routine or living situation. Young children react to changes at home with changes in behavior. Often they cannot tell us in words what is bothering them. They show their discomfort by crying, hitting, backsliding on toilet training, etc. If we know what your child is reacting to we can be more understanding and respond more appropriately to your child's behavior. Thank you for helping us to keep those communication lines open.

- **HOURS OF OPERATION**

Grasshopper Green is open year-round, Monday through Friday. We close as noted in our registration letter and annual calendar. We open at 7:00am and close promptly at 6:00pm. All children must be picked up by that

time. Of course, if you are late someone will remain with your child. A late fee of $15.00 will be charged for the first 15 minutes or any portion thereof your child is here after we close at 6:00pm. There will be a charge of $5.00 for each additional 5 minutes. Every effort will be made to contact you or one of the emergency numbers on your registration form. If we have not been able to contact anyone by 7:00pm, 911 will be called and Social Services contacted.

- **TUITION AND FEES**

Tuition is charged weekly and payable by the Wednesday of each week. A tuition week is Monday through Friday. The school will be closed on holidays listed on our annual calendar. Your tuition remains the same regardless of holidays, vacations, illness, snow days, or other acts of nature. A delinquent charge of $15.00 will be assessed if payment is not received by the Wednesday of each week. If the bank returns a check to us your account will incur a $30.00 fee.

- **WITHDRAWAL/EXPULSION POLICY**

Two-week written notice is required for withdrawal of your child for any reason, or parents will be charged for that period. If you withdraw your child, you cannot re-enroll your child for at least 30 days. A new enrollment fee and activity fee will be required when you re-enroll your child.

Examples of possible reasons for expulsion of a child may include, but are not limited to, acts or threats of physical violence, unresolved differences with a parent or child, or non-payment of fees. Every effort to resolve conflicts will be made. Should expulsion be the final outcome, the Director and Executive Administrator make the decision.

- **HOLIDAYS**

Please see our annual holiday calendar.

- **SNOW AND EMERGENCY CLOSING**

Snow and Emergency Closings – We are CLOSED if the Federal Government is closed.
If the Federal Government remains open- We will do everything possible to remain open.

- If liberal leave is granted to Federal Government employees, you should receive notification by our new "One Call Now" system if the center is closing for the day or if you have any questions please call the center answering machine. If the Federal Government releases its employees early, all centers will close as quickly as possible and you will be notified by the automated call system or by email to pick up your children. A report is issued by "One Call Now" verifying that all parents have been contacted.
- If the Federal Government report time for their employees is delayed or Fairfax County Schools are closed, our opening hours will change you will receive a call or email about the opening time of the center.
- In a weather emergency if you have not received an automated call or email by 6:30 am please check the center answering machine for a message about closing or our web site.

If Fairfax County Schools are closed, the centers will not open before 9:00 AM.

1. A final decision about the closure of the centers for the day will be made and put on the center's answering machine or sent out by the automated system no later than 6:30 AM. Should Fairfax County Schools be closed two consecutive days, our centers will make every effort to open on time the second day. "One Call Now" will notify all parents about the opening time for the second day. Notices will also be posted at the centers.
2. If Fairfax County Schools have a delayed opening, schools will open on time. In the event of a situation where circumstances are beyond our control and we would have to open late you would be notified by the automated calling system.

All schools are equipped with emergency supplies and have emergency procedures in place to follow should it become necessary. Please make certain you have the phone number of your child's center. We also ask if your work, cell, or emergency numbers have changed, that you update them with the office.

If the power or water is out at the center at 7:00 AM, the center will remain closed for the entire day. If the power should go out during a storm, the center will contact parents and will close immediately. This is a licensing regulation.

If the power is out at the center at 7:00 AM, the center will remain closed for the entire day. If the power should go out during a storm, the center will contact parents and will close immediately. This is a licensing regulation.

- **ADMISSION**

Grasshopper Green is open to children of all races, religions, and nationalities. Ages of acceptance are from 2 years to school age. If we do not have space available, we will gladly put your child on our waiting list. Before a child is put on the waiting list or enrolled, we recommend one or both parents to personally visit the school with the child. To be enrolled your child will need:

- A registration form completed and signed by the parent.
- Payment of a registration fee.
- Proof of child's identity and age (i.e. certified copy of birth certificate, notification of birth, or baptismal record.)
- A health form, included in this packet, completed by your child's doctor.
- An extra set of clothes-pants, shirt, socks, and underwear for use in the event of toileting accidents, spills, etc. (please clearly mark all items with child's name).
- Emergency medical form provided in this packet.
- Copy of custody agreement, if one parent has custody.
- An annual review by parents of their child's records will be required by the center. This is to ensure all information within their record is accurate.

- **PROGRAM REGISTRATION**

The attached forms are necessary for registering your child at Grasshopper Green. Before your child may attend school, the registration application, emergency medical authorization, and the physical examination form must be completed. The green school entrance physical examination form must be completed within 30 days of enrollment.
Should you have any questions regarding these forms, please contact the office at Grasshopper Green School, (703) 256-4711.

- **REGISTRATION FEE**

A program registration fee will be collected prior to enrollment for both the fall and summer sessions. This non-refundable fee will guarantee your child's placement in Grasshopper Green School.

- **CLASSROOM FEE**

At the time of enrollment, each family is required to pay a non-refundable class fee per child. This fee will be used to fund any classroom materials, field trips, and special events. Parents will be notified prior to a field trip or event. This method ensures that all children may participate in scheduled events and that teachers do not need to collect / track money from individual students.

An additional class fee will be required upon enrollment in our summer program.

- **HEALTH FORMS**

A certificate from your child's doctor, including immunization record must be in our files in order for your child to attend. This is a State of Virginia requirement. Proof of updated immunization is required. Approved forms are included in this packet. Please help us avoid preventable problems by alerting us to any chronic ailments, allergies, or food sensitivities that your child may have. Have your pediatrician note these on your child's health form.

- **EMERGENCY MEDICAL FORM**

This is one of the most important things that you can do for your child's protection. This form must be completed before your child may be registered. Please keep all phone numbers and contacts current. This form is always available should an emergency arise. These forms go along on any field trip your child may attend.

- **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**
  - **DROP OFF AND PICK UP POLICY**

Parents are required to bring their children into the building upon arrival to ensure that the proper staff member meets them. This is the most pleasant way for your child to begin the school day. Custodial parents are welcome anytime during the day to visit, but they need to come through the office and check-in first.

When picking your child up you may go to the playground gate and a staff member stationed there will get your child for you. Please do not go onto the playground area. If the children are in the classroom they will be released through the school office. For the protection of our students and classroom integrity, parents must not enter classrooms without being cleared by office personnel.

Remember to pick up your child's artwork and papers along with the daily report at the end of each day. Their belongings are placed in the labeled containers on the porch. Your child has looked forward to sharing his/her work with you all day.

Please remember that we will release your child only to those people listed on your registration form. If for any reason someone not listed on your form must pick up your child, please notify the office in advance. Whoever picks up your child will be required to show proper ID.

Please be careful when using the parking lot. You can never tell when a child may dart away from a parent and run in front of or in back of your car. With their safety in mind, please drive slowly as you approach the school. Also, for safety reasons please turn off your engine while your car is in the parking lot. Please park so that another car may pass. Pull forward as far as possible and do not straddle the lane dividers or block the playground entrance.

  - **STUDENT VACATION POLICY**

After one year of attendance one-week vacation credit for children will be authorized. Any vacation exceeding one week will be charged the full weekly tuition rate. If the vacation week is not used, it cannot be held over until the following year. Also, a vacation week cannot be used early or 'borrowed' against a future vacation week. Individuals not wishing to pay may withdraw for more than one week but will not have their position retained. They will be placed on a waiting list and must register as a new enrollee when they return. Vacation credits may not be applied if the child is in attendance any portion of the vacation weeks. Vacation year is determined from the date of enrollment.

  - **ABSENCES**

When it is necessary that a child be absent for any reason, it is requested that you call our office by 9:00am to report the reason. No reduction in tuition is allowed because of absences due to illness or otherwise.

  - **HEALTH AND WELLNESS**

Our goal is a school full of healthy children. We can come close to achieving this goal if parents and staff work together. Our staff members practice and teach good health habits, such as hand washing before meals and after toileting. We ask that parents do their part by keeping ill children out of school. We know that unplanned absences from work mean hardship for many parents. We recommend that you have a relative, baby-sitter, or friend lined up for backup care when your child is ill.

Several of our staff members have training to screen children for signs and symptoms of communicable disease. Screening is done in the morning as children arrive, as part of our normal greeting procedure. If a child has a temperature over 100 or other signs of communicable illness while at school, we will make the child comfortable, separate him or her from the other children, and call the parent to pick up the child.

Parents agree to inform Grasshopper Green and Kenwood School staff if a member of their immediate household has developed any reportable communicable disease, as defined by the State Board of Health, within 24 hours. Any life-threatening diseases must be reported immediately.

Please make sure the information on your child's registration form is up to date so we can reach you if your child becomes ill or injured. If the school is unable to contact you, the other people listed on the registration form will be called. Please list people who will know your whereabouts or who could pick up your child if you cannot be reached. If you're routine changes, please stop by the office and leave a number where you can be reached for that day. A secondary accident insurance policy is carried to protect your children. The cost of this insurance is included in your tuition fees.

- **MEDICATION POLICY**

Grasshopper Green/Kenwood staff will only give EpiPens and asthma inhalers at school. Medication and allergy forms will need to be filled out by the parent and physician and are available in the office.

Parents can sign a form to allow Grasshopper Green/Kenwood staff to apply diaper cream, sunscreen, and insect repellant.

- **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

School rules defining limits and expected behaviors are made with the children's ages and abilities in mind. These rules are explained in each classroom in a way the children will understand. Discipline based on these rules depends on a foundation of mutual respect and affection between teacher and child. Our teachers are aware of their responsibility as role models and know that an important part of their job is the teaching of safety rules and social skills. Good behavior is encouraged by suggesting and praising appropriate actions as well as by teaching the children what not to do. Physical punishment and verbal abuse are unacceptable and not used. Likewise, we do not force or withhold food or naps. Toileting accidents, a natural childhood occurrence, are not punished.

As teachers, our role is to guide each child toward behavior that is safe and sociable. We do not expect perfection. Children need and expect adults to set the limits which they cannot make for themselves. Discipline is the enforcement of these limits through the use of both guidance and positive redirection. Effective discipline is fair and consistent. When misbehavior occurs, we focus our disapproval on the child's actions, not on the child. Sometimes a child needs to be separated from the group and take a break for a few minutes. This gives the child a chance to calm down and to ponder the desirability of behaving in a way that allows him or her to remain a part of the group.

In some cases, a parent-teacher conference may be needed to decide on a joint approach to discipline.

- **POLICY ON REPORTING CHILD ABUSE**

State law requires that child care staff be cognizant of maltreatment of children and to report suspected child neglect or abuse to Social Services. Maltreatment usually falls into one or more of four general areas: physical abuse, neglect, emotional maltreatment, and sexual abuse. Indicators are basically of three types:

- Physical-child's appearance (including presence of physical injury).
- Behavior.
- Environment/Circumstantial-including social, cultural, or familial factors which are known to correlate with various kinds of abuse and neglect.

Persons making complaints and reports are, by law, immune from any civil liability if they act in good faith. Any person required to report that is found guilty of not reporting suspected child abuse could be fined.

- **FOOD POLICY**

Grasshopper Green serves a hot, well-balanced, nutritious lunch at 12:15. Midmorning and afternoon snacks are also served. Children may bring special treats from home to share with their class for special occasions such as birthdays and holiday parties. Except for health or religious purposes, children may not bring food from home to school. Children who require a special diet must have a letter from a pediatrician.

- **TOYS**

Toy guns, bows and arrows, or knives are not allowed. We cannot be responsible for loss or damage of any toys brought by the children, although we make special efforts to preserve them and it is seldom that a well-marked toy is lost.

- **SCHOOL DRESS**

Please dress your child in clothes that are comfortable, washable, and appropriate for a day of play and learning. Any clothing that may be taken off and misplaced (hats, sweaters, mittens, coats, etc.) should be clearly labeled with your child's name. Please provide an extra set of clothing (shirt, pants, socks, underwear, and shoes). No sandals or open-toe shoes are allowed. Please make certain that your child's clothes are changed seasonally.

- **OUTSIDE PLAY**

We are proud of our large playgrounds where the children enjoy running, shouting, and climbing the play equipment. Weather permitting; all children spend one half-hour or more each morning and afternoon outside. Virginia licensing standards requires this. We shall exercise our very best judgment regarding outside play. If a child is not well enough to be outdoors, he or she is not well enough to be at school. Please make sure that your child has outer clothing appropriate for the day's forecast.

- **FIELD TRIP INFORMATION**

Unless a parent specifies otherwise in writing, the application/contract for registration of your child includes your permission for them to go on center sponsored field trips. There will be a class fee for field trips due upon registration and periodically thereafter as required. Transportation will be provided by Grasshopper Green School. School buses are provided for field trips. To maintain the highest staff/child ration possible, all staff assists on field trips. Please note the departure times, as no staff members can remain at the center for late arrivals. If a parent does not want their child to participate in a specific trip, then the parent must make alternate arrangements for childcare on the date of the trip.