



**Brush Creek Nursery School
PARENT HANDBOOK
2018-2019**

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INTRODUCTION

This Handbook will give you important information on Brush Creek Nursery School. Please take the time to read it and keep it for reference throughout the year.

Nursery School Staff

<i>Julie MacDonald</i>	<i>Program Director</i>
<i>Karin Manning</i>	<i>Administrative Assistant</i>
<i>Vicki Briggs</i>	<i>Teacher</i>
<i>Janice Carpenter</i>	<i>Teacher</i>
<i>Gena Kilgore</i>	<i>Teacher</i>
<i>Nancy Libby</i>	<i>Teacher</i>
<i>Heather Miller</i>	<i>Teacher</i>
<i>Ally Madrid</i>	<i>Teacher</i>

GENERAL INFORMATION

Hours and Holidays

Brush Creek Nursery School generally follows the Rincon Valley School District calendar. During the school year we open at 8:00 a.m. and close at 4:30 p.m. Summer school hours and dates are determined each spring for the next summer school sessions. All dates in **BOLD PRINT** are school closing dates.

2018-19 School Calendar

August 28, 29	Orientation
August 30, 31	First Regular School Days
September 3	Labor Day (closed)
September 26	Family Potluck
October 9,10	Photo Days
October 16, 17	Eye and Ear Screening
October 27	Mother's Event
November 12	Veterans' Day
November 21, 22, 23	Thanksgiving Holiday
December 21-Jan 6	Winter Break (school resumes Jan 7)
January 21	Martin Luther King Jr. Day
January 26	Father/Child Breakfast
February 11	Presidents' Day
February 18	President's Day
March 2	TLC day
March 9	Open House for new families
March 18-22	Spring Break
April 27	Evening in Paradise fundraising event (Wild Oak)
May 17	closed for annual staff training day
May 27	Memorial Day
June 5	End of the year pizza night
June 6, 7	Last day of school

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Please note that unless you are utilizing before school care, school doors open at 9:00 a.m. or 1:00 p.m. **If you arrive earlier, please wait outside the front door, not in the play yard.** Each child must be signed in and out daily at the front door! Please walk your child into the classroom to help him/her start the day. Make sure the teacher has greeted your child before you leave. If your child is having difficulty with separation, the teachers will be glad to work with you and your child to make the transition a smooth one. Unless your child is enrolled in Early/After Care, you must pick up at 12 p.m. or 4 p.m.

At pick up time, please make sure your child says goodbye to the teacher. Parents wishing to converse with one another at drop off or pick up are asked to do so outside the front door/parking lot area. Make friends please but be aware of classroom happenings. To avoid having staff stay after their scheduled work time, we feel strongly about on time pick up! Therefore, we have a strict late policy (see Financial Policies).

If someone other than the parent will be picking up a child, please notify the staff in advance in writing, unless that person is on your forms in the office. We cannot release your child to anyone less than 16 years of age. No exceptions. We will check identification when someone picking up is unknown to us. Kindly keep your info up to date.

CARPOOLS, DRIVEWAY AND PARKING

Due to our limited space for parking, we strongly encourage you to arrange carpools. We will supply you with lists of children and parent's names and addresses for this purpose.

Please drive slowly when entering and leaving our driveway. Children behind cars are difficult to see. Driving slowly makes it safer. It also causes less wear and tear on the driveway. Please follow the 5 mph speed limit.

Again, parking is limited, so please pull up as far as you can and return quickly to your car. Please park only on driveway surfaces, **not on the curve of the driveway.** Please park on Badger Road or at the Middle School, if necessary, **not** in our neighbor's driveways. Last year the neighbors became quite frustrated with cars frequently parking on their property. Understand you could be towed!

WHAT TO BRING, AND WHAT NOT TO BRING

We have toys for everyone at school and children are encouraged to leave their toys at home. This way we can avoid disputes about who should play with them and avoid conflicts over broken toys. Books, records, bugs and other special treasures of benefit to the whole group may be brought and shared occasionally at group time. Structured "sharing days" are sometimes used by teachers as a tool for strengthening verbal skills. Teachers will inform you of this ahead of time and may place some restrictions on items to be brought.

An extra set of old clothes should be brought to school and left here in a zip lock bag for emergency changes. Please include a shirt, pants, underwear and socks. If clothes are used, please make sure to return them again after laundering.

PHILOSOPHY

Brush Creek's program is based on a child's need for both order and freedom of expression. We try to help each child discover inner strengths as he or she develops confidence in solving problems independently of adults.

There is an emphasis on being part of a larger group and being sensitive to the needs of others. We encourage the children to know and express their feelings in ways that get positive responses from others. We help empower them to resolve difficulties and strengthen relationships with peers.

A number of "hands-on" experiences are provided each day introducing challenging activities and problems to solve. Through such contact with natural phenomena, building and art materials, shapes, sounds and textures, children expand their comprehension of concepts basic to reading and mathematics skills and begin to develop truly creative thinking.

Our goals for the children are to learn to work and play independently, become able to accept help and direction from adults, learn to live effectively with other children, develop self-identity, grow in competence and worth, sharpen and widen language skill--both listening and speaking, be curious and be able to act on their curiosity.

Our program values mainstreaming special needs children into our classrooms. We accept special needs children according to how well we can meet their needs. We have found mainstreaming to benefit all the children in the class.

Finally, it is the goal of Brush Creek's highly qualified staff to prepare children not just for kindergarten, but for life in a world that needs caring, resourceful people.

FINANCIAL POLICIES

Funding

Brush Creek Family Services operates from an annual budget with the majority going toward staff salaries. Income comes from parent paid tuition and fundraising.

Tuition

Tuition for the 2018-19 school year is \$395.00 per month for 3 days per week and \$295.00 per month for 2 days per week. The Early/After care (see Program Information) fees are \$7.50 per hour contract and \$9.50 per hour non-contract.

Admission and Financial Agreement

Each family is asked to sign a Financial Agreement when enrolling their child. This is to ensure they understand the school's financial policies. These policies are as follows:

1. Statements are printed and distributed to the children's files on the 1st of month of the Monday following the first, if it falls on a weekend. Payments are due by the tenth (10th) of each month for that month. If payments have not been made a late fee will be charged. If payment is still not made by the 15th of the month, another \$15 late fee will be posted to your account. Failure to make payment by the end of that month will result in the termination of the child's enrollment the first day of the following month. If special circumstances exist, special arrangements for payments can be made prior to the due date of the 10th of the month with the Program Director. In these special arrangements cases, no late payment fees will be charged unless the arranged payment date passes with no payment.
2. A registration fee is to be paid yearly at the beginning of the school year. This fee is non-refundable.
3. June tuition (half-month rate) will be due in advance. This will be payable at the time of enrollment. It is paid at the time of registration. If a child is dropped after July 15th, The registration fee is non-refundable.
4. **In October, a \$100 annual fundraising fee will be billed.** This fee is required of all families (except those on scholarships). It includes two tickets to the spring fundraiser (EIP). Parents may opt for a two-payment plan or a four-payment plan.
5. The school's budget is figured on a yearly basis and the tuition parents pay is divided into equal monthly payments (excluding June). Therefore, no credit will be given for holidays, including the two week's vacation in December and one week Spring vacation. A school calendar of holidays will be given out at the beginning of each school year.
6. There will be no credit given for vacations and other "absences by choice".
7. At least two weeks notice is required if a child is to be withdrawn from the program at any time during the year. If no notice is given, there will be a charge for a half-month tuition.
8. Children must be picked up by 12:00 or 4:00 (if 4-4:30 Early/After Care is not used). If a parent is late or has not notified the school, a \$25 charge will be given for the first 2 events. An additional charge of \$10 will be given for every 10 minutes thereafter. If there are subsequent 3rd and 4th events, a \$50 fee will be charged. If there are more than 4 late pick up charges, a conversation with the Program Director will be required to decide if Brush Creek is the best placement to meet your scheduling needs.
9. Brush Creek closes at 4:30. Pickups after 4:30, even if the school has been notified, will be subject to late pick up fees.
10. A \$25.00 fee will be charged for returned checks.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

3-Year-Old Class Goals and Descriptions (Morning and Afternoon)

This class is designed essentially as a first school experience. The atmosphere is warm and nurturing, a wonderful first step away from home. Children will be striving to explore their individuality while learning what a group environment is all about. The main goals for the three-year-old classes are strengthening self image, exploring new materials and social relationships, becoming a participant in a group situation and learning the basic rules and guidelines of a classroom situation. As in all classes at Brush Creek, each child is encouraged and respected.

4-Year-Old Class Goals and Description (Morning and Afternoon)

These classes are designed to prepare a child for kindergarten and the world around us. Children will be strengthening their social skills, sharpening their cognitive skills, self expression and independence. Skill levels in a variety of areas are identified and activities are planned to foster the strengthening of those skills. It is our ultimate goal that children finish this year with an ability to thrive in a group setting and have and enjoyment for learning and an excitement for the learning process.

Early/After Care Program Goals and Description

The Early/After Care Program is an extended care program for children enrolled in Brush Creek. Its hours are Monday through Friday 8-9 a.m. and Monday through Friday 12-4:30 p.m. Sign-up can be done on a monthly or daily basis depending on available space. (See Tuition for cost.) Children bring a lunch, sheet for resting and blanket if needed. Snack is provided. Curriculum includes a rest time, art activities, outdoor time, walks to nearby locations, singing, movement, story time and more. The Early/After Care Program is designed to provide a quality program for children in a caring environment.

Guidance Techniques

It is our goal to foster growth in the children: to develop techniques in problem solving. By introducing methods of expressing feelings to others, we hope that children can reach a point of independent problem solving through communication, rather than physical methods. Teachers use consistent limits in their classrooms. If a child continually exceeds those limits, various techniques will be used to change the behavior (eliminating difficult pairings, redirection).

In our most extreme case, time-away to a different area or quiet time may be implemented. Brush Creek NEVER uses any form of corporal punishment.

Curriculum Themes

September - Making friends, self-awareness

October - Fall/leaves, Halloween, Reality/Imagination

November- Families- sharing, Thanksgiving, Harvest/plant life

December- Families and Traditions

January- Winter (weather changes, clothing), Outer space

February-Feelings and Emotions, Friendship and Love, Dental Health, Heart Health and Awareness, Valentine's Day

March- Wind, Growing (children, plants, etc.), St. Patrick's Day

April- Baby Animals/Life Cycles, Spring, Garden Vegetable planting

May - Insects, caterpillars/butterflies, May Day

June - Summer, Father's Day

Brush Creek tries to maintain a low-key policy where holidays are concerned. We use holidays such as Christmas, Hanukkah, Halloween, etc. for a basis to learn about colors, customs, different countries, etc. We do not present religious aspects or theories behind these holidays. To be fair to all diverse backgrounds, we use a non-partisan approach.

Summer School Classes

The goals and descriptions of the Summer School Classes are determined each spring when Summer School plans are made. Flyers containing this information are available in the spring.

Daily Schedule

The classes have a wonderful schedule that combines structured and unstructured activities as well as indoor and outdoor play. Your child's teacher can provide you with a copy of the schedule your class is using.

Lunch, Snack, Birthdays

School will provide a daily snack. Often the children will be helping their teacher prepare/cook our snack. It is our intent that snacks be small in quantity and large in nutrition. We use many organic and fresh foods in our snack preparation.

If children have food allergies, please make sure teachers are aware of them so they can plan snacks accordingly. Monthly snack menus are posted on the refrigerator and the front bulletin board.

School does **not** provide lunch. Any children staying for Early/After Care will need to bring their lunch from home. We have a school policy that children may not bring candy

in their lunch boxes. It will be sent back home uneaten. Please help us promote healthy eating. If your child has a birthday approaching and you'd like to bring snack, please inform teachers several weeks in advance (curriculum and snack planning are done monthly). Bringing your child's favorite fruit or vegetable is a great snack. We do not do parties at school, but we do our best to promote a festive birthday mood by singing and eating a healthful snack. **NO CUPCAKES OR JUNK FOOD PLEASE.**

Teacher Qualifications and staffing Ratios

Because we believe the quality of our staff is directly related to the quality of our program for children, we require that all Brush Creek Nursery School teachers have taken at least 12 semester units in a college level Early Childhood program and have had experience working with young children. Most of our staff far exceeds these qualifications. Our staff is evaluated yearly and staff training is a vital part of our school's program.

The State regulations require that we maintain a 1 to 12 adult to child ratio, but to provide a quality program for children we feel it is important to maintain a lower adult to child ratio. In our 3-year-old classes we have two teachers. In our 4-year-old classes we have 3 teachers or two teachers and an Asst. Teacher. Our school is licensed for 45 children at one time. Brush Creek was the first school in Sonoma County to receive accreditation through the National Association for the Education of Young Children. We have been in business since 1959.

OTHER PROGRAM INFORMATION

Emergency Preparedness

The Brush Creek staff has been trained in both First Aid and CPR. Some staff members also have attended workshops and seminars on disaster preparedness training.

The school has a very complete plan in case of an emergency. A copy of the plan in its entirety may be borrowed from the office. The school is prepared to keep your child here safely and comfortably for a three-day period if the need arises. A flyer will be given to you that will outline briefly the school's plan in case such a time comes that it will need to be implemented. We maintain emergency supplies here at school in case we need them.

Appropriate Clothing

Since an important aspect of the program is working with "messy" materials (paints, water, clay, etc.), children should wear suitable play clothes. Climbing and sand play are also popular activities and appropriate play shoes (rubber shoes that grip) should be worn. Aprons or smocks are normally required for painting unless it is felt that a child will be inhibited by the requirement. We recommend comfortable play clothes for all kids. We appreciate super hero clothing being kept to a minimum (although we certainly acknowledge the fascination). In that same vein, no "costumes" please. Should your child need to wear a cap on cold days, please inform us. Be reminded that unless it is raining, we will go outdoors- so dress your child accordingly. **PLEASE MARK ALL REMOVABLE CLOTHING WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME!** Every year many unmarked items are donated to Goodwill.

Absences/Health and Safety of Child

If your child is ill or will be missing some school, please give the school a call (539-1612) to let us know. We especially need to know if your child comes down with a communicable disease (i.e. chickenpox, head lice, etc.), so that we may inform other parents of a possible exposure.

Your child may be sent home if he/she appears to have symptoms of illness while at school. If this happens, the child will be isolated, and parents will be asked to pick the child up.

Please keep your child home if he/she:

- has not been free of fever, diarrhea, vomiting for at least 24 hours**
- has started taking antibiotics in the last 48 hours**
- has a cold that is less than 4 days old**
- has a heavy nasal discharge**
- has a constant cough**
- is fussy, cranky or generally not herself/himself**
- feels overly tired or lethargic**
- has symptoms of a possible communicable disease (sniffles, red eyes, sore throat, headache, abdominal pain, fever).**

If a child accidentally gets injured while at school, the staff will administer necessary first aid and immediately contact the parent. **This is one reason keeping up-to-date emergency numbers is so important.** If necessary, the staff will obtain emergency medical care at your expense.

Medication of any kind will not be dispensed by our staff. If your child requires a medication during the school day, you may come to school to dispense it.

FIELD TRIPS

Occasionally the four-year old classes may plan to go on a field trip. Most field trips would be in the neighborhood, and we would walk. If your child's class will be going, teachers will notify you 1-2 weeks in advance. Three-year old classes do NOT go on driving field trips.

NOTE: Brush Creek Nursery School transports children according to current California laws.

NEWSLETTER

Every month the school sends out a newsletter to all parents telling about upcoming events, holiday closings, classroom activities and more. We strongly encourage everyone to read the newsletter to keep informed.

SEE SAW BOOKS

Once a month, the school offers parents the opportunity to order children's paperback books through the See Saw Book Club. Book Club order forms are attached to the monthly newsletter. Return them to school along with a check (no cash accepted), made out to Scholastic (not Brush Creek). In approximately 2 weeks, books arrive.

THE CHRISTOPHER ROWE MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Renamed in 2012 after the tragic hit and run death of a 4-year-old Brush Creek student, Christopher Rowe Memorial Scholarships are available by application. The scholarships are set up as a fund. A scholarship committee determines how to disperse the scholarship funds for the school year. Scholarships generally cover between 50-75% of tuition. Applications can be obtained in the office or on our website.

PARENT INFORMATION CENTER

Located by the fireplace in the front class is our Parent Info Center. All books may be checked out by parents for 1-2 weeks. Books cover such subjects as nutrition, art, science, language, prereading and prewriting, behavior or more. All books belong to the staff or the school and consequently are used frequently. Please help yourselves but remember to return as soon as you're finished. The Parent Bulletin Board located outside the front door will also have helpful information pertaining to parenting.

EARLY/AFTER CARE REMINDERS

Children using early/after care will need to bring in a crib sheet with their name written on it. Regular contract Early/After Care users will be given a canvas bag to keep all resting items in. You are asked to take sheets home weekly for laundering. More information regarding early/after care will be given out at Orientation.

SUGGESTIONS/COMPLAINTS

Comments and suggestions are always welcome. Should you have any for us, please write them down and put them in the tuition box or talk to a staff member. BCNS is licensed by the State Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing, telephone 576-2210. Parents have the right to call or write the licensing agency if fault is found in operation of the program or treatment of their child. Community Care Licensing has the authority to interview children or staff and to inspect and audit facility records without prior consent. They also have the authority to observe the physical condition of a child related to child abuse reporting. Our license number is 490 105414.

TAX IDENTIFICATION NUMBER

The tax identification number for Brush Creek Nursery School is 94-2297008.

You can email us at: bcns@brushcreeknurseryschool.org or
nsbrushcreek@sbcglobal.net

Our web page is: www.brushcreeknurseryschool.org