**Barbara M. Tufts Cooperative Pre-School**

**1558 South County Trail**

**East Greenwich, R.I. 02818**

**Phone: 885-2132 E-Mail:** [**barbaramtufts@gmail.com**](mailto:barbaramtufts@gmail.com) **Website:** [**www.barbaramtufts.org**](http://www.barbaramtufts.org/)

**Parent Handbook 2019-2020**

Welcome to the Co-op Pre-School! We look forward to a great year of learning adventures with your children and you. Please use this parent handbook as a resource as we work together as a team this year to give your children a high quality pre-school experience that will serve as a door to their future educational journeys.

**Mission Statement**

The Barbara M. Tufts Preschool was established as an ecumenical venture of the East Greenwich faith communities. Our goal from the start has been to provide a developmentally appropriate, high quality preschool experience with openness to each child’s individuality; without regard to gender, family origins, economic situation, or religious affiliation.

In keeping with the original vision, the East Greenwich United Methodist Church provides classroom space at no cost to the school, so that we may offer tuition on a sliding scale and no child is ever denied access for financial reasons. We are a Bright Star rated 501 C3 cooperative preschool working together with families to provide opportunities for children to make choices, solve problems, build relationships, and celebrate their individuality.

A day at the BMTCP finds children exploring a carefully planned environment, reflecting their interests. We provide a well-rounded program for three, four, and five year olds, based on the Rhode Island Early Learning and Developmental Standards (RIELDS). Experiences and materials nurture cognitive growth, emotional well-being, fine and gross motor skills, language development, literacy, math, science and social studies, creative arts as well as self-care skills. At the BMTCP we strive to respond to the individual needs and interests of each child. Our program offers opportunities for your child to make choices and decisions while learning through play based developmentally appropriate activities. Parents are a child’s best teacher and an integral part of our team. Working together with their child’s teacher, other parents and volunteering on a monthly basis in our classrooms to provide each child with the best possible preschool experience.

**Staff**

**Education Coordinator/Director**: Lisa Wesson 524-7414 [lw154@cox.net](mailto:lw154@cox.net)

**Office Administrator:** Heather Donoyan 885-2132 [barbaramtufts@gmail.com](mailto:barbaramtufts@gmail.com)

**Head Teachers:** Lisa Wesson (3’s) 524-7414 lw154@cox.net

Heather Bristol (Fall Fives) 575-8364 hogan\_\_bristol@yahoo.com

Monique Rosiello (4’s) 323-4396 morosiello@yahoo.com

**Classroom Assistants:**

**Threes:** Ms. Marilyn (Rodriguez) & Ms. Kelly (Johnson)

**Fall Fives:** Ms. Trish (Murray); Ms. Kelly (lunch), & Ms. Kate (Lowell, Wednesdays)

**Fours:** Ms. Hannah (Henry Haas) & Ms. Nanny (Ann Marie Suffeletto)

**Morning Class Orientation Days**

**Week of September 9, 2019**

**Monday and Tuesday (September 9 &10) families will choose one hour to attend**

**Either 9:00-10:00 or 10:30-11:30 (coffee and muffins will be available for parents)**

**Wednesday, Thursday & Friday (September 11, 12, &13) the whole class attends for two hours each day, 9:00-11:00**

**Regular school hours begin September 16th they are 9:00-11:30.**

**Fall Five Class**

**Classes will begin on Monday; September 9, 2019 school hours are 9:00-1:00.**

**Afternoon Fall Five classes meet regularly Monday-Thursday 9:00-1:00**

**Lunch Bunch** Lunch Bunch will begin on Monday, September 16, 2019. Sign-up notebook is located in the office; the cost is $10 per day and must be paid in cash at the time of sign-up. There is a limited amount of children allowed per day, so please be sure to sign-up ahead of time to ensure space availability. Lunch Bunch meets from 11:30-1:00, Monday-Thursday, children are asked to bring a NUT FREE lunch and a drink. Lunch Bunch provides an extra hour and a half of fun and socialization with peers.

**Orientation:** Families are encouraged to tour our school before enrolling; children are welcome to visit in the spring prior to their enrollment on a drop in basis with their families. Classroom teachers will call families sometime in August to arrange a home visit prior to the start of the school year. Teachers will go over any paperwork and policies with families at that time; visits will last no more than 30 minutes. Please print forms from the school website www. Barbaramtufts.org and fill them out prior to your appointment. We find home visits make the transition to preschool easier for your child, and want to do everything we can to make a smooth start for all of you. Parents are encouraged to attend an open house and meeting the week prior to the start of school. This year the meeting will be held on Thursday, September 5, 2019 at 7pm in Fellowship Hall at the church. Formal staff introductions will be made, school policies will be reviewed and any lingering questions will be answered. Parents will have an opportunity to meet other families, walk through classrooms, and network.

**Arrival: Each day upon arrival at school please take your child into the bathroom and wash their hands in accordance with DCYF regulations.** We ask that you please accompany your child into the classroom and into their teacher’s care. We cannot be responsible for children dropped off outside the classroom, or left in a classroom before teachers arrive. You will need to sign your child (full signature) in at arrival and out at pick up. If someone other than yourself is transporting your child please let your child’s teacher know in advance in writing. They will be expected to show a picture ID when they arrive and must be listed on your emergency form. A staff member will be at the door beginning at 8:50, 11:20, 12:50, to let families in and out for drop off and pick up. The door remains locked at all times please ring the bell to gain admission after these hours.

**Late Policy:** Parents and caregivers are expected to pick up their children in a timely manner. We understand emergencies happen, and at times circumstances are such that you may be late picking up your child. We ask that you please call school and let us know you are running late. If we do not receive a call or this becomes a chronic problem, there will be a $5 charge for each 15 minutes you are late, beginning at 11:35 or 1:05. Lunch Bunch attendees from morning classes will be picked up by a teacher for lunch bunch, and afternoon children will be brought to class after lunch bunch. Parents need to drop off and pick up Lunch Bunch children in a timely manner as staff needs to report to their afternoon classes promptly, and cannot leave morning classes early.

**Classroom Supervision:** Student/Teacher ratios follow DCYF regulations and are posted in each classroom according to age group. Parent volunteers are not considered part of the ratio, but as a cooperative we count on your help in the classroom. DCYF maximum Staff/Child Ratios Preschool 3; 1:9 max group size 18; Preschool 4; 1:10 max group size 20; Preschool; 5-6 1:12 max group size 24.

**Daily Schedule:** Routine and predictability are important as children learn to navigate life. At the BMTCP free choice is available through a carefully structured morning schedule.

All classes follow a daily schedule in one classroom, with time for outside activities on our playground or the church grounds. The daily schedule is posted in the classroom. During inclement weather the block room will be used for play. Each classroom includes centers that enhance our curriculum and are structured around the RIELDS. Dramatic play, art, fine and sensory motor activities, math, writing, book nook, science, and block centers have all been carefully arranged within each classroom. Our playground is located right outside our building. We often take nature walks around the grounds as a part of our nature’s classroom activities.

**Clothing:** Please send your children to school in clothes which are comfortable and appropriate for crawling, climbing, painting, pasting and getting messy. Crocs and flip flops while fashionable are not safe for outdoor play. We supply smocks for messy activities and use washable supplies but sometime even these products stain clothes. Please label your child’s outerwear with name. When weather permits we go outdoors, so please dress your child with the weather in mind. Hats and mittens are a must during cold weather months. Hats will not be provided due to DCYF regulations.

**School Cancellations:** Any school cancellation notices will be listed with the State of R.I. Broadcasters Association. Look for the Barbara M. Tufts Cooperative Preschool on broadcasters closing notices. Make up days are at the discretion of the Board of Directors and the Education Coordinator. As always we ask you to use your own judgment, if you feel roads are unsafe then please keep your child home, your family’s safety is what is most important.

**Registration:** Registration for in house families is held the January before the next school year. Once we have families who are currently attending or whose children have attended in the past registered we will move on to new families. There is a $200 non refundable/nontransferable registration fee required at the time of registration. Once you have your tuition contract finalized $150 of this fee will be credited to your account towards your child’s tuition.

**Tuition:** Tuition at the BMTCP is on a sliding scale. It is determined by income and individual circumstances. Proof of income in the form of your current tax return is required, unless you opt to pay full tuition. This information is kept strictly confidential, it is between you and the school administrator, no other staff or families have access to any financial information. Any family who is not paying full tuition is in fact receiving a scholarship, this differs by family and economic situations please respect this confidentiality. We ask that you keep your tuition information between your family and the school administrator. This must be brought to the Office Administrator by the first week of school, if it wasn’t calculated at the time of registration. Total tuition for the year is your weekly tuition x 34 weeks. Tuition paid in full receives a 5% discount. We offer a 10% discount if you have more than one child enrolled in school. Even if your child is absent payment is required, school vacation weeks are not included in the 34 weeks. Tuition is due the first week of every month. The sliding scale provides scholarships to families who need it. We provide these scholarships through the generosity of the East Greenwich United Methodist Church, parent help, and various fund raisers held throughout the year, the main event being our annual May Fair. Tuition that is not paid in full by the end of the school year will be subject to collection proceeding unless arrangements for payment are made with the office administrator for a definite payment schedule. Returning families who are not making regular payments and have unpaid balances will not be permitted to register for the following school year. If your check is returned by the bank for insufficient funds you are responsible for paying any banking fees assessed. School policy requires that after two returned checks families must make future payments in cash or by certified bank check.

**Withdrawing:** At times due to relocation or a change in life circumstances, families may need to leave school before the end of the year. We certainly understand but require that you please notify our office administrator 30 days in advance of leaving. This ensures transition for your child and his/her peers can be a smooth one, and any clerical concerns can be taken care of before your departure.

**Forms: *All state physical forms (from your pediatrician’s office) and emergency forms MUST be on file the first day of school.*** All other forms must be returned to your child’s teacher at the time of home visit or by the first week of school. All necessary forms may be found on our website [www.barbaramtufts.org](http://www.barbaramtufts.org/). Back ground check forms must be filled out, notarized and returned with a $10 fee payable in cash or check payable to BMTCP, these will be sent in to DCYF for processing. Home visits are a great opportunity to turn in forms.

**Telephone Messages:** The school phone number is 885-2132. If it is important for you to reach us during school hours, please call and leave a message with the Office Administrator. If your child will be absent, please call prior to class starting.

**Family Communication:** A parent bulletin board and resource notebook are located in the hallway. Information is also located on classroom clipboards and parent snack sign up bulletin boards located in your child’s classroom. A weekly school newsletter will be e-mailed to you on Sunday evenings. If you are not receiving these e-mails please speak to the office, and we will ensure your e-mail is correct on our list. The school also has a Facebook page with information, and you can always visit our website [www.barbaramtufts.org](http://www.barbaramtufts.org/) for news. Formal parent teacher conferences are scheduled twice a year, if you would like to address something with your child’s teacher at any time please e-mail them or request a time outside of classrooms hours to talk. Communication is our top priority, and key to your child’s having a successful year at the BMTCP.

**Conferences:** We schedule two formal conferences with parents during the school year. This year conference days will be Monday, November 25, 2019 and Thursday April 9, 2019. The first will be an informal time to talk about how your child is adapting to the classroom and answer any questions you may have. The second will be a more formal conference; assessments of your child’s progress will be discussed. Classes will not meet on conference days. Your child’s teacher will post sign-ups for a 15 minute time slot prior to conference day. If you have a need for a conference before then please arrange this with your child’s teacher. Children, parents and teachers reap the benefits of good communication, so please feel free to reach out via e-mail or phone call at any time during the year.

**Health and Safety:** Young children who are sick are often quite contagious. When your child is sick, please consider all the other children and adults at school. Although we know your child will be disappointed, especially if he/she is feeling better, please keep your child home from school for twenty-four hours after a fever breaks, and vomiting or diarrhea stop. Please call school and let the office know if your child is ill. In the case of a communicable disease i.e., chicken pox, strep throat or head lice, it is our responsibility to let families know that other children in the class have these illnesses.

If your child becomes ill during the school day they will need to be picked up as soon as possible. We will make every effort to reach a parent first; if we are unsuccessful we will call the emergency number you have listed. Children who become ill will be kept in a quiet area of the office with a staff member until someone arrives to pick them up. In the case of an emergency we will call 911, as well as you, and a trained staff member will administer first aid or CPR until EMT’s arrive.

R.I. State Law Regarding Child Abuse and Neglect, Rhode Island requires that “any suspected case of child abuse and/ or neglect must be reported to the Department of Children Youth and Families by calling 1-800-RI-CHILD.” If the staff at the BMTCP has any reason to believe that a child is being or has been abused or neglected, we will, as required by law, report the information to DCYF.

R.I. law states that children under the age of 7 should not be left alone in a car or elsewhere, and children also must use appropriate car seats.

There is no smoking allowed anywhere on the school grounds, including the parking lot. This will be strictly enforced for the health and safety of all.

Staff will not give medicine to children when in school, with the exception of children who have severe allergies and have a clearly labeled prescription for an epi-pen with explicit instructions for use provided by their physician. Benadryl may also be administered under these circumstances. All staff are required to learn proper use of an epi pen with a practice injector. Epi pens will be stored in a safe clearly labeled container in the room the child has snack in. An allergy action form with the child’s picture, known allergens, and emergency procedure if the child comes in contact with an allergen will be located in the snack cupboard and in the child’s file in the office.

In the rare case of custody disputes involving restraining orders, please remember that all current court documents must be given promptly to the office administrator, and the child’s classroom teacher needs to be notified. Legally we need to be in possession of the documents so that we may follow the court order. We reserve the right to make decisions concerning custody disputes based on the safety of all the children attending school.

**Curriculum:** The curriculum at the BMTCP is literacy and theme based planned in accordance to the RIELDS. It is developed with the interests of the children in mind. Learning opportunities through play are created with the Rhode Island Early Learning Developmental Standards as a framework. The nine domains of the RIELDS are physical and motor development; social and emotional development; language; literacy; cognitive development; mathematics; science; social studies; and creative arts. Activities are woven into the curriculum with particular attention to children’s developmental levels. We seek to build self- esteem through communication, planning, responsibility, problem-solving, participation, following directions, imagination and sharing within the group. Children develop skills through collaboration, compromise, self-expression, and respect for each other through group dialogue. Open ended activities and materials are available to allow children to work at their own pace, to make choices independently and cooperatively in both small and large groups.

**Behavior and Classroom Management:** BMTCP is a preschool devoted to the healthy development of the whole child. We regard challenge, conflict and disagreement as an appropriate component of child development. At BMTCP, positive verbal reinforcement and role modeling is used to encourage appropriate behavior. Reinforcing a child’s positive self-image through praise encourages good decision making and serves as a good example for other children in the class to follow. Children are encouraged to use their own words to work out problems with their peers, with teacher guidance when necessary. Role-playing allows children to understand how others may be feeling. Redirection serves as a positive way to diffuse a negative situation. If an issue persists, a child is taken away from the problem, not as a time out, but rather as a time to calm down, regroup, and rethink their decisions. When the child is ready he/she may rejoin the group with appropriate behavior. Corporal punishment is not tolerated and is grounds for immediate staff dismissal. Under no circumstances do we associate consequences with food, playground time or toileting.

If a child is having repeated difficulties with certain behaviors that are disruptive to or endangering other children in the class, a conference will be held with the family. Families will be asked to provide suggestions for behavior modifications based on their experiences at home. Working together as a team teachers and families will come up with a plan of action to help the child with their difficult behavior.

**Family Classroom Volunteers:** Families are a vital part of the BMTCP experience! At the co-op you can really share in your child’s preschool experience. Coming to school is a big step for your child; family presence in the classroom helps to ease that transition and to keep you informed as to what your child experiences at school. Calendars for volunteer signups are posted on classroom bulletin boards. Classroom volunteers are required to have a DCYF background check on file at school for the safety of all.

Parents or a family member usually work in the classroom once a month or more depending on classroom enrollment, and number of children the family has enrolled. If you are unable to help on your scheduled day, please try to find another family to take your place. Often parents are able to switch days. A school directory will be sent home in the early fall.

On your day to volunteer, follow your child’s lead. It is his/ her special day with you. If your child is willing to share you there are lots of small ways you can help your classroom teacher. Help children with smocks, writing names on their papers, helping them to find their cubbies, reading books, building with blocks or creating with play dough. We hope you enjoy your time in the classroom. **Cell phones and drinks of any kind are not permitted in the class room.** To ensure privacy, picture taking, with the exception of a child’s birthday, taking pictures is not permitted at school. Teachers have cameras for school use only to take photos for your child’s portfolio.

**Due to DCYF regulations concerning maximum capacity of children in each classroom we will no longer be able to allow siblings to attend on family volunteer days.**

**Snack:** On the day you volunteer in the classroom, we ask that you bring snack for the whole class. Please provide a half gallon of milk (water is always available) along with a nutritious snack. Please refer to the list of healthy snacks you will be receiving for options. We are a NUT FREE school; please do not bring any NUT products. Families of children with allergy need to give their child’s teacher a food action plan. Cups and napkins are provided.

**Birthdays:** We celebrate birthdays with a special snack brought by the birthday child. Families will want to sign-up for a special day on or close to your child’s birthday. During snack, we light a candle and all join in singing Happy Birthday! If your child’s birthday falls during summer months or school vacations, please plan a date with your child’s teacher so we can celebrate.

**Parties:** This year due to the parking lot being leased out by the church our Halloween celebration is yet to be determined. We will announce our plans in early October. Thank you for your patience with parking our hope is to have the parking lot back by early December.

In December, an all school party with entertainment is scheduled the Friday morning before the holiday break. Sign-ups for food and paper goods will be posted on class clipboards or through Sign Up Genius well in advance.

**Paper Good of the Month:** In order to keep expenses down and tuition affordable we have established a paper good of the month donation. Every month you will get an e-mail requesting a donation of some type of paper good. Some months we are in need of paper towel, tissues, or 5 oz. cups. We ask every family to donate a package of the paper good requested each month.

**Field Trips:** We take a number of field trips during the year to enhance our curriculum. Field trips will be announced in our weekly newsletters. Parent chaperones will be needed, but bus chaperones are usually limited, parents are always invited to drive to our destinations. We plan trips for different days of the week so each child will have the opportunity to attend at least one trip, and very often include the whole school, please refer to notices for exact trip details. Permission slips with posted additional fees for admission and transportation will be distributed prior to the trip, please return on or before the date listed.

**Fundraisers:** While we host a variety of fundraisers throughout the year, May Fair is our largest fund raiser, which is always held on the first Sunday in May. **We require every family to participate in this event**, which runs from 11-3 and includes games, pony rides, entertainment, food, etc. There are many ways to volunteer for this awesome event. Every class will be responsible for planning one fund raiser during the school year, we appreciate everyone participating in these fund raisers but it is not required.

**Scholastic Books:** This book club offers great books at lower than bookstore prices. Order forms will be placed in your child’s cubby monthly. If you wish to order books, watch for the due date which will be included in the weekly newsletters. You may order on line (codes will be provided) or fill out order forms clearly, with your child’s name and teachers name clearly printed on the form. Payment is expected at the time you order either in cash or one check for all orders payable to BMTCP.

**Parent Advisory Committee:** If you are interested in serving on a parent advisory committee there will be a sign up available at the parent meeting on September 5. Ideally a couple of family representatives from each class will meet quarterly with staff representatives to discuss any ideas, concerns, or plans for upcoming events. The discussions will be shared with the rest of the school through minutes taken by a designated corresponding secretary for the group. If you have any questions please speak with Ms. Lisa at the meeting.

**Family Programs:** Throughout the year we have events for parents and for families. Our first event is always a parent pot luck which is held in October. This is a dinner for parents only, giving everyone a chance to socialize and meet other parents at school. In the winter we have a family night, some years an ice cream social others a dinner. In the spring we host an art night featuring the children’s art work. We also have Texas Roadhouse and other restaurant nights several times a year.

**Program Evaluations:** Towards the end of the school year we have an on-line survey available for parents to provide us with feedback which allows us to plan and grow for the future. **If at any time during the year you have suggestions, thoughts or concerns please speak with your child’s classroom teacher, or Miss Lisa our education coordinator.**