

Children's School at Carnegie Mellon University

Job Description for the Undergraduates

August 2012

Students working at The Children's School will be extra hands for the teachers in exchange for pay (student employees) and/or experience relevant to the students' program of study (typically psychology for interns and education for student teachers) or future career plans.

****Speak and behave in a professional manner with staff, children, parents, university partners, visitors, service people, et cetera, at all times.**

*Model dress after the staff members. Choose clothes that are comfortable and professional. Working with young children may mean stains, running, stretching, and bending. **Avoid revealing clothing** (e.g., no bare midriff tops, short skirts, or short shorts) and items with slogans or characters. Closed-toe shoes are highly recommended. **Please refrain from eating and drinking in the classroom, other than at snack or lunch times with the children. Never use cell phones while on duty.***

****Strive to be a team player, taking initiative to help with tasks, share space and materials, offer support and constructive critique, etc. for the benefit of the whole staff.**

****Follow the school and university policies and procedures carefully and with attention to timeliness.**

****Be prepared to flexibly adapt to the diverse situations that arise in early childhood education, particularly in a university lab school.**

****Take direction from the supervising teacher (though taking initiative to complete routine tasks without being asked and offering to play additional roles are highly valued). Be sure to ask questions if you are uncertain what to do.**

[Interns - observed & evaluated by the Director, with input from the teachers]

[Student Employees - observed & evaluated by the Educational Administrative Team, with input from the teachers]

[Student Teachers - observed & evaluated by the Supervising Teacher, with input from the other teachers and the Director]

Teachers provide input about the support staff in their classrooms via the attached form.

Task Categories (** indicates highest priority)

****Teachers**

serve as assistant as described above

****Children**

know and be known

treat children in developmentally appropriate ways

serve all children without bias or favoritism

greet children within the school

monitor children already greeted or waiting for dismissal

address children as "friends" rather than by "boys and girls"

focus comments on children's actions and interactions rather than appearance, clothing, or accessories

- help with dressing, toileting, diaper changing, etc.
- help set up and distribute snack
- monitor children on playground, while taking walks, etc.

Since the goal is to foster children's independence and to facilitate their engagement in activities, adults at the Children's School refrain from having children sit in our laps, from playing with hair, clothing, or jewelry, and any other behaviors that encourage them to focus an inappropriate amount of attention on us.

Families

- know and be known

To protect both the undergraduate and the school, please refer ALL questions regarding individual children, school policies, etc. to a teacher or administrator. Feel free to answer simple procedural questions (e.g., where should I put x, etc.). Also, for the same reasons, do not accept babysitting jobs with Children's School families.

Program

- prepare materials for bulletin boards and activities (indoor and outdoor)
- setup bulletin boards and classroom activities
- do simple computer work, such as preparing nametags, printing photos, etc.
- lead activities with individual children, small groups, and/or large groups as appropriate and under the supervision of a teacher (i.e., student teachers typically do more than student employees)
- read stories to children
- cleanup from activities (indoor and outdoor)

Special Events

- setup and cleanup (decoration hanging, table covering, furniture moving, etc.)
- setup and cleanup food
- supervise activities and/or playground

Associate Teachers

- offer assistance if time permits

****Administrative Coordinator**

- sign in and out / complete time card
- notify in case of absence / schedule change
- carry messages / distribute mail to student lockers

Office Suite

- type, copy, laminate, bind, etc. and other tasks as requested

Public Relations

- model school philosophy (every staff member is an advertisement)

Space

- light cleaning (e.g., tables, paintbrushes, sinks, etc.)
- student employees may be asked to do heavier cleaning, including pet cages

Children's School Standards (6.A.04 B)

There are many responsibilities related to being involved in the educational process. What follows are essential guidelines to help you meet them.

Be Professional.

Keep confidential any discussions concerning the case of a specific child. The school staff trusts you to use such information and observations only to work more effectively with that child. Never discuss students with parents or in any situation other than with that child's teacher. **Please remember that you have signed a confidentiality agreement that is kept on file at the Children's School.**

Choose clothes that are comfortable and professional. Working with young children may mean stains, running, stretching, and bending. **Avoid revealing clothing** (e.g., no bare midriff tops or short skirts) and items with slogans or characters. Shoes should be close-toed. No high heels.

Refrain from drinking or eating in the classroom except during the children's designated snack or lunch times. Please leave coffee cups and other drink containers in the office.

Cell phones should not be used during classroom time. If there is a situation where you need to use your cell phone, please let the teacher know and leave the classroom.

Be a Model.

You are in our school as an adult model, not a playmate. If your behavior is calm and controlled and your tone of voice quiet and pleasant, the children's will be too. Provide a consistent, fair model of behavior for children even when they are moody. A pleasant word from you may often change the direction of a situation. Children depend on you to be helpful, courteous and sincere.

Be Responsible.

Sign the log book in the school office each day; arrive and leave the school promptly as scheduled; call 268-2199 before classes begin if you will be absent. Remember to sign out when you leave.

Be Aware.

Orient yourself to follow the policies and procedures of the school.

• Basic Behavior Expectations at the Children's School

Knowing and meeting expectations encourages **independent** action and fosters **self-esteem**.

Signals:

Lights Off means Stop, Look and Listen

Bell means Clean Up and Find the Teacher

School Rules:

Be a kind friend.

Listen the first time.

Stay in your own space.

Use your words.

Use inside voices.

Use walking feet.

Use things appropriately.

Follow the routine.

Put everything in its place.

The teachers and students in each class will discuss behavior expectations throughout the year. As appropriate, **each class will add specific examples** relating to each of the items listed above. For example, for “Be a kind friend,” one year a 4’s class added “share”, the Kindergartners added “respect the rights of others,” and the 3’s specified “if you put down your toy and move on to something else, another friend can use it.”

• **Boundaries Around and Within the School**

1. The office and main hallway are not a play areas.
2. The observation booth is only for adult usage.
3. The office and kitchen are adult supervised areas only.
4. Children must stay within sight of adults.
5. Children must be accompanied by a teacher to leave the school and playground.

Recognize that teachers have a variety of teaching styles and work successfully in different ways. In the beginning, you may be very apprehensive about working with children (and teachers); but as you have new experiences with the children, your confidence will grow.

Be Open.

Take your direction from the teachers. Accept criticism as constructive, realizing that the teacher is trying to assist you in developing procedures and techniques for working with children.

Develop a willing attitude as you assume new and greater responsibilities. Dealing with human beings, you will encounter unforeseen situations and problems that may call for great effort on your part to find solutions.

As you gain experience in the classroom, teachers are open to students taking initiative in certain activities and daily routines. Be proactive with daily tasks and activities in the classroom.

Working With Young Children

Ways With Children* - In Speech

1. Use your voice as a teaching tool (calm, moderate tones).
2. Use a tone of voice that will help the child feel confident and reassured, not afraid or guilty or ashamed.
3. Speak in a very matter of fact manner and avoid baby talk with children.
4. Make an effort to speak in simple sentences but in a regular tone of voice.
5. Make suggestions or state directions in a positive rather than a negative form. Example: "Park your tricycle here." - rather than "No, don't do it that way."
6. Give children a choice only when you intend to leave the situation up to them; do not offer the child a choice when there is no choice. For example: "It's your turn to play this game" instead of "Do you want to play this game?" "You may choose to do xxx or yyy."
7. Redirecting the child is likely to be most effective when it is consistent with the child's own motives or interests.
8. When young children are drawing, it is better to ask "Would you like to tell me something about your drawing?" than "What is it?" since children may not always know what it is themselves.
9. Avoid trying to motivate a child by making comparisons between the child and another or by encouraging competition.
10. If a child is tattling on another, respond with, "Thank you for telling me" and then deal with the situation as appropriate. That phrase is also helpful when a child is relating a story to you but you aren't sure you understand.

Ways With Children* - In Action

1. Be alert to the total situation in the classroom.
2. Be calm, not impulsive. Do not roughhouse with the children.
3. Encourage children to handle all materials with care and stress the importance of completing tasks.
4. Give the child the minimum of help in order that he/she may have the maximum chance to grow in independence.
5. Make your suggestions effective by reinforcing them when necessary.
6. When limits are necessary, they should be clearly defined and consistently maintained.

*Extracted from pages 313-331 of *The Nursery School* by Katherine Read, published by W. B. Saunders Co., Philadelphia, 1971. Permission to reprint granted by the publisher.

Guidelines for Supervising Play (6.A.04 B)

- When supervising all types of play, be aware of what every child is doing each minute. Watch the quality of play and do not let it disintegrate. Sometimes a suggestion at just the right time to redirect the play can prevent the situation from getting out of control. When problems do arise, try not to become tense or worried. The children will relate to you better if you are relaxed and good-natured, but firm in your requests.
- Avoid engaging in conversation with other assistants, observers, teachers, or parents while supervising children. If you are assigned to watch an activity, never turn your back on it.
- Keep the group small. If too many children gather in one spot or if they crowd the easels or clay tables, interest some of them in another activity. You might say, "You may have a turn with the clay later. I'll call you when it's your turn. Why don't you use the easel now?" Be sure you keep this promise.
- Children can learn to observe simple rules. Be sure you know the rules your teacher has for indoor and outdoor play and equipment.
- A child does not need to monopolize one piece of equipment indefinitely. Give him/her time to think about relinquishing a piece of equipment by indicating ahead of time that he/she must give it to someone else. You might say, "You may ride the tricycle to the gate and back again, and then it'll be another child's turn, and it will be **your** turn to play in the sandbox."

Specific Rules for Play Areas (6.A.04 B)

- A. Whole School Rules
 1. Lights Out and/or the Quiet Sign means “Stop, Look, and Listen.”
 2. A Closed Sign means that those materials are not available for children’s use.
- B. Safety
 1. With heavy blocks, children may build only as high as they are tall.
 2. Chairs are for sitting only; tables are not for sitting.
- C. Art
 1. Return all art materials and tools to proper places.
 2. Put the child's name, **and date** on the back of paper and articles, if he/she cannot print his/her own name. Please check class lists for proper spelling and print the name and date rather than using cursive.
 3. Cover workspace with newspaper.
 4. Encourage children to wear smocks when painting or doing other messy work, but it is not required.
- D. Water Play
 1. Encourage children to wear smocks when using water, but it is not required.
 2. Keep water in the table.
 3. Only four children may use the water table at any one time.
- E. Sand Table
 1. Keep the sand in the table.
 2. Do not throw sand.
 3. Only six children may use the sand table at one time.
- F. Clean Up Time
 1. All children participate in clean up, with adult facilitation as needed.
 2. Children remain in the area where they were playing until the clean up is completely finished before moving to their next activity.
 3. The water fountain is closed during clean up time.
- G. Outdoors
 1. Adults should remain alert to the events going on around them, even while they are facilitating the children’s play.
 2. Adults should refrain from conversation with other adults so their full attention is on the children.
 3. Children ride tricycles only on the path.
 4. Children can go down the slides feet first and when the other child is completely off the slide. Climbing up the slides is the teacher’s discretion.
 5. The playground equipment is put away at end of the day and the playground is locked.

Strategies for Handling Aggression

1. **Hurdle-Help.** Help the child make transitions from one activity to another. We sometimes get aggression because the child has been too long at one activity. Say, "I have these puzzles at the table" or "Have you seen this book?"
2. **Touch control.** Sometimes a gentle pat or light touch on the shoulder will serve as a reminder to control behavior. If properly timed, this may prevent unmanageable aggression.
3. **Friendly interest.** Try liberally using names, acknowledging activities, and commenting on interactions and achievements, such as saying, "You're doing very well in asking for a turn. That was great the way you worked it out with Johnny."
4. **Omit all moralizing** such as "Now, was that a *nice* thing to do?" Avoid long explanations concerning cause and effect behavior. Use short phrases such as "Use your words.", "Tell your friend what you want.", or "I can't understand you." Long periods of talking it out are seldom productive. You can support the child's understanding by saying, "Look at your friend's face. How do you think your friend feels?"
5. **Signal control.** A verbal reminder or a nod that the behavior is not acceptable may work. Timing is important here. This is a good technique if the child is looking for the limit, but it works only if the child can muster some internal restraint, and if you and he/she have a relationship established.
6. **Planned ignoring.** Here you let the behavior die under its own steam. Use this strategy only if a dangerous situation is not involved.
7. **Positive Reinforcement.** A friendly comment may circumvent a disciplinary crisis.
8. **Timing and pace.** Not every infringement has to be dealt with. The child may be deaf to your pleas when wearing emotions on his/her sleeve. Pick moments when feelings are fairly well intact. You may leave him/her alone during a temper tantrum once you are sure the child is in a safe place.
9. **Face saving.** Don't put either yourself or the child in an impossible situation. Leave the child and yourself a gracious way out; e.g., don't make threats which you can't carry out; extract promises which he/she isn't likely to remember; nor expect things he/she isn't likely to do except by persuasion.
10. **De-fuse your "No."** See that children hear as little anger as possible in your verbal restraint. Don't be confused on this. We expect, even hope, that you will express anger when it's called for and when you feel angry; but if your restraints are always angry ones, you become ineffective. Remember, a simple "no" is more effective than a blast of verbiage.

*Permission requested 7/6/76 from Pacific Oaks College, 714 W. California Blvd., Pasadena, California 91105. Changes made for the Children's School.

Children's School at Carnegie Mellon University **Child Abuse and Neglect Policy (6.A.04 C)**

Prohibited Practices (Child Abuse 10.D.03-04)

If any staff member, family member, volunteer, or other person, while in the vicinity of the Children's School, engages in a practice prohibited by the program, the Director and/or Educational Administrator will take necessary steps to assure that there is no reoccurrence of the practice.

- Corporal or any type of physical punishment is not permitted. This includes hitting, spanking, beating, shaking, pinching, or other measures that produce physical pain. (1.B.09)
- Any form of emotional abuse, including rejecting, terrorizing, isolating, or corrupting a child is not permitted. (1.B.09)
- Any form of public or private humiliation, including threats of physical punishment, is not permitted. (1.B.09)
- Withdrawal or the threat of withdrawal of food, rest, or bathroom opportunities is not permitted. (1.B.10)
- Abusive, profane or derogatory language, including yelling and belittling, is not permitted. (1.B.10)

Reporting Child Abuse (10.D.03-04)

All observations or suspicions of child abuse or neglect will be immediately reported to the child protective services agency no matter where the abuse might have occurred (10.D.03). The Director or an Educational Administrator will call ChildLine at 1-800-932-0313 and/or the Allegheny County CYS at (412) 473-2000 to report suspected abuse or neglect. The Director or an Educational Administrator will follow the direction of the child protective services agency regarding completion of written reports. If the parent or legal guardian of the child is suspected of abuse, the Director or an Educational Administrator will follow the guidance of the child protective agency regarding notification of the parent or legal guardian. Staff who report suspicions of child abuse or neglect are immune from discharge, retaliation, or other disciplinary action for that reason alone, unless there is proof that the report is malicious.

In the case of a staff member who is accused of child abuse (10.D.04), the Director or an Educational Administrator will work directly with the CMU Human Resources Liaison and Legal Consultant to ensure due process and confidentiality for the staff member. A staff member who is accused of child abuse may be suspended or given leave without pay pending investigation of the accusation. Such caregivers may also be removed from the classroom and given a job that does not require interaction with children. The Director or an Educational Administrator will follow the guidance of the University officials regarding notification of the parent or legal guardian of the suspected abused child, as well as communication with parents or legal guardians of other children so that they may share any concerns they have had. However, no accusation or affirmation of guilt will be made until the investigation is complete. Caregivers found guilty of child abuse will be summarily dismissed or relieved of their duties.

Children's School at Carnegie Mellon University
Student Employee Performance Evaluation Form
2012/2013 School Year

Department: Children's School/Psychology

Supervising Teacher: _____

Student: _____

Date: _____

Please indicate the activities in which the student has been engaged most frequently. Check all those items that apply.

- Lead activities with individual children
- Lead activities with small groups
- Help children with dressing, toileting, etc.
- Playground Duty
- Office work (type, copy, laminate materials)
- Prepare materials for bulletin boards and activities
- Cleanup activities
- Other _____

Please rate the student's performance on the following items where appropriate:

	Poor		Excellent			
	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
1. Attendance	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
2. Punctuality	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
3. Take direction from teacher	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
4. Initiative	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
5. Ability to relate to students	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
6. Appropriate Interaction with children	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
7. Flexibility	1	2	3	4	5	n/a

Please use the back of this sheet, if needed, to write any pertinent comments.

Date

Signature of Supervising Teacher

(Teachers complete this form multiple times during a semester and return it to an Educational Administrator for review.)