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Via Nova Children's School

Dear Via Nova Parents and Guardians:

WELCOME TO VIA NOVA CHILDREN'S SCHOOL. We are happy to start a brand new school year with both you and your child. We realize that you, as a parent, are the major source of responsibility for your child's development and education. Therefore, our most important role as teachers and as a Director is to bring about communication and collaboration between the home and our program, and to help you understand and appreciate your child and the current knowledge of early childhood profession in ways that enhance your child's development.

Please feel free to discuss your child's progress with the teachers. We strive to maintain open, ongoing communication between staff and parents where information regarding your child's life at home and school is shared regularly.

Sincerely,

Theresa Magabo

Director

Greta Davis

Assistant Director

ABOUT VIA NOVA CHILDREN'S SCHOOL

Via Nova Children's School is a bilingual Spanish-English preschool for children ages 2-6 years old. We are located at 3032 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Berkeley, CA 94703, right across from the Ashby BART station. Our phone numbers are 510-848-6682 (office) and 848-6687 (classroom). Our email address is vianovapreschool@gmail.com. Hours of care are 8:00 am to 5:30 pm, Monday through Friday. All of our children attend full time, 5 days a week. We do not offer part time care or less than 5 days per week care.

HISTORY

Via Nova was founded in 1994 by the late Ticia Casanova to serve the unmet need for a full-time, high-quality preschool program in our diverse South Berkeley community. The belief that the child's first 5 years are a critical and precious time in the development of a child's self-identity, self-esteem and cognitive growth, shapes our resolve to create a developmentally appropriate learning environment where children learn to value, understand and respect their own cultural heritage along with that of their friends, while actively engaging in investigation. Our gentle approach to conflict resolution along with a keen respect for families' personal and cultural identity are two tenets that guide Via Nova's educational practices.

Our remodeled two-story facility has a new foundation and seismic retrofitting, and meets the state codes for commercial building. A state of the art radiant floor heating system was installed on both floors of the school.

PHILOSOPHY

At Via Nova, we believe that children are endowed with innate knowledge and learning abilities and that social interactions and community play a central role in their learning.

At Via Nova, we respect each child's individuality and we strive to provide a warm and safe environment in which children can fully explore who they are and the world around them. Via Nova's philosophical approach has three major components:

Learning through diversity: Via Nova has an anti-bias approach to education and a strong tradition of family diversity. Our curriculum is designed to help children like and respect themselves and others by becoming aware of our similarities and differences. Via Nova's teachers, school environment, curriculum materials and field trips reflect the diverse community we live in and provide children with a more holistic view of the world.

Learning through play: We believe that children learn the most through individual and cooperative play in a supportive and stimulating environment. At Via Nova, children initiate their own learning by choosing among art, drama, science, conversation, reading and children-inspired teacher-directed activities.

Peaceful problem solving and setting limits: One of our primary goals is to help children develop inner controls and social competency so that they can make appropriate and effective choices about their own behavior. They learn about their emotions and how to talk about their conflicts in a context that supports mutual respect, where older children and teachers serve as role models for younger children. Our problem solving approach is based on setting limits by giving as much responsibility as possible to the children. By setting limits, we avoid making and enforcing arbitrary rules followed by some kind of punishment. Corporal punishment of any kind will never be used by our staff.

OUR EDUCATIONAL APPROACH

At Via Nova, we provide care for children with a rich Spanish/English bilingual curriculum that supports individual growth and development, coupled with group responsibility.

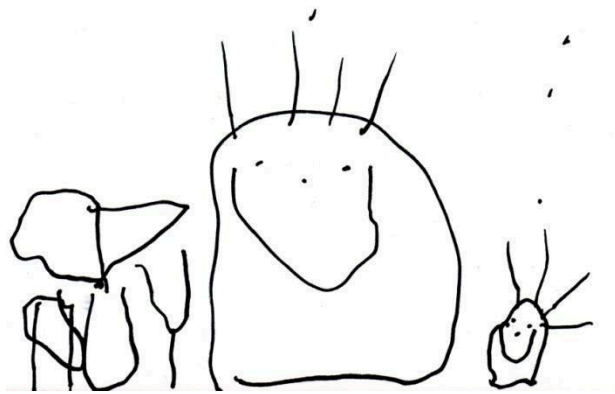
Inspired by the Reggio Emilia Approach and the Project Approach, our inquiry-based projects evolve from a variety of experiences in which the children and teachers may have constructed knowledge together.



We encourage the children to explore, ask, answer, and solve questions and we document their works, their remarks, and their discussions. This simple documentation serves multiple purposes: it allows the children to reflect on their thinking as they move on to new ones and it facilitates better understanding of children's experiences. It also promotes discussion and professional growth among teachers.

At Via Nova, we create an **ACTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**, where space and materials are selected and arranged to promote learning. In each "area of interest" materials are organized so children can get them out easily and put them away independently.

At Via Nova, our **DAILY ROUTINES** give children a sense of control over the events of the day while providing enough flexibility to meet



the ongoing needs of the children. Our program is lightly structured in order to provide blocks of time for child-directed play.

At Via Nova, **CHILD/ADULT INTERACTIONS** matter!

Our teachers emphasize using positive interaction strategies, sharing control with children, focusing on children's strengths and forming authentic relationships with children. We support children's ideas and adopt a problem-solving approach to social conflicts.



At Via Nova, we use **ASSESSMENTS** to track each child's progress. Our teachers use observations and documentations, such as anecdotal and running records, to best support each child's development.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

At Via Nova, we strive to keep everyone as healthy as possible throughout the year, and your child's health is a matter of major importance to us all. Please use your best judgment in assessing your child's health before sending him/her to school. It is especially important to keep your child home from school when symptoms are just beginning.

Illnesses that may occur in children requiring to stay home:

- Fever
- Vomiting/Diarrhea
- Severe congestion
- Ear-ache
- Pink eye or eye discharge - thick mucus or pus draining from the eye
- Head lice or nits (eggs)
- Other common children infectious diseases

Your child may return to school if:

- The child has been fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication.
- The child has been symptom free of vomiting/diarrhea for 24 hours.
- The child is over the cold, but the child still has residual symptoms



- The illness or communicable disease is no longer contagious
- You feel your child is well enough to play outside and participate in group care. We cannot keep a child indoors at outside time

Please notify us regarding any physical difficulties that your child may have, such as visual or auditory problems and allergies.

ACCIDENTS

- In case of accidental injury, we will administer First Aid, we will fill out an accident report to be signed by the parents and returned, and we will inform the parents at pick up time.
- If a child's injury needs medical attention, but it's not an emergency, we will call the child's parents. If a parent cannot be reached, we will call the emergency numbers you have listed on your child's emergency form. Please keep your emergency numbers and any other pertinent information updated since we are not able to take the child to his/her doctor.
- If the injury requires immediate emergency treatment, we will call 911 for an emergency transportation to the hospital. An adult will accompany the child to the hospital and we will call the parent and the child's physician.

MEDICATION

We do not administer medicine to children unless absolutely necessary. All medications, prescription and non prescription, require a signed note from the doctor and a written authorization form to dispense medication signed by the parent. If your child needs Incidental Medical Services such as inhaled medication or Epi-pen, you will need to fill out and hand to the teachers the below forms:

- Parent Consent for Administration of Medication and Medication Chart form.
- Consent/Verification form you have trained the staff in the use of your child's medical device.
- Physician Instruction and Record form.



EARTHQUAKE OR DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

In case of a natural disaster, the top priority of the staff is the physical safety and emotional well being of the children until the children are safely released to their parents or another authorized pick-up person. All staff have current CPR and First-Aid training.

We have emergency supplies located in the outdoor shed as well as a three-day supply of food and water. Each year we recycle our food supply.

We ask that each family bring a three-day supply of non-perishable food and change of clothes, socks, underwear in a gallon Ziploc bag marked with your child's name.

In the event of an emergency, we will evacuate the children as soon as we are safely able to, and to contact you to the best of our ability based on the information you have provided on the Emergency and Natural Disaster forms. Please make sure these are up to date at all times.

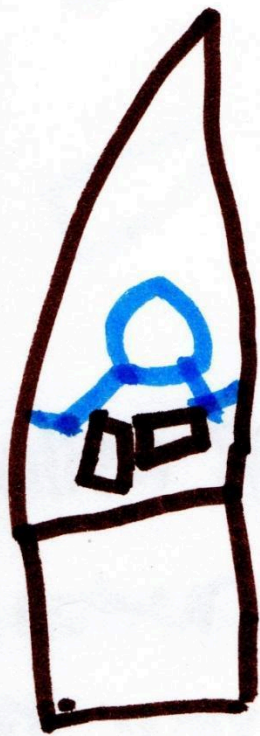
If we need to leave the premises, we will evacuate to the South Berkeley Senior Center, 2939 Ellis St., or if that location is not available, to the open space in Grove Park at the junction of Oregon Street and Martin Luther King Jr. Way, across from the South Berkeley Library and follow instructions from the first responders.

FIRE, EARTHQUAKE and LOCKDOWN DRILLS

Fire drills will be conducted monthly to prepare children for a real fire emergency. Earthquake and lockdown drills will be conducted quarterly.

TOYS AND OBJECTS FROM HOME

In order to keep a safe environment, please bring to school only your child's essential items and please label them. Except for one object that may be needed in the very beginning days of school to help ease transitions, we ask that you leave your child's toys at home.



Please place all items, such as change of clothes and nap lovey, in a tote bag labeled with your child's name. We will reuse the bag to send home your child's art project or soiled change of clothes at the end of the week.

Appropriate comfort objects, such as a doll or stuffed animals, may be brought to school for nap time to be left at school. Please label these items and we will send them home on Fridays to be washed, along with your child's school sheet and blanket.

ARRIVAL AND PICK-UP

Via Nova is open from 8:00am to 5:30pm. Drop off and pick up will be mainly in the yard for the Dragonflies, in the classroom for Grasshoppers and at the front door for the Roly Polies.

- Please check your child's temperature and for any sign of illness before leaving home.
- We will have hand sanitizer for you to use before you are handed the sign-in sheet.
- All children must be signed in and out daily on classroom sign-in sheets by their parents or other drivers. Please sign legibly using both first and last name. No exceptions as this is a legal document.
- Please drive slowly and park safely. **DO NOT DOUBLE-PARK.**
- **Please do not block the neighbor driveway** and do not park in the school's driveway to keep it free for bikes and bike trailers pull-in.
- Please free the curb space for other parents to drop off or pick up their child as soon as you can do so safely.

If you are going to be detained, please call the classroom at **848-6687** immediately so that we can reassure your child. **There is a late pick-up fee of \$1.00 per minute to be paid on the same day by a check to Via Nova.**

No child will be released to a person not authorized by a parent to pick up the child. We must have written authorization for changes in this respect. Space for notes is provided on the sign-in sheet for this purpose. Please ask your pick-up person to be prepared to show proper identification.

SNACKS AND LUNCH

Please bring a morning and afternoon snack and lunch packed in a container easy to sanitize daily. Please restrict snack and lunches to healthy foods, such as yogurt and cheese, fresh or dry fruits and vegetables, dinner leftovers and hard-boiled eggs, sandwiches and bagels, tortillas and pasta, rice and beans, chicken and dry fruit, etc. We ask you to NOT send candy, cookies and other sweets to school. Make sure lunches contain food your child likes in small, easy to open portions.

BIRTHDAYS

We usually celebrate birthdays at afternoon snack time. In the morning, the classmates make a "birthday crown" for the child. We ask the parents to bring a special snack for the child's celebration if they are able. Please discuss it with the teachers in advance so that it can be integrated in the planning. We suggest nutritious muffins or other healthy, low-sugar treats (no frosting please). The teachers will add special songs to make this a special time for your child. Another tradition at Via Nova is for the birthday child to present his/her class with a book signed by the child and inscribed inside the cover "to Via Nova from (child's name) on my (# of years) birthday and dated.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips for the younger groups will focus on simple excursions in the neighborhood or farmers market. Older groups may head further and their field trips may last longer. During our field trips the children will walk or use BART or buses or share rides. Parents are encouraged to volunteer as chaperones and/or shuttle drivers, so that children can be safely escorted and teachers can concentrate on the enrichment activities.



WHAT TO WEAR

Please send your child in sturdy, comfortable clothes that are free from complicated fastenings. Provide clothing that is washable and expect to find some paint, glue, or clay on clothing, even though we provide smocks. Provide your child with sturdy shoes, suitable for running, climbing, etc. Rubber-soled shoes are important for safety in the play area. Sandals, jellies, or party shoes are unsafe and uncomfortable when filled with sand or wood chips.

LABEL ALL OUTER GARMENTS WITH CHILD'S NAME

This includes hats, raincoats, boots, shoes, sweaters, jackets... anything that the child may remove.

EXTRA CLOTHING

Leave a complete set of extra clothing for your child in a cloth shopping bag at school. This will prepare us for toilet accidents, as well water play, spills, etc.

SUNSCREEN

Each child needs to have their own bottle of sunscreen at school, and parents' authorization for dispensing it, if you wish to have it applied. We encourage you to apply sunscreen to your child in the morning at home, and we will reapply in the afternoon on sunny days if authorized.



CREATING A PARENT-TEACHER PARTNERSHIP

DAILY COMMUNICATION

Communication between teachers and parents is essential. On the sign-in sheet there is a space for short notes to/from teachers for everyday communication. You will have an opportunity to check with your child's teacher daily at drop off and pick up, and you may also set a special time to confer with both your child's primary teachers. The teachers will also post a short bulletin near the sign in sheet with the most relevant activities of the day.



EMAIL, PUBLICATIONS, ROSTER, CALENDAR ETC.

Most school's announcements of events will be posted on the Via Nova Google Group. You will be added to our Google Group for important communications just before the new school year. For easy reference, please save the link to our [google drive](#) with important school forms and documents such as the roster and calendar.

PARENT ORIENTATION

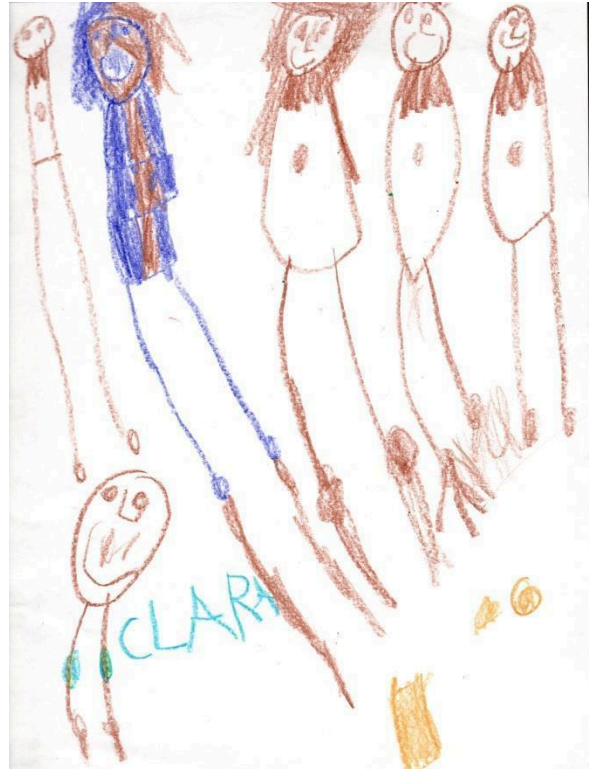
There is one mandatory school-wide parent orientation at the beginning of the school year.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

You may request a conference at any time with your child's teachers regarding issues concerning you or your child. Formal conference days will be held twice a year, in the fall and in the spring.

PARENT EVENTS

Parent Education Programs are planned on pertinent topics, usually concerning child rearing, which are of interest to many parents. These are held in the evening.



PARENT PARTICIPATION

Parents at Via Nova Children's School are considered an intrinsic part of our community and we invite you to involve yourself in our program as an opportunity to build connections with the teaching staff and with other parents. Via Nova encourages parent volunteering that respects parents' limited time and energy and that makes the most of all of our skills. To provide our children with the best education and environment possible, parents are expected to volunteer. This may include doing a special project, sharing skills, fundraisers, workshops and participating on committees.

Examples of volunteer hours may include:

- Individual parent workdays through the year
- Winter holiday and staff appreciation celebration in December
- Annual fundraisings events
- Classroom field trips
- Special projects
- Individual projects such as working on the yearbook, construction projects, arranging or coordinating events etc.



COMMITTEES AND COORDINATORS

Depending on your interests, availability and skills, your family can sign up for the following:

- **Joining a Committee** - Participate in the planning process and help organize related activities
- **Coordinating a Project** - Take a lead role in projects identified by the preschool director. The job of a coordinator is not to do all the needed tasks but to orchestrate the effort.
- **Participate in a project** - Help with projects and tasks organized by the committees and coordinators. This means you are not a planner, but you help get the job done (i.e. school clean-up, yard sale etc.)

Role of Committees and Committee Descriptions

The following committees meet regularly with the preschool director to fulfill critical functions that help the school run smoothly:

Advisory Committees: Provides the director with parent input and feedback on school policies and events, and makes suggestions to improve the program. The committees need representation from each class.

Communications Committee: Facilitates communication on issues important to the school community via email (Google Group) and newsletters. The committee maintains the parent list-server.

Social Committee: Plans and organizes social activities including the Annual Winter Party, school picnics, potlucks, camping trips, and teachers recognition activities.

Fundraising Committee: Plans and organizes events and activities to raise money to fund school projects and classroom enrichments. Annual fundraising events include auctions/raffle, yearbook sale, etc.



Earthquake Committee: Organizes emergency preparedness at the school by collecting emergency supplies for each child and the school.

Facility Committee: Orchestrates parent work days and maintains a list of improvement projects. Works with the preschool director to determine priorities and needs of the school and coordinates volunteers.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES

Children who are 2-5 years of age are eligible to enroll at Via Nova Children's School. Admission requirements are as follows:

1. Child must be 2 years old to be admitted into the program. Rolling Registration is based on availability.
2. Our program is open to all families and children regardless of race, color, creed, national origins, or sex. We will however, make an effort to balance the children by sex and age in an effort to promote friendships.
3. We give enrollment priority to the following applicants: a) Children of the staff, b) Siblings of current and former Via Nova students, c) Friends and families of the Via Nova community and families of our neighboring communities.
4. Prior to submitting an enrollment application, we ask all prospective families to tour the school with your child to ensure the program is a good fit for the child and family. Tours are individually scheduled. Please bring your child!
5. Once the classes are filled, the child's name will be placed on a waitlist to fill vacancies as they occur, with a concern for maintaining gender, age and diversity balance.

REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES

Following your decision to place your child in Via Nova Children's School's program, you will submit an Enrollment Application. Registration requirements are as follow:

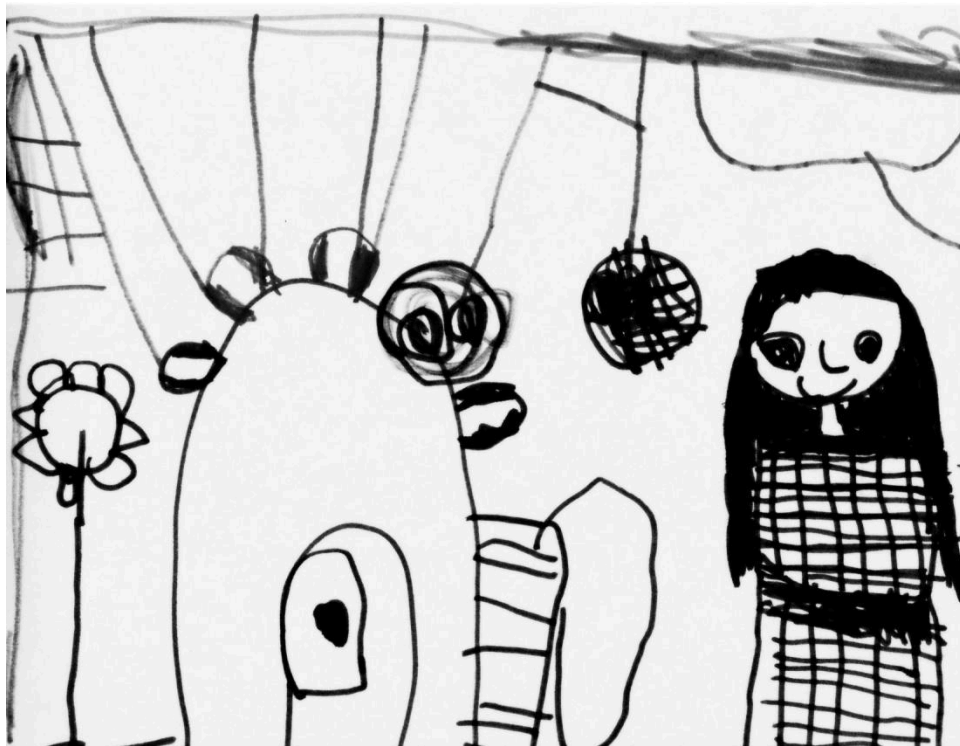
1. Complete and return the Enrollment Application.
2. Schedule a school tour.
3. We will contact you once your child has been accepted into the program, usually by the beginning of the calendar year.
4. Acceptance will become effective once we receive the signed admission agreement and one month tuition deposit to be credited toward your last month tuition.
5. Once we receive the deposit we will mail you all of the registration forms.
6. Return of completed registration forms will ultimately guarantee your child's place in the classroom.

All registration forms are due **BEFORE** your child can begin attending the program.

TO-DO LIST OF REQUIRED REGISTRATION FORMS TO BE COMPLETED AND RETURNED:

1. Signed Admission Agreement
2. Emergency Information Form with emergency numbers of physicians and emergency contact people
3. Signed Consent Form for Emergency Medical Treatment
4. Signed acknowledgment to have received the Personal Rights Form

5. Signed acknowledgment to have received the Parents' Right Form
6. Health History Form
7. Physician Report with Immunization Records (physical exam required - please be advise to schedule the physical exam ASAP)
8. Ages and Stages Questionnaire - This is a non-official document designed to allow the director and teachers to assess your child and his/her ability to flourish at the school and it will be distributed on the first week of school.
9. Signed Field Trip Permission Form
10. Natural Disaster Release Form
11. Authorization to Dispense Sunscreen



PARENTS' RIGHTS

As a parent/Authorized Representative, you have the right to:

1. Enter and inspect the child care center without advance notice whenever children are in our care, but please call once at the gate.
2. File a complaint against the licensee with the licensing office and review the licensee's public file kept by the licensing office
3. Review, at the child care center, reports of licensing visits and substantiated complaints against the licensee made during the last three years.
4. Express concern to the licensing office and inspect the child care center without discrimination or retaliation against you or your child.
5. Request in writing that a parent not be allowed to visit your child or take your child from the child care center, provided you have shown a certified copy of a court order.
6. Receive from the licensee the name and telephone no. of the local licensing office: Community Care Licensing, 1515 Clay St. Ste 1102, Oakland, CA 94612, Tel. 510-622-2602
7. Be informed by the licensee, upon request, of the name and type of association to the child care center for any adult who has been granted a criminal record exemption, and that the name of the person may also be obtained by contacting the local licensing office.
8. Receive, from the licensee, the Caregiver Background Check Process form

PERSONAL RIGHTS

Personal Rights, See section 101223 for waiver conditions applicable to Child Care Centers. Each child receiving services from a Child Care Center shall have rights which include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. To be accorded dignity in his/her personal relationships with staff and other persons.
2. To be accorded safe, healthful and comfortable accommodations, furnishing and equipment to meet his/her needs.
3. To be free from corporal or unusual punishment, infliction of pain, humiliation, intimidation, ridicule, coercion, threat, mental abuse, or other actions of a punitive nature, including but not limited to: Interference with daily living functions, including eating, sleeping, or toileting; or withholding of shelter, clothing, medication or aids to physical functioning.
4. To be informed, and to have his/her authorized representative, if any, informed by the licensee of the provisions of law regarding complaints including, but not limited to, the address and telephone number of the complaint receiving unit of the licensing agency and of information regarding confidentiality.
5. To be free to attend religious services or activities of his/her choice and to have visits from spiritual advisors of his/her choice. Attendance at religious services, either in or outside the facility, shall be on a completely voluntary basis. In Child Care Centers, decisions concerning attendance at religious services or visits from spiritual leaders shall be made by the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the child.
6. Not to be locked in any room, building, or facility premises day or night.
7. Not to be placed in any restraining device, except a supportive restrain approved in advance by the licensing agency.

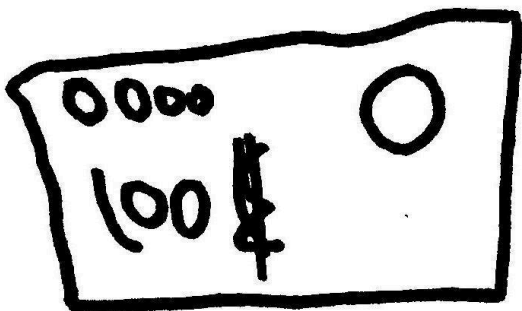
THE REPRESENTATIVE/PARENT/GUARDIAN HAS THE RIGHT TO BE INFORMED OF THE APPROPRIATE LICENSING AGENCY TO CONTACT REGARDING CONCERNS, WHICH IS: COMMUNITY CARE LICENSING DEPT. BAY AREA OFFICE, 1515 CLAY STREET, SUITE 1102, OAKLAND, CA 94612.

TUITION PAYMENT AND FEES

Tuition payments are due on the first day of each month with a five-day grace period before payments are considered late. You may send payment through one of the following options:

- Check made out to Nova Learning Inc deposited in our mailbox
- Bill pay to Nova Learning Inc - Chase Bank Account Number 599893065 / Routing Number 322271627
- Quick Pay via Zelle - email is vianovapreschool@gmail.com

If paying after the 5th of the month, please add the late fee of \$20.00 to your total. A \$25.00 fee will be charged for returned checks.



One Time and Annual Fees:

Enrollment Fee	\$100.00
Last Month Deposit	Equal to one month's tuition
Annual Earthquake Fee	\$25.00
Yearly Material Fee	\$300.00
Late Pick-up Fee	\$3 each minute
Late fee for Monthly Tuition	\$20.00 after the 5 th of the month
Return Check	\$25.00

ROLY-POLY DAILY SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

Please note that the schedule of activities may change with the seasons and to meet the needs of the children and the program.

Roly-Polies

8:00 am Arrival/free play/potty/change diapers

8:50 am Clean up/snack/circle time

10:00 am Outside play

11:00 am Potty/change diapers/Lunch

12:00 pm Nap time

2:00 pm Potty/change diapers/snack

2:35 pm Outside Play

3:50 pm Transition inside/potty/change diapers/wash hands/free play

5:30 pm School closes

GRASSHOPPER DAILY SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

Please note that the schedule of activities may change with the seasons and to meet the needs of the children and the program.

Grasshoppers

- 8:00 am Arrival time/outside activities
- 9:00 am Inside/wash hands/toileting/snack/free play/projects
- 10:30 am Clean up/circle time
- 11:00 am Outside play
- 11:45 pm Inside/wash hands/toileting/lunch
- 12:30 pm Nap
- 2:00 pm Wash hands/toileting/snack/inside play
- 3:00 pm Outside play
- 4:20 pm Afternoon Circle Time/outside play
- 5:30 pm School closes

DRAGONFLY DAILY SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

Please note that the schedule of activities may change with the seasons and to meet the needs of the children and the program.

Dragonflies

- 8:00 am Arrival/outside free play/wash hands/snack
- 10:00 am Inside/circle time/free play/projects
- 11:20 am Spanish circle time/wash hands/toileting/lunch time
- 12:15 pm Outside play
- 1:00 pm Inside/toileting/nap
- 2:00 pm quiet activities
- 3:00 pm Inside free play/projects/snack
- 4:30 pm Outside play
- 5:30 pm School closes