

Schlitz Audubon Nature Preschool

COVID-19 Response Plan

We have worked hard to ensure that our program is meeting the best possible health and safety practices in response to COVID-19. Our Response Plan includes the COVID-19 licensing regulations set by the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families, as well as guidelines and recommendations established by the North Shore Health Department and the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

Due to the evolving nature of this virus, all policies are subject to change.

Goals for the 2021-2022 School Year

- Keep all students and staff physically safe
- Care for the social-emotional needs of students and staff
- Design flexibility into the school schedule should we need to adjust our program in response to COVID-19
- Modify our spaces and protocols as needed, without losing the core values of our program

Nature Preschool's Policy on Facemasks

Facemasks are currently required for all participants. This includes teachers, staff, volunteers, parents, and preschool children. Children are expected to come to school with 2 personal facemasks labeled with the child's name. The preschool has a limited number of child-sized disposable masks to hand out if needed. We recommend lanyards that attach to the masks, keeping them securely in place and making it less likely they will get lost or mixed up with another child's mask.

- All staff members are required to wear a mask when not at their personal work-stations
- Parents and caregivers are required to wear a mask at drop-off and pick-up
- All visitors are instructed to wear a mask on the trails when unable to maintain a distance of at least six feet from other visitors
- Anyone visiting our play spaces or coming in contact with our preschoolers is required to wear a facemask
- Facemasks are *not* required for children ages 2 and under
- Our goal is to relax these policies once it has been deemed safe to do so, but current recommendations strongly encourage facemasks on children even in outdoor settings, particularly when physical distancing is not possible. As we do not practice physical distancing with our preschool students, facemasks are an important safety measure

Nature is Our Primary Classroom

We are following an all-outdoor, Forest Kindergarten model and will only go indoors if temperatures are dangerously cold (well below zero) or when there is a risk of lightning.

- Our indoor classrooms will be reserved for bathroom visits and as a place to shelter from hazardous weather
- We will provide warming stations in each outdoor space when the weather cools
- We will provide outdoor campfires and warm beverages in cold weather
- If it becomes too cold to sustain an all-outside model, we will divide our time between outdoors and indoors in accordance with the temperature
- Your child's preschool class will have its own designated outdoor classroom each week, and we will rotate through these spaces so that children may experience different areas
- Each class will have its own indoor classroom
- Until such regulations are lifted, there will be no co-mingling between classes. Children will learn their class birdcall and can sing their calls to one another from a safe distance on the trails.

Managing Bathroom Visits

Parents and caregivers should take their child to the bathroom just prior to the start of class.

- To avoid over-crowding in our preschool bathrooms, adults should take their child to the larger public bathroom down the hall before class starts or make use of the smaller outdoor bathroom at the pavilion
- Skipping a trip to the bathroom may result in a toileting accident, which compromises your child's confidence, makes them cold and uncomfortable, and creates a health risk

Our bathrooms will be deep cleaned each evening and sanitized throughout the day.

Hand Washing

We have always encouraged hand washing in our program, as it is one of the simplest and most effective ways to keep everyone healthy.

- In response to COVID-19, we will install handwashing sinks in our outdoor play spaces
- Upon arrival, children will be directed to wash their hands before playing
- We provide environmentally friendly liquid soap
- We will also carry hand sanitizer on our hikes
- We will have children wash their hands at drop-off, after sneezing and blowing noses, and after using the bathroom

- We will add a few drops of biodegradable liquid soap to our water-play areas, and have the children assist with washing our teaching materials during clean-up time, which means they are also cleaning their hands as they play and as they care for their tools
- Once the weather turns colder, we will disconnect our outdoor sinks
- In cold weather, children should begin wearing mittens. We will lightly sanitize mittens when children arrive with an alcohol-based sanitizing spray.

Drop-off and Pick-up

- **We are staggering our start times to avoid overcrowding in our shared spaces.**
Children in our 8:45am classes are welcome to join us anytime between 8:45-9:15am.
Children in our 9:00am classes are welcome to join us anytime between 9:00-9:30am.
Children in our 12:30pm class are welcome to join us anytime between 12:30-1:00pm.
Children in our 12:45pm classes are welcome to join us between 12:45-1:15pm.
Families may arrive at the Center earlier than this if you wish, but our teachers will not be available to check your child in until the start of class time.
- We will make a point of remaining and playing in our outdoor spaces for longer periods before we go hiking, in order to accommodate the expanded arrival window
- We are not adjusting our pick-up window at the end of class, as we need this time to clean our spaces and materials, making sure they are ready for the next group of children
- We have traditionally ended each class with verbal announcements from the teachers, highlighting the days' activities. We are forgoing this tradition for now, as it requires adults crowding together in small spaces, and instead will provide regular emailed updates describing our activities
- Parents and caregivers will drop-off and pick-up their child at their designated outdoor classroom and must remain with their child until teachers have checked them in
- Teachers will ask each adult-child pair a number of health-screening questions at the start of each week. *These questions are subject to change.*
- Please refer to preschool texts, emails, and the posted signs with the laminated birds on them in order to locate your rotating outdoor classroom each week!

Guidelines for Keeping Children Home

Parents are expected to assess the health of their child on a daily basis before coming to Preschool. You should keep your child at home if:

- Your child has a fever. Fever reducing medication may not be used when determining a child's health. Your child must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school.
- Your child is experiencing recognizable symptoms of COVID-19, including a runny nose, cough, shortness of breath, intense headache, lethargy, or difficulty breathing
- Please note that many children who test positive for COVID-19 show very few symptoms *apart from a mild runny nose*. If your child develops a runny nose, you should keep them home for at least a day or two to monitor their symptoms. If the runny nose shows

significant improvement, or is *only* present when the child is outside, and if *no other symptoms* develop, we will allow the child to return to preschool. Please do *not* assume that a runny nose is an allergy without first monitoring your child's health for a few days.

- Your child must remain home if they have tested positive for COVID-19 as well as for any other contagious illness
- Your child should remain home while they, or any other household member, is awaiting results of a COVID-19 test
- Your child must remain home if they have been identified as a *close contact* of anyone who tested positive for COVID-19
- If someone else in your household is under quarantine due to an exposure, but your child was not directly exposed, then we request that your child remain home until the close contact receives a negative test result, no sooner than 5 days after exposure. If the result is negative, your child may then return to school.

Actions Taken if a Child Develops Symptoms of COVID-19 while at Nature Preschool

If a child develops symptoms of COVID-19, we will follow the same basic protocol we use with any contagious illness.

Our protocols regarding sickness include the following:

- Remove the child from their group and relocate them to an isolated area with a member of staff.
- Call the parent/guardian to pick the child up
- Report the event to the Preschool Director

In Case Someone in the Preschool Tests Positive

- If a child in our program tests positive for COVID-19 we will notify all families in our Nature Preschool in the event that other children in the school were at risk of exposure. We will share information regarding the individual's classroom but will not identify the individual by name.
- Parents are expected to inform us if their child tests positive for COVID-19.
- The North Shore Health department will likewise contact us if anyone in our school tests positive for COVID-19, based on information they receive through their database
- We will follow the guidance of the North Shore Health Department, which currently requires that anyone directly exposed to someone who has tested positive quarantine before returning to Preschool.
- Siblings who are in other classes should remain home until the child who was in close contact receives a negative COVID-19 test result

- *Close contacts must complete their required quarantine before returning to school even with a negative test result*
- If a person in our program tests positive for COVID-19, but shows minimal to no symptoms, they may return *once they have completed their at-home isolation period and received clearance from their local health department.*
- If a person in our program tests positive and *is symptomatic*, we will work with them on an individual basis, using input from medical professionals, to determine when they can return to our program.
- **We understand that no one gets sick on purpose. We ask for patience and understanding should anyone in our program test positive to COVID-19, just as we would any illness.**

A Note About Snacks

- Instead of offering a daily snack, we now serve special treats on occasion
- We provide seasonal outdoor campfires and warm drinks such as apple cider, hot chocolate, or homemade maple tea, which children can enjoy together
- We have removed snacks from our birthday celebrations, but will continue to make birthdays special by having children bring in special pictures and books, and by inviting the birthday child walk around a yellow sun while the class sings to them.

How Parents and Caregivers Can Support our Program

- Have your child use the bathroom before class starts!
- Make sure they have everything they need to remain warm and waterproof.
- Serve your child a healthy breakfast or lunch prior to class, which includes protein
- Label everything! This includes water bottles, mittens, and facemasks!
- Please read our school emails and sign up for our REMIND texts to stay informed
- Call us at 414-352-2880 x 154 to report your child's absence. *Do not email us to report a child absence.*
- Keep your child home when sick.

TUTION REFUNDS IN CASE OF SCHOOL CLOSURE:

In the case of a mandatory school closure (by order of the North Shore Health Department), preschool tuition for missed school weeks due to COVID-19 will be refunded.

Parents will be given the option to donate some or all of their tuition back to the preschool. Additionally, families will be provided at-home activities and curriculum materials, and teachers will continue to communicate with children and parents over a variety of platforms, until classes are able to resume in person.

Updated 4/26/21