

# 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 required indoors as well as outdoors for the beginning of the 2021-22 school year. We will continue to assess our facemask policy – particularly as it pertains to outdoors - in an ongoing basis, and will remain in regular communication with the North Shore Health Department as well as with the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families.***

***Factors that we will consider include:***

- ***Whether or not it is possible to be outdoors unmasked without risk of infection***
- ***Whether or not it is safe to be outdoors unmasked without enforcing physical distancing***
- ***The current burden rate of SARS Co-V-2 in our community.***

**We require that anyone sharing the outdoor spaces and indoor classrooms and hallways with the preschool children wear a mask, including, staff, volunteers, caregivers, and parents, regardless of vaccination status.**

- Facemasks are *not* required for children ages 2 and under
- Facemasks are not required in the parking lot, or if individual families wish to hike the trails together

- We will take carefully directed mask-breaks throughout class, ensuring that children breathe fresh air and drink water
- *As with all things COVID related, our facemask policy may change based on the latest recommendations from the CDC, the North Shore Health Department, our licensing agency, and the rate of community spread*

## **Nature is Our Primary Classroom**

**During the fall and spring trimesters, we will follow an all-outdoor, Forest Kindergarten model and will only go indoors if outdoor conditions are hazardous (for example, when there is lightning, or the Real Feel temperature falls to single digits). During the winter trimester, we will make greater use of our indoor spaces in accordance with the weather.**

- During the warmer months, our indoor classrooms will be reserved for bathroom visits and as a place to shelter from hazardous conditions outdoors
- We will provide warming stations in each outdoor space when the weather cools
- We will provide outdoor campfires and warm beverages in cold weather
- When 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. We will *not* rotate our indoor spaces

## 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 are asked to 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
- Children who struggle with the larger bathrooms may use the preschool bathrooms
- 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 are deep cleaned each evening and are 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.

- During the warmer months, we use handwashing sinks in all four outdoor classrooms
- Upon arrival, children are directed to wash their hands before playing
- We provide environmentally friendly liquid soap
- We also carry hand sanitizer on our hikes
- We have children wash their hands upon arrival, after sneezing and blowing noses, and after using the bathroom
- We also 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 cleaning their hands as they play
- Once the weather turns colder, we disconnect our outdoor sinks
- In cold weather, children should begin wearing mittens

## 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

- 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 are required to ask each adult-child pair a number of health-screening questions at the start of each week.
- 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 your 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, sore throat, cough, headache, or general lethargy
- 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.
- Even if facemasks are once again optional outdoors, children with *allergy-induced* coughs or runny noses should wear a facemask while at school to help contain fluids
- *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
- 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.
- Your child must remain home if they have been identified as a *close contact* of anyone who tested positive for COVID-19. Please refer to the following for details:

**What if My Child is a Close Contact?** A Close Contact is defined as a person who was exposed to someone who tested positive for COVID-19

- while either party was unmasked
- and was 6 feet or closer for 15 minutes or longer
- within a 48 hour exposure window while that person was infectious

The 48-hour window is measured from the first day symptoms developed. If no symptoms developed, the 48 hours are measured from the day the person was tested.

***In case of exposure:*** the day of exposure should be counted as Day 0, the next day as Day 1, etc. *A close contact should be tested for COVID-19 on Day 6 or 7, but not earlier or results may be inaccurate. If the test comes back negative, the individual is free to return to school or work on Day 8.*

***If both parties were masked at the time of exposure, the bystander is not considered a close contact and no quarantine or COVID test is required unless the two were in extremely close proximity (2 feet or less) while indoors for 15 minutes or longer.***

## **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**

- Parents are expected to inform us if their child tests positive for COVID-19. We are also contacted by the local health department when there is a positive case in our school.
- If a child in our program tests positive for COVID-19, we will let all families in our program know, but we will not identify the individual child by name. *Families whose children may be considered close contacts will receive additional information as it is possible they will need to quarantine*
- We are required to notify the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families of any positive case in our school within 24 hours
- Anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 must remain home for a minimum of ten days – remember that the day symptoms first appear counts as Day 0 (if there are no symptoms, then Day 0 is the day they take their COVID test)
- If a person in our program tests positive for COVID-19, but shows *minimal to no symptoms*, they may return to school once they have completed their 10-day 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 to determine when they can return to our program

## A Note about Snacks

- Instead of offering a daily snack, we will serve special foods on occasion
- We will 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 we will continue to make birthdays special by having children bring in special pictures and books, and by inviting the birthday child to 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 with your child's name, *including water bottles 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 as we do not check email until after attendance is taken)
- Please be considerate of our teachers and staff, who have been working in person non-stop since June 2020 under the constant shadow of COVID-19
- 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 days 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 8/18/21*