Cincinnati Nature Center



Parent Handbook
2027/2028

CNC Nature Preschool
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Class Options/Tuition 2025-2026

Classes are composed of mixed age groups of children ages three to five years. There are four options available:

- **Two mornings per week**
  Tuesday and Thursday
  8:30 – 11:30 a.m.
  Tuition (2027-2028 school year): $3,826
  2-day $250 deposit 8 monthly payments $447

- **Three mornings per week**
  Three mornings per week
  Monday, Wednesday, and Friday
  8:30 – 11:30 a.m.
  Tuition (2076-2028 school year): $5,670
  3-day $250 deposit 8 payments $667.50

- **Two afternoons per week**
  Tuesday and Thursday
  12:30 – 3:30 p.m.
  Tuition (2027-2028 school year): $3,826
  2-day $250 deposit 8 monthly payments $447

- **Three afternoons per week**
  Three mornings per week
  Monday, Wednesday, and Friday
  12:30 – 3:30 p.m.
  Tuition (2027-2028 school year): $5,670
  3-day $250 deposit 8 payments $667.50

Enrollment Deposit

The $250.00 deposit is required at time of application. Your child is not officially enrolled until this deposit is received by CNC. The deposit will be applied to your total prior to calculating your remaining payments. If your child enrolls and does not attend the Nature Preschool, the $250 deposit is not refunded. CNC member registration opens online on our website on January 20th. Membership at the family level or above is required to enroll for preschool.
If a student withdraws for any reason other than a medical problem (verification from a licensed physician required) or relocation, parents are personally liable to pay the full tuition for the balance of the school year.

Purpose:

To meet the developmental needs of the whole child by initiating a life-long, meaningful relationship with the natural world in a high-quality early childhood environment.

Quality Education in Nature - Bridging the Gap (Philosophy):

The program's emphasis is on bridging the gap between the "nature of the child" and the "child in nature" by incorporating theories on learning and human development as well as the latest research on nature education for young learners. Teachers attend to children's needs for autonomy, connection to others, and acquiring/mastering skills while creating an environment where children are self-motivated to focus deeply on purposeful activities.

Experienced Educators

The Nature Preschool is facilitated by highly trained educators who combine early childhood and environmental education experiences. Teachers are observant, flexible, and creative facilitators and mentors who model an ethic of respect and love for all life.

Staff naturalists, trained and carefully chosen volunteers, and student teachers also support our educators and enhance the preschool experience.

Exceptional Adult-to-Child Ratios

Our program will always operate with a minimum of one adult educator per eight children (1:8 ratio), which surpasses the state licensing minimum of one adult per twelve children (1:12). Two professionally trained educators, assisted by CNC's dedicated early childhood volunteers, work with a maximum class size of fifteen children. This ensures a safe and personal learning experience for your child. All volunteers are carefully selected and trained and have had background checks. As an extra precaution, CNC's "two-deep" policy ensures that an adult is not alone with a child out of sight of other adults. Children are never left alone.

Nurturing Young Minds in Nature (Curriculum):

Nature is the foundation for the curriculum. Direct experience in nature is critical in meeting the social, physical, emotional, and cognitive needs of children. Our curriculum is inquiry-based, student-driven, and based on Ohio Early Learning Content Standards and developmentally appropriate practices.

Children are included in a community of staff, volunteers, teachers, and visitors who all share a common interest in the natural world. Real-life learning can happen at any time. While discovering, learning, and practicing stewardship in nature, children develop skills in the following areas:

- Math
- Science
- Language development
- Music
- Art
- Dramatic play
- Large and fine motor skills

Children are provided a unique opportunity to develop a "Sense of Place" rooted in a deep appreciation and age-appropriate understanding of the land and its inhabitants (human and otherwise).

The natural world with its inherent wonder, complexity, and beauty serves as a catalyst for each child's growth and development. Children "learn by doing" through child-initiated play and active hands-on exploration of their environment where they gather information, pursue new questions, and construct their own theories of how the world works.

Curriculum and adult-child interactions are based on best practices applying modern research on human development. Adults show respect for the inner life of the child, provide freedom with responsibility and movement, focus on each child's personal interests, and provide ample opportunities for children to directly experience the world around them. Children's daily schedule allows for concentration, repetition, intrinsic motivation, and collaborative learning.

Formal Assessment for students: We use Pearsons Work Sampling Systems as a form of assessment to ensure development is progressing.

Application, Enrollment, and Payments:

Priority is given to members of the Cincinnati Nature Center. Children must be three years of age on or before September 1, to be enrolled in CNC Nature Preschool and must be toilet trained. Our school year begins the Tuesday after Labor Day and ends mid-May. We require a commitment for the entire school year.

Application:

CNC member registration opens in January. Membership at the family level or above is required to enroll for preschool.

Enrollment Deposit:

The $250.00 deposit is required at the time of application. Your child is not officially enrolled until this deposit is received by CNC. The deposit will be applied to your total prior to calculating your remaining payments. If your child enrolls and does not attend the Nature Preschool, the $250 deposit is not refunded.

If a student withdraws for any reason other than a medical problem (verification from a licensed physician required) or relocation, parents are personally liable to pay the full tuition for the balance of the school year.

CNC Nature Preschool admits and does not discriminate against students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin, sex, religion, or disability in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Enrollment Requirements

- Medical consent, allergy information, immunization records, emergency phone numbers, etc. These completed forms must be on file prior to your child's first day of CNC Nature Preschool.
- Parents will sign up for a parent orientation in August to go over paperwork and meet their teacher before the school year begins.
- The child's parent or guardian must provide the following documentation to CNC Nature Preschool:

    - Online registration and deposit complete
    - Obtain a family membership of the Cincinnati Nature Center
    - Child's enrollment and health information

- Child's medical statement (immunization record) signed by a physician.
- Routine Fieldtrip form
- Photo/video release form

- A health exam is required for entry into the program. Health forms are required to be completed at the time of enrollment and must show any allergies, physical handicaps, a statement of general health, and a current immunization history. These must be updated and kept current. All the forms listed above must be completed and returned prior to the first day of school. If you have trouble completing the forms, please contact the director. A doctor's signature is required on ODJFS form 01305.

Non-Discrimination Policy:

Cincinnati Nature Center does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, age, income ethnicity, sexual orientation, or marital or family status.

Daily Schedule:

Below is an example of a typical school day at CNC Nature Preschool. Specific activities and curricular focus vary by season and are shaped by the interests of the students. We value spontaneity in activity and take advantage of the "teachable moment." We also know that young children, first experiencing a regular activity away from home, benefit from knowing what will happen next. We will maintain a loose schedule, but with predictable events throughout the day to give children security, such as snack and group experiences. The following is an example of a possible classroom schedule:

Arrival
Class begins outside in one of the two play areas. The adult who brings the child will sign him/her in, will assist with hand washing and a bathroom break if needed, and will then take the child to the outdoor play area to join the preschool teachers outside. Because children will already be dressed for the weather, it saves time to start the class outdoors rather than to begin with an indoor orientation each day.

Active Outdoor Play
Children will play in the outdoor area and then take a hike on the CNC nature trails. Play area activities include water play, digging, fort building, gardening, and dramatic play. Hikes include trips to the cabin, PlayScape, ponds, fields, forests, and sugar house during maple syrup season.

Group Meeting
Children take part in conversation, engage in music and movement activities, listen to stories, sing songs, and participate in other whole-group activities.

Snack Time
Teachers and children eat "family style and picnic style," where children and teachers may converse and enjoy each other's company. Our snack may take place indoors or outdoors. As

they finish eating, children clean up from snack and may look at books or go directly to choice time.

Choice Time

Children have at least sixty minutes of uninterrupted time to choose an activity among the different areas of the classroom. This allows children to lengthen their attention spans and to develop competency with an activity. Classroom activities include:

- Blocks and building (e.g., the use of unit blocks or hollow blocks)
- Art activities (e.g., painting or collage)
- Sensory activities (e.g., water play or clay)
- Science and discovery activities (e.g., observing an animal or experimenting with color)
- Writing activities (e.g., creating a book, drawing a picture, or developing lists)
- Reading activities (e.g., listening to a story, reading a story, or recognizing a favorite song/poem in print)
- Dramatic play activities (e.g., playing house or pretending to be a veterinarian)
- Math and manipulative activities (e.g., graphing or playing a matching game)
- Music and movement activities (e.g., playing instruments or dancing)
- Manipulatives (e.g., putting together a puzzle or sorting buttons)

Small Group

Adult-directed activities such as cooking occur in small groups. These activities allow children to ask more questions and give the teacher an opportunity to evaluate each child's needs and progress. This is a time for more concentrated learning.

Clean-up

Children put away materials they have used and prepare for one final group experience.

Closing Group Meeting

We gather to say goodbye and recall activities from the day before adults pick up the children.

Departure

Parents or guardians sign their children out and depart.

Typical Schedule

Morning	Afternoon
8:30 – 9:15 a.m. Arrival, greetings, and sign-in. Outdoor Play.	12:30 – 1:15 p.m.
9:15 - 9:30 a.m. Group Circle Time (Naturalist Visit)	1:15 - 1:30 p.m.
9:30 - 10:30 a.m. Group Excursion Hike	1:30 - 2:30 p.m.
10:30 a.m. Snack – indoors or out	2:30 p.m.
10:30 - 11:15 a.m. Choice time inside: Art, Dramatic Play, Math, Music, etc.	2:30 - 3:15 p.m.

*Small group – Special small groups, such as cooking projects, turtle races, etc., will take place during free choice time.
11:15 - 11:30 a.m. 3:15 - 3:30 p.m. Final group meeting and goodbye

Licensing:

- The Cincinnati Nature Center is a nonprofit education organization located in Milford, Ohio. The preschool is a fully licensed, nine-month preschool program offering morning or afternoon classes for three to five-year olds. The State of Ohio licensing rules and regulations are available for review in a binder located in the preschool. The center's license is posted on the wall immediately as you walk into the preschool for review. Our center does not have a full-service kitchen, so we maintain no food service license.

- CNC Nature Preschool maintains a licensing notebook which includes all licensing inspection reports and special investigation reports. This notebook is available for parents' review during regular business hours.

- Licensing record compliance forms, compliant investigation reports, and evaluations from building and fire departments are available for review from Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services. Their website is: http://jfs.ohio.gov.cdc/childcare.stm.

- Cincinnati Nature Center's non-profit identification document is available upon request.

Arrival and Departure (Early Drop-Off/Late Pick-Up):

Children must be signed in and out by the custodial parent or adult person approved by the parent(s). Only those persons approved by the child's parent(s) may take a child from CNC Nature Preschool. If those persons are not known to current staff, identification will be required.

Because we operate in a one-room classroom, we have very little flexibility regarding drop-off and pick-up times. Please be considerate of the teachers and other students by refraining from early drop-off or late pick-up. Teachers must eat lunch, clean up and set up the classroom for afternoon class, make parent phone calls, and get supplies before and after each class. If children are present prior to or past class time, it seriously impedes the teachers' ability to effectively run the program.

Please plan your schedule to assure timeliness in dropping off and picking up your child. If a true emergency requires that you'll be late, please contact the Preschool Director by calling (513) 965-3341.

Non-Custodial Parents and Custodial Situations:

A parent of a child enrolled who is not the child's custodial parent will be given the same rights as the custodial parent unless there is a court documentation limiting access and conditions of the non-custodial parent on file at the center.

If custody or court papers are on file, they will be strictly followed unless the custodial parent requests a more liberal variation of the court order in writing.

If there are court papers in the child's center file that deny/ limit the non-custodial parent/guardians' rights to visitation, we cannot release the child. Staff will call the custodial parent and report the circumstances. If the parent insists or is threatening staff, we will call 911.

Illness, Absence, and Medications:

For appropriate management of suspected illnesses, the center shall follow the Ohio Department of Health "Child Care Communicable Disease Chart" located in our school office.

When to Stay Home

Regular attendance is very important for your child to get the most from preschool. When there are frequent absences, a child may feel uncomfortable as s/he may not know the songs, activities, or the other children. Friendships are easier when children attend regularly. There are times when it is best for a child NOT to be at school. If your child has one or more of the following symptoms, please do not send him/her to school: Any employee with the following signs and symptoms will be sent home and a substitute teacher will be called in:

- Temperature of at least one hundred- and one-degree Fahrenheit when combined with other sign and symptoms of illness; ex: lethargic, tired, crying, not acting normal.
- Diarrhea – 3 or more loose stools (stools with increased water content and decreased form) in a 24-hour period.
- Difficult or rapid breathing.
- Yellowish skin or eyes.
- Redness of the eye or eyelid, thick and purulent (pus) eye discharge, matted eyelashes, burning, itching or eye pain.
- Untreated infected skin patches, unusual spots or rashes.
- Unusually dark urine and or gray or white stool.
- Stiff neck with an elevated lice, scabies, or other parasitic infestations (our center has a nit free policy).
- Sore throat or difficulty in swallowing.
- Vomiting more than one time or when accompanied by any other sign or symptoms of illness.

A child with any of the above signs or symptoms occurring while at the center will be immediately isolated from the other children and dismissed as soon as a parent/guardian or emergency contact can arrive to pick up the child. Isolation of a child from the group will involve removing the child from the room but not out of sight or sound of a staff member, typically in the director's office with direct supervision.

Parents/ Emergency Contacts of sick children need to have children picked up from the center within an hour of being contacted by center administrator.

When caring for sick children, the center shall:

- Isolate sick child away from other children, but within sight or hearing at all times.
- Provide the sick child with a cot or mat.
- Notify the child's parent immediately if the child's condition worsens.
- Launder bedding and wash toys used by the sick child before use by another child pursuant to rule 5101:2-12-13 of the administrative code.
- Sanitize the thermometer after each use.

Please make sure your child is fever-free for at least 24 hours before returning to school.

Children will be readmitted to school after at least 24 hours of being free of fever and other symptoms. If they are not symptom free, a doctor's note will be required stating that the child is not contagious.

At the discretion of the director, a "return to school" permit may be requested from the child's physician before the child can return to the center. Also, a "return to school" permit may be denied by the director if it does not adhere to state licensing or Cincinnati Nature Center guidelines.

In the event of a diagnosed communicable disease (i.e., chicken pox measles, etc.) the parents of the other children attending the center will be notified by placing a sign on the door or by email.

You will be notified if your child has been exposed to a contagious disease. It is requested that you inform preschool staff if your child has been exposed to or contracts any communicable disease. Please take into consideration the rest of the children and staff.

Please call the Nature Preschool at (513) 965-3340 when your child will not be in preschool.
All employees will be taught the proper handwashing methods.

Medications

- If your child needs medication to be administered by our staff, you must complete a "Request for Administration of Medication" form.

  Prescription medication will be accepted only if it is in the original container.

- Nonprescription medication may only be administered by following the manufacturer's recommendation on the label. Medication must be in the original container and accompanied by a copy of the information given to you by the pharmacy.

- Before any prescription or nonprescription medication can be administered, including sunscreen or insect spray, we must have permission in writing from the child's parent or guardian. Please fill out the medication forms and enter instructions into the Daily

Medication Logbook. Please bring a copy of the information given to you by the pharmacy.

- Any medication must go home after the last date that it has to be administered.

- We ensure that ADA requirements are followed in our procedure for administering medications and care to children with disabilities.

Parents who enroll children without immunizations must complete a child medical form that is signed by the families' physician. An exemption form must also be completed.

STATE OF OHIO LEGAL IMMUNIZATION EXEMPTION Per OHIO STATUTE 3313.671 (Exemptions) Religious, Good Cause, and Medical Exemption Form Amended Substitute Senate Bill No. 282. Ohio Revised Code. Sections 3313.671. Pat (3) and (4) Section 3313.671, part (3): A pupil who presents a written statement of his parent or guardian in which the parent or guardian objects to the immunization for good cause, including religious convictions, is not required to be immunized. Section 3313.671 part (4): A child whose physician certifies in writing that such immunization against my disease is medically contraindicated is not required to be immunized against that disease. This section does not limit or impair the right of a board of education of a city, exempted village, or local school district to make and enforce rules to secure immunization against poliomyelitis, rubeola, rubella, diphtheria, pertussis, and tetanus of the pupils under its jurisdiction.

Extreme Emergency Situations Concerning Your Child

"Serious incident, injury, or illness" includes any situation occurring while a child is in the care of the center that requires emergency medical treatment or professional consolation or transportation for emergency treatment. It is extremely important that we have current information in your child's enrollment file. We will need to contact you if your child becomes ill or an emergency occurs.

If a parent cannot make it to the center prior to the transport of a child by an emergency squad, a staff member will accompany the child in the squad. All pertinent data and health record information will be transported with the child. We will not enroll a child without permission to transport in a medical emergency. We will not transport your child by any means other than emergency squad. You are only giving is permission to give the emergency squad permission to transport.

Safety Inspections and Emergency Drills

Centers are inspected regularly by licensing, fire, and health department personnel. Our employees also conduct internal safety inspections.

Clothing and Outdoor Play:

As a rule, all outerwear should be marked with the child's name. In addition, each child must have a complete change of clothing, clearly marked with the child's name on each item, left at CNC. Please dress your child according to the weather. We do not recommend umbrellas.

Fall	Winter	Spring
Rubber boots	Snow pants	Rubber boots
Jackets or sweatshirts	Winter coats	Jacket or sweatshirt
Rain jacket w/hood	Gloves	Rain jacket w/ hood
	Scarf/neck cover	
	Hat	
	Boots	
	Warm socks	

Outdoor Play

Outdoor play is a regular part of the daily routine; children should be prepared to play outside. Please do not request that your child stay indoors.

Positive Environment:

Our goal is to create a positive, successful experience for each child. When a child isn't having a successful experience at school, this is not best for the child, teacher, or for other children in the classroom. Our students will hike the trails daily and the following expectations will help you decide if our environment is a good fit before enrolling your child:

- Children should be able to move themselves along gravel and woodchipped trails, up and down hills, across boardwalks, and over flat and uneven ground with minimal assistance.
- Children must be fully potty trained as we are not equipped to change diapers or clean up after accidents. Parents or guardians may be asked to come help if needed.

- To ensure safety for students and staff, children should be capable of maintaining appropriate self-control and emotional self-regulation in the classroom and on the trails. This includes:
    - The ability to emotionally separate from you without emotional stress. If a child cries or screams for more than 30 minutes, you will receive a phone call and may be required to return.
    - The ability to express emotions verbally or non-verbally safely without physically harming (e.g., hitting, biting, etc.) teachers or other children.
    - The ability to keep themselves safe by staying with their assigned group, following safety rules, and respecting teachers' directions.

Discipline Policy

Positive discipline allows children to solve their own problems with guidance and modeling by preschool staff. Our goal is to support the development of self-regulation skills as children learn to use words or gestures to get their needs met. Through consistent and predictive routines and by practicing our expectations and rules, children will learn to monitor and regulate their own behaviors. While self-discipline is the goal, occasionally there are children who need more teacher-directed interventions or professional intervention. These might include limiting choices, redirection, removal from the area, behavioral support, or intervention plans.

When children are having difficulty, communication and cooperation from parents or guardians are crucial. Parents or guardians are required to be available for conferences and, should they want to continue in the program, to seek professional assistance for their

child when requested by the nature school director. When children do not respond to these strategies and engage in repeated inappropriate behavior at school, teachers will work with parents or guardians to co-plan consistent support both at home and in school. If teachers perceive that children are not behaving safely during the course of the day, parents or guardians will be contacted and required to take the child home for the day. Conflict resolution, emotional vocabulary, redirection, and support for the development of empathy for humans and the natural world are used as positive discipline strategies with all children.

Withdrawal from the Preschool Program:

Your child cannot attend CNC Preschool until the current tuition is paid. CNC will not issue a tuition refund if your child is withdrawn for any reason other than a medical problem or relocation. The Nature Center reserves the right to withdrawal a student at any time.

Disenrollment Policy and Guidance

If our teachers observe consistent concerning behaviors that cannot be addressed through positive guidance, supportive environments, and instructional practices that are inherent in our early childhood education program, they will consult with parents to create a specific behavioral intervention plan designed to encourage your child's success and continuation in the program. Teachers will implement interventions within the scope of our financial and human resources. Should the plan be deemed unsuccessful due to limits in a child's capabilities or family commitment, your child will be withdrawn from our program.

Expectations of Parents and Guardians:

Our most fundamental behavioral guidelines for children are: “respect yourself, respect others, and respect the environment.” We expect the same at all times from adults, parents, and school staff, in all relationships within the school community. We expect every member of our community (students, parents, volunteers, and staff) to accept full responsibility for their attitudes and actions. This includes speech and outward behavior. Support your child by speaking about their teachers, classmates, and school in positive terms. Respect and abide by the school’s policies and procedures. Honor your commitments. Look for ways to make a positive contribution to the life of the school. Through your behavior, you contribute to your children’s moral development and to the culture and daily climate of our school.

Holidays and Birthdays:

We do not celebrate holidays in the traditional sense at Nature Preschool; however, we celebrate the seasons and events in the natural world. For example, we may have a pajama party on the day of winter solstice (the day of the year with the shortest amount of daylight). We might focus on pumpkins in the fall and evergreens in winter. Our students’ birthdays are acknowledged with classroom traditions designed specifically for our nature preschool. Children are encouraged to bring a special book to read with the classroom on their birthday.

Snacks:

We try and keep our snacks healthy therefore we prefer no sweets. Every class will have a snack sign up sheet for parents to volunteer to bring snack. There are 16 students in every class. With allergies becoming so prevalent please restrain from allowing children to bring in their own food.

Parental Participation and Conferences:

It is our desire to give you and your child the best services and care while s/he is enrolled here. We schedule two parent/teacher conferences throughout the year. If you have problems or concerns related to our education program in between these conferences, please follow these procedures:

- Parents are encouraged to first talk with the child's teachers (including the preschool director) in order to establish where the potential problem lies. Since time is limited before or after class, we recommend that you make an appointment to meet with the staff. Parent/teacher meetings are an excellent means for developing a communication network.
- If further assistance is needed, you may arrange a meeting with CNC's Education Director, Connie O'Connor, by calling (513) 965-4891.

Open Door Policy

We welcome parents at any time, in any area of our school. We encourage parental involvement and present the following policies to ensure this involvement is productive:

Parent Involvement & Classroom Helpers

Entering preschool is a milestone for youngsters. To ease the transition from home to school, it is a great help to talk regularly with your preschooler about his/her new experiences. Share with your child the excitement of meeting new people and encountering new ideas. Your preschooler will benefit from your support and understanding as s/he begins to grow outside the home. Recognizing the important connection of home and school, we ask that your involvement include:

- Volunteering no more than three times per month in the classroom due to licensing regulations.

- Attending family activities held throughout the year to allow parents to share fun and exciting activities with their children.

- Two parent/teacher conferences.

- Reading seesaw messages and email.

The children love having Mom or Dad in the classroom, but we also welcome other family members! When in the classroom, you can play with your child and other small groups of children. You may read books, build with blocks, role-play, put together puzzles — whatever is fun for you. The staff is there to help if you have questions, and of

course the staff will handle discipline. You are always welcome to visit Nature Preschool anytime during hours of operation and participate in preschool activities.

In addition to formal parent teacher conferences throughout the year, we encourage you to talk with the classroom teachers whenever you have concerns or questions; however, please refrain from doing so during class time.

Volunteers:

Volunteers are always under the supervision of Nature Preschool staff. No child is ever left alone with a volunteer. Licensing regulations require volunteers to complete a statement indicating they have not been convicted of child abuse, child neglect, or a felony involving harm or threatened harm to an individual. This statement is kept on file. CNC requires all volunteers to complete a criminal history check.

Calendar:

Parent Orientation Payment Due	August August 18th	
First Day of Classes		September 7,8,9,10, 2027 (Staggard start half the class starts the first day and half the second day)
No School	Parent/ Teacher Conferences	November 2,3, 2027
No School	Thanksgiving break	November 24,25,26, 2027
No School	Winter Break	December 17, 2027 – Dec. 31st 2027 (Return 1-3-28)
No School	Martin Luther King Day	January 17, 2028
No School	Presidents Day	February 21, 2028
No School	Good Friday	April 14th, 2028
No School	Spring Break:	To be determined
Last day of school for M,W,F class		May 11, 2028
Last day of school for T, TH class		May 12, 2028
End of the year conferences		In May 2028

Communication and Documentation:

CNC Nature Preschool staff will document your child's progress in a variety of ways, including:

- Parent/teacher conferences
- Student portfolios
- Parent newsletters
- Weekly curriculum is posted every Monday.
- Project displays
- Emails with attached photos

You may request a special meeting with the preschool staff if you have concerns at any time.

Routine Field Trips:

One of the highlights for students enrolled in CNC Nature Preschool is the time we spend outdoors daily! The class and at least two preschool staff will often be accompanied by trained volunteers and/or naturalists as we hike the trails of Rowe Woods, which will exceed the required JFS staff: child ratios. Your signature on this permission slip provides permission for the entire school year for your child to engage in these daily excursions. These daily hikes are part of our curriculum except on days when there is a high wind advisory, or when thunder is heard (at which time we go indoors and remain there until thunder has not been heard again for 20 minutes).

During these routine hikes, children will have access to ponds that are two feet or more in depth. Water activities are not planned other than dipping for tadpoles and observing pond life from the safety of the boardwalk. Children will be supervised and all safety rules will be explained and enforced, around the pond areas and elsewhere on the property. Safety devices such as life preserver ring, ropes, and poles are located next to the pond board walks.

You are responsible for dressing your child for the weather (warm coats and boots and mittens in winter, rain gear on rainy days, etc.) If your child is unprepared, the entire class must remain indoors for the day, since we all hike as one class and do not have enough staff to supervise a child who must stay behind because they are unprepared.

Fire Emergency and Weather Alert Plan:

In the event of a fire emergency

Each staff member shall calmly inform the class to line up and prepare to exit the building. After exiting, the staff and children will meet in the pre-arranged designated spot (the far northwest corner of the parking lot). The roll will immediately be called. If any child is not accounted for, the staff member will alert another staff member, and the children will join that staff member for supervision. A staff member will immediately alert any authorities present of the missing child and will safely and calmly do everything possible to locate the child and return him/her to safety with the group.

In the event of a weather emergency

When a tornado *watch* is issued by the weather service for this area, the supervisor in charge shall prepare the designated tornado area and ensure that all children are within a short distance away. When a tornado *warning* has been issued the director will ring a bell, and the children and staff will report to the designated area. When the danger has been lifted by the weather service, the director will inform the staff to return to regular activities.

Designated tornado area

Within the preschool building, all children and staff will report to the restrooms, away from windows and doors. Within the Rowe Visitor Center, all children and staff will report to the basement.

Emergency School Closings

CNC will follow Milford Schools' closings for weather emergencies. Checking your class seesaw is the best way to find out. You may call the Preschool Director at (513) 490-7101 if you are unsure about the status of closings at CNC. If Milford is on a two-hour delay, the morning class will be canceled, but the afternoon class will still be in session at the regular scheduled time. If there is an early release, then the afternoon session will call all the families for early pick up or cancel afternoon class. If CNC must cancel school for any other reason, we will contact you directly. Parents have the final decision as to how safe it is to travel, even when school is open.

Parent Information:

The center is licensed to operate legally by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. This license is posted in a noticeable place for review.

A toll-free telephone number is listed on the center's license and may be used to report a suspected violation of the licensing law or administrative rules. The licensing rules governing childcare are available for review at the center.

The administrator and each employee of the center is required, under Section 2151.421 of the Ohio Revised Code, to report their suspicions of child abuse or child neglect to the local public children's services agency.

Any parent of a child enrolled in the center shall be permitted unlimited access to the center during all hours of operation for the purpose of contacting their children, evaluating the care provided by the center or evaluating the premises. Upon entering the premises, the parent, or guardian shall notify the Administrator of his/her presence.

The administrator's hours of availability and child/staff ratios are posted in a noticeable place in the center for review.

The licensing record, including licensing inspection reports, complaint investigation reports, and evaluation forms from the building and fire departments, is available for review upon written request from the Ohio department of job and family services.
It is unlawful for the center to discriminate in the enrollment of children upon the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin or disability in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 104 Stat. 32, 42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.

For more information about childcare licensing requirements as well as how to apply for child care assistance, Medicaid health screenings and early intervention services for your child, please visit http://jfs.ohio.gov/cdc/families.stm

Appendix C to rule 5101:2-12-07

Recommended Reading:

Recommended Adult Literature:

Leslie, C. (2010) *The Nature Connection*. Massachusetts: Storey Publishing.

Louv, R. (2006) *Last Child in the Woods.* New York: Workman Publishing.

Mooney, C. (2000) *Theories of Childhood*. St. Paul: Redleaf Press.

Young, J. (2010) *Coyote's Guide to Connecting with Nature.* Washington: Owlink Media Corporation.

Ward, J. (2008) *I Love Dirt*. Boston: Trumpeter.

Recommended Children's Literature:

Anthony, J. (1997) *The Dandelion.* Nevada City, CA: Dawn Publications.

Arnosky, J. (1987) *Raccoons and Ripe Corn.* New York: Shepard Books.

Arnosky, J. (1997) *Rabbits and Raindrops*. New York: Shepard Books.

Carle, E. (1990) *The Very Quiet Cricket.* New York: Philomel.

Luenn, N. (1994) *Squish.* New York: Atheneum (Simon and Schuster).

Martin, B. (1970) *The Turning of the Year*. New York: Harcourt.

Perkins, L. (2003) *Snow Music.* New York: Harper Collins.

Rice, J. (1987) *Those Mean Nasty Downright Disgusting but Invisible Germs.* St. Paul: Redleaf Press.

Rylant, C. (1986) *Night in the Country.* New York: Aladdin.

Yolan, J. (1987) *Owl Moon.* New York: Philomel.

Appendix:
Health Care Plan

Licensing regulations require CNC Nature Preschool to provide you with this copy of our Health Care Plan.

Health Care Plan:

Incident Reports

An incident report will be completed anytime an accident or illness occurs at CNC Nature Preschool. The staff member who attended to the sick or hurt child will be responsible for completing the report. When the parent of the sick or injured child arrives at the center, s/he will be responsible for signing a copy of the incident report.

Communicable Disease

Many communicable diseases can be prevented through appropriate hygiene and sanitation practices. Contamination of hands, toys, and other equipment in the classroom appears to play a role in the transmission of disease in childcare settings. Illnesses may be spread by way of:

- Human waste, such as urine and feces
- Body fluids, such as saliva, nasal discharge, eye discharge, open skin sores, and blood
- Direct skin-to-skin contact
- Touching a contaminated object
- Air droplets that result from sneezes and coughs

Since many infected people carry communicable diseases without symptoms, and many are contagious before they experience a symptom, caregivers need to protect themselves and the children they serve by carrying out, on a routine basis, Universal Precautions and sanitation procedures that approach every potential illness-spreading condition in the same way. With this concern in mind, the following policies shall be implemented at Nature Preschool:

Controlling Infection

If a child becomes ill while at Nature Preschool, the child's parents will be called immediately to pick him/her up. The child will be moved away from the rest of the group and made comfortable until the parent arrives. If the child handles toys or other items in the classroom, the items will be sanitized to reduce the risk to other students. When performing tasks that involve body fluids, employees will adhere to the following Universal Precaution procedures.

A child isolated due to suspected communicable disease shall be:

- Cared for in a portion of the room not being used.
- Within sight and hearing of an adult at all times.
- Made comfortable and provided a cot. All linens used by the ill child shall be laundered before being used by another child. After use, the cot shall be disinfected with appropriate products.
- Observed carefully for worsening conditions.
- Discharged to parent, guardian, or person designated by the parent as soon as possible. Parents will be given a discharge form which will detail the child's illness. Parents will be required to sign the form at the time of pick up.

Hand Washing

Staff must wash their hands:
• When arriving at school.
• Before preparing or serving any food or drink.
• After handling animals.

• After sneezing or blowing the nose.
• When hands are dirty.
• Before administering medication.
• Before and after giving first aid (when appropriate).
• After using the restroom.
•After contact with a child's bodily fluids, including blood, vomit, sputum, and mucus.

After washing hands, it is important not to touch anything (such as a child, chair, doorknob, etc.) before handling food.

Children must wash their hands:
• When arriving at school.
• Before eating.
• After using the restroom.
• After sneezing or blowing the nose.
• After playground activities.
• After handling animals.
• When hands appear to be dirty.

How hands should be washed:
• Wet both hands.
• Apply a small amount of liquid soap.
• Rub your hands together for at least fifteen (15) seconds to work up a good lather.
• Be sure to wash between your fingers, under your nails, and over all hand surfaces from the tips of the nails to beyond the wrists.
• Rinse hands well under a stream of warm running water.
• Leave water running while you dry your hands – you do not want to turn off the "dirty" faucet with your now clean hands.
• Dry your hands well with a paper towel.
• Use the paper towel to turn off the faucet.
• Dispose of the towel in the trash.
• Consider the use of hand lotion to prevent chapped and cracked skin.

Teaching children to wash their hands:
Children will be taught the correct hand washing technique as described above, including when and how to wash and dry hands (staff demonstrating correct techniques). Each child's hand washing technique will be observed and corrected as necessary.

Handling Bodily Fluids

Nature Preschool staff shall use Universal Precautions (i.e., protective gloves) when handling potential exposure to blood, including blood-containing body fluids and tissue discharges. Staff shall treat all situations involving potential contact with blood, body fluids, or medical waste with caution.

1. Wash hands after contact with any bodily substance or articles contaminated with a bodily substance. Use liquid soap from a dispenser, not bar soap.

2. Wear protective gloves on both hands for anticipated direct hand contact with blood, body fluids, medical waste, or contaminated objects or surfaces. Wash hands immediately after removing protective gloves.
3. When unanticipated exposure occurs, remove contaminated substances by washing hands and other skin surfaces immediately and thoroughly. If splashed in the eyes, nose, or mouth, flush with water immediately. Notify the director immediately. It is recommended that medical help be sought within two (2) hours of exposure.
4. Treat all linen soiled with blood and/or body secretions as infectious. Soiled linens and materials should be handled as little as possible and with minimum agitation. All linen should be bagged in a red-labeled biohazard bag at the location where it is used.
5. Trash must be placed in covered containers bagged in impervious bags; secure tops when filled, and double bag if a break-through is anticipated.
6. Areas, surfaces, or articles that are grossly soiled with blood or other body fluids must be cleaned with detergent/disinfectant.

Cleaning & Sanitizing of Equipment

Nature Preschool staff shall complete regular cleaning and sanitizing of equipment, toys, and surfaces. Cleaning procedures will be conducted according to the timeline below and anytime a child contracts a communicable disease. Bleach solution in a spray bottle or bucket will be used.

Daily	Weekly	Bi-weekly
Counter tops & tabletops	Cubbies	Dress-up clothes
Floors (sweep or vacuum)	Toys	
Door and cabinet handles	Loft	
Trash		
Sinks		
Restrooms		

Edited 11-20-2026