



Nature Kids Preschool



Welcome to the Tualatin Hills Nature Center's Nature Kids Preschool Program. Nature Kids offers preschoolers the opportunity to experience an education that allows them to learn, grow, play, and develop a relationship with nature, themselves and community. Nature Kids promotes whole-child development and builds a foundation for environmental literacy.

This Preschool Handbook provides the information you need to know about Nature Kids before your child begins the program. **Please review the entire handbook and sign and submit the Handbook Acknowledgement form upon completion.**

Thank you for choosing a nature-based preschool experience for your child! We look forward to sharing the Nature Kids journey with you and your family!

PHILOSOPHY

At Nature Kids, we believe that children thrive through hands-on exploration, curiosity-driven discovery, and meaningful connections with the natural world. Our nature-based program immerses children in outdoor experiences that engage all their senses, fostering a deep appreciation for nature while building essential skills for lifelong learning.

Using a nature-based curriculum, we create a positive and supportive environment where children are encouraged to play, create, explore, express ideas, and solve problems. By adopting a strength-based approach, we observe the world through each child's perspective and adapt our teaching strategies to meet their unique needs. We focus on what children can do and how we can support them to reach their full potential in a nurturing and inclusive environment.

We recognize that families play a vital role in a child's learning journey, and we actively invite them to be part of our classroom community. Through open communication, collaborative learning experiences, and family engagement opportunities, we build strong connections that support each child's growth.

To ensure a comprehensive understanding of each child's development, we get to know them individually and use documentation to identify their strengths. Guided by the Oregon Early Learning Division (ELD) Guidelines, we establish clear goals for learning and development that bridge early education and kindergarten. These guidelines emphasize practices that are developmentally appropriate, culturally responsive, and linguistically inclusive, honoring the diverse needs of children and families. We continue to evaluate and enhance our program and curriculum following the North American Association for Environmental Education Guidelines for Excellence and the Nature-Based Program Assessment Tool and Guidebook from Minnesota Children and Nature Connection.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Ladybugs, Owls, and Dragonflies are for children who are planning to enter kindergarten in the next school year. Chipmunks and Hummingbirds are for children that are participating in a long-term program for the first time, aren't old enough for our older class, with the majority of students being over a year from starting Kindergarten.

TYPICAL CLASS FLOW

A typical day consists of drop off and free play, circle time, snack, and story time. We then engage in learning centers and our outdoor nature activity, and then head home for the day. Our schedule is flexible to meet the needs of each class.

Class	Days	Time	Ages	Price	Location
Ladybugs	M/W/F	8:30 am – 11:30 am	4-5 yrs	\$398	Robin's Nest classroom, Tualatin Hills Nature Center
Owls	M/W/F	1:00 pm – 4:00 pm	4-5 yrs	\$398	Robin's Nest classroom, Tualatin Hills Nature Center
Dragonflies	M/W/F	9:00 am – noon	4-5 yrs	\$398	Jenkins Estate Gatehouse
Chipmunks	T/TH	9:00 am -11:30 am	3-4 yrs	\$290	Robin's Nest classroom, Tualatin Hills Nature Center
Hummingbirds	T/TH	9:00 am -11:30 am	3-4 yrs	\$290	Jenkins Estate Gatehouse

CONTACT INFORMATION

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(503) 619-3912

Tualatin Hills Nature Center: 15655 SW Millikan Way, Beaverton, OR 97003, (503) 629-6350
Jenkins Estate Gatehouse: 8005 SW Grabhorn Rd. Beaverton, OR 97007, (503) 629-6350

Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District

Preschool Handbook



Cedar Hills Recreation Center

11640 SW Park Way
Portland, OR 97225
503-629-6340

Conestoga Recreation & Aquatic Center

9985 SW 125th Ave
Beaverton, OR 97008
503-629-6313

Tualatin Hills Nature Park & Nature Center

15655 SW Millikan Way
Beaverton, OR 97003
503-629-6350



Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District

Nine-month Preschool Program

MONTHLY TUITION

There is a non-refundable \$50 registration fee due upon enrollment to hold your child's place in the program. Early withdrawal will result in forfeiture of your registration fee. If you withdraw from the program, your registration fee will not be applied to any other tuition payments or any other THPRD programs.

In-district or assessment-paid preschool tuition prices are listed online. Families who live outside of the THPRD district boundaries will need to pay a quarterly assessment fee or pay out-of-district prices. To see if you are in-district or to view out-of-district assessments visit www.thprd.org/activities/am-i-in-district.

Payments are due on the fifteenth of each month, one month in advance. September tuition is due August 15. Payments can be made in the following ways:

- **Online** – Tuition will be placed on your account approximately one to two weeks before it is due on the 15th. When logging onto your portal, click the “Pay Balance” link on the left-hand menu to see your tuition for the upcoming month. For security reasons, we do not keep credit cards on file.
- **In-Person** – You can pay in person at any THPRD facility during open hours.
- **Phone** – **We cannot take credit cards over the phone.** You may create a credit card token in your online account. For more information about this option, use the link provided: www.thprd.org/activities/payment-tokens.

The monthly tuition is based on the total number of days in attendance and divided equally among the nine months of the program. September tuition is due by August 15 and the last payment of the year, April 15 is for May tuition.

Late Tuition Payment Fee – Monthly tuition is due by the 15th of the prior month. After the 15th, payment is considered late, and a \$30 late fee will be charged. If tuition is not paid by the 1st of the month, your child is not registered for that month and will not be able to attend class until tuition and registration for the month is completed.

Employment Related Daycare (ERDC)

The Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) program helps families who are working, in school, or receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) pay for childcare, including registration fees. For more information visit:

<https://www.oregon.gov/delc/programs/Pages/erdc.aspx>

The following THPRD preschool programs are able to accept ERDC payments: Nature Kids Preschool at the Tualatin Hills Nature Center and Jenkins Estate, Bilingual Preschool at Conestoga Recreation & Aquatics Center, and Jump Start at Cedar Hills Recreation Center.

CHILDCARE TAX CREDIT

The federal tax number for childcare credits is 93-6011018. You are responsible for maintaining your own records for tax purposes. Invoices are available in your THPRD portal.

ATTENDANCE / ARRIVAL

We prefer children to arrive on time and encourage students to use the bathroom before check-in. Please try to schedule any appointments for your child around their school day to maintain the routine of coming to school on time and leaving on time to minimize disruptions for them, the teacher, and the class. If your child is going to be absent, arrive late, or leave early, notify their teacher or other center staff.

CHECK-IN PROCEDURE

Please bring your child to the classroom at the start time. Staff will check your child in at the door to the classroom. We ask that parents and guardians sign the child into class in a timely manner for the class to get started on time. THPRD staff will record the name of the adult and the time of drop-off. Staff will also confirm that required forms and information have been provided before the student enters the classroom. THPRD staff will then assume responsibility for the student.

CHANGES OF IMPORTANT INFORMATION

If you have a change in address, phone number, email, emergency phone number, physician name, or your child's health status, it is your responsibility to update your child's "Emergency Contact / Medical & Physical Information" online and notify staff. Once staff have been notified that an update has been made, the updated form will be printed and given to your teacher.

CHECK-OUT PROCEDURE

Check-out will take place at the same location as check-in. For safety reasons, all authorized individuals will be required to show a photo ID at pick-up. Please update your THPRD Emergency Contact form each time you have a new individual to add as an authorized pick-up. Only individuals listed on the Emergency Contact form will be authorized to pick-up your child.

THINGS TO BRING/WEAR

Preschool can be messy. As such, please dress your child in clothes that can get dirty. Also, make sure your child has appropriate clothing for art projects, active play, and weather variations. We go outdoors as often as possible for activities, rain or shine. **Label all removable clothes with your child's full name.**

- Come dressed for the weather (bring rubber boots, a raincoat, rain pants, etc., as needed).
- Wear closed toes shoes like sneakers/hiking boots.

- Bring small reusable water bottle and a hearty, **nut-free snack**.
- Bring small backpack or lunch box that can carry all of the above items.

THINGS NOT TO BRING

- Toys and electronic games or devices
- Pets, candy, gum, umbrellas
- Anything that you would rather not run the risk of getting dirty, broken, or lost.

NO SCHOOL DAYS

A yearly calendar will be provided before the school year begins. Listed below are major holidays we will not have class:

- Veteran's Day
- Thanksgiving
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Winter Break
- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- President's Day
- Spring Break

DISCONTINUATION

If for any reason your child will no longer be attending the program, please notify the lead teacher and the program coordinator in writing. A 30-day notice of discontinuation is requested. Reminder, the \$50 registration fee is non-refundable.

PROGRAM CANCELLATIONS AND INCLEMENT WEATHER

During inclement weather, THPRD classes/programs may be delayed or canceled if weather conditions warrant. Refunds will not be issued for inclement weather cancellations. Please note that THPRD closures do not follow Beaverton School District for delays or closures. For the latest information please check our website, www.thprd.org, or subscribe to THPRD text alerts by texting "join" to 833-340-0174. If your class is canceled every effort will be made to contact you by phone and/or email.

HEALTH

Please notify preschool staff if your child will be staying home sick and missing a day of school. If your child should develop an illness, please do not bring your child to class until they have been symptom-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.

Illness is defined as having one or more of the following symptoms:

- Fever
- New onset or severe cough
- Vomiting

- Nausea
- Diarrhea
- Unusual yellow color to skin or eyes
- Skin or eye lesions or rashes that are severe, weeping or pus-filled
- Stiff neck and headache with one or more of the symptoms listed above
- Difficult breathing or abnormal wheezing
- Complaints of severe pain

If your child develops any of these symptoms during school, you will be contacted and asked to pick your child up early. If your child should develop a communicable disease such as COVID-19, chicken pox, head lice, etc., please stay home and notify the preschool staff or Program Coordinator.

We do everything possible to minimize accidents through safety programs, close supervision, attentive facility maintenance, and consistent behavior management. In the event of an accident/injury, we will administer first aid and make every attempt to call the child's parent/guardian or emergency contact person. Our staff is certified in CPR and First Aid. If warranted, we will call 911 for emergency care.

MEDICATION

Medication brought to the school, prescription or non-prescription, must remain in its original container from the store, pharmacy, or doctor's office. It must be labeled with the participant's name and the date. For the staff to administer medication, the parent/guardian must fill out a THPRD medical authorization form that gives a description of the medicine, time to administer it, dosage, and a signature. This includes topical creams such as sunscreen or diaper cream.

SAFETY AND POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORT

A safe environment is a top priority for all of our programs and participants. It is our goal that each child feels safe and secure in our programs and that the environment promotes positive social skills, problem-solving, and conflict resolution. We nurture children's social behaviors listed below and hope for support from you at home, to ensure your child knows these behaviors.

We foster the following behaviors:

- Following directions
- Listening respectfully to others
- Keeping hands/feet/bodies to oneself
- Being kind, safe, and respectful to others

Our behavior management techniques include:

- Listening to each child's needs
- Clearly communicating the expected behavior and restating the expectation as needed

- Offering choices such as a break from the activity to re-regulate behavior
- Reinforcing appropriate behavior
- Re-directing the child to another activity

All behavior is an attempt to communicate a need or a want. If a participant engages in disruptive/inappropriate behavior, THPRD staff, in cooperation with the parent/guardian, teachers, and other stakeholders, will identify various accommodations and strategies to manage behavioral risks. When a participant's behaviors impact their ability to interact with others or the participant demonstrates the inability to control their emotions or to judge social and play situations appropriately, this may result in the interactive process with THPRD outlined below.

Step 1: Early Intervention

Program staff will work with participants and their parent/guardian to collaboratively resolve participant behavior. Program staff will document participant behavior and communicate with parents/guardians about the situation and steps taken by staff. We encourage parents/guardians to share tips with us on how to work best with their child.

Step 2: Behavior Support & Strategies

If the behavior continues, program staff will continue to document the participant's behaviors and determine appropriate intervention strategies. Program staff will work with the parent/guardian, teachers, and other stakeholders to gather additional information and to develop additional support methods and accommodations for the participant. These strategies may include quiet time to re-regulate or calling home for participant pick-up.

Step 3: Behavior Modification Plan Development & Implementation

Program staff will work with the parent/guardian, teachers, and other stakeholders to develop a behavior modification plan that outlines support methods and goals for participants to meet expectations for participation in the program. Program staff and parents/guardians will actively monitor and evaluate the plan to consider more effective accommodations or communicate any changes.

A parent or guardian may be required to attend class to observe their child's behavior. The parent/guardian is invited to observe up to an hour of class, depending on the circumstances. During the observation period, the parent/guardian is hands-off, watching their child's normal interactions with teachers and other children, rather than interacting with their child and the rest of the class. The goal is to give the parent/guardian a clear impression of the child's behavior to develop more strategies for supporting the child.

Step 4: Behavior Modification Plan Review

If, after implementation of behavior modifications, the behavior continues, program staff will refer the participant to the program coordinator, and parent/guardian will be contacted. The program coordinator will conference with the parent/guardian to review the behavior modification plan and may consider alternate strategies. A child may be asked to stay home from class for a predetermined length of time upon further occurrences of the concerned behavior.

Please note: Parents/guardians will not be allowed to be involved in disciplinary situations which involve any child other than their own.

INCLUSION SERVICES

THPRD's Adaptive and Inclusive Recreation program provides access to recreation programs within THPRD to patrons who have developmental, learning or physical disabilities or mental illness. Adaptive and Inclusive Recreation provides participants with the opportunity to enjoy recreational, educational, and leisure offerings through THPRD.

If you want to take advantage of Inclusion Services and request an Inclusion Assistant for your child for preschool this year, please apply on our website at <http://www.thprd.org/activities/adaptive-and-inclusive-recreation> at least 14 days prior to the first day of class. This allows Inclusion Services time to schedule a staff member to assist your child. If you do not contact inclusion services at least 14 days prior to the first day of class, this service cannot be guaranteed.

COMMUNICATION

We value open, direct, and constructive communication between our parents/guardians, the school community, and our staff. If you have any questions or concerns at any time, please call or email your Program Coordinator. We encourage parents/guardians to ask questions about matters before they become issues. Classroom concerns should be addressed through the teacher. If you have broader school issues, or if your concerns are about the teachers, please discuss them with the Program Coordinator.

You are encouraged to communicate with your child's teacher when something out of the ordinary occurs. Our teachers work hard to meet the needs of each student. As you share the information, please respect the privacy of the situation. Examples of concerns that may be helpful to share are: a family member is ill or has passed away, a parent or close family member is out of town, your child did not sleep well the previous night, a pet is missing or has passed away, an accident has occurred, or there is a change in family structure.

TEACHER CHECK-INS & CONFERENCES

Teacher check-ins are offered daily at pick-up. Teachers will tell the parent/guardian how the day went and other important information. It also allows teachers to discuss what their expectations are for the classroom, and for parents/guardians to ask questions. Teachers are open to having private meetings with parents/guardians, as necessary.

Our preschool programs provide student progress reports at the end of the school year. The goals are to assess your child's growth and development throughout the year and to help prepare them for kindergarten.

RESTROOM VISITS

All children in 3+-year-old preschool programs need to have the ability to, and be comfortable with, using the restroom independently without the use of pull-ups. A teacher will always accompany restroom trips and will always have a group of at least three people. Please take your student to the restroom **before** school begins each day. We understand that accidents do happen and families and guardians will be called if/when they occur.

Children in the 2½ - 3½-year-old class are not required to be potty trained. Staff will work with students to become more comfortable using the restroom independently. Please bring a change of clothes daily and pull-ups or diaper changing supplies needed.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are one of the most personal and individual events in our lives. We also tend to recognize them differently in different families. If you choose to celebrate your child's birthday at school, we can help integrate the celebration into our class schedule, so please discuss this in advance with your classroom teacher.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips will be scheduled during regular class hours. When we have a field trip, we ask parents/guardians to drop off and pick up at the field trip location. We may take smaller walking field trips to local parks.

VOLUNTEERING

Volunteers help teachers prepare crafts, join in with circle time, free play, and outside time, and get to see what life in our preschool is like! Volunteers assist the entire class and support teachers. Teachers are responsible for behavior and classroom management, but you are welcome to interact with and redirect your child as appropriate. In order to volunteer in our classrooms, adults must complete a two-part, background check process. One part is with THPRD and another through the Oregon Early Learning Division Central Background Check Registry which includes fingerprinting. For more information on volunteering in the classroom please contact your preschool lead staff.

PHOTOS

We often take photos of children participating in our programs. On occasion, will use these photographs in our printed publications and on our web pages. Please request, in writing, to the lead teacher or program coordinator if you do not wish your child's photo to be used.

REQUIRED INFORMATION DUE

Complete the following by August 15

- ☐ September Tuition Payment – **Due August 15**. All future payments are due on the 15th of the month, one month in advance.
- ☐ Log in to your Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District online account to fill out the **Emergency Contact & Medical Information** form.
 - Visit our website at www.thprd.org
 - Click “Registration LOGIN” in the upper right-hand corner
 - Enter your login information in the blue box.
 - If this is your first time logging in, please click “Creating an account is easy” and follow the instructions to create your account
 - If you forgot your login information, use the lost password or recover username links under the login button.
 - Click the link in the left-hand column that says “Emergency Contact & Medical Information”
 - Click “Add or View/Update Emergency Contact Information” under your child’s name
 - Be sure to add all authorized pick-ups, including yourself.
- ☐ Read and sign Handbook and Registration Acknowledgement Form
- ☐ “Get to Know Your Child” Questionnaire. Please email form back to Program Coordinator.



Handbook & Registration Acknowledgement

Student's Name: _____

I, _____, acknowledge that I have read and fully understand the requirements and the expectations for my child and myself as stated in the THPRD Nine-month *Preschool Handbook*.

As a parent/guardian, I understand I am to:

- Provide appropriate clothes, snacks, and water bottle for my child daily.
- Agree to follow the behavior support protocols and if necessary, work with THPRD staff to develop a Behavior Modification Plan and implement it.
- Arrange immediate transportation for my child to be picked up if a disciplinary situation arises, my child develops an illness, or is injured in a way that prevents them from being able to participate in the program.

I have read the financial policies as outlined in the *Preschool Handbook*. **I understand my registration fee is non-refundable, even if I withdraw my child from the program prior to the end of the school year.**

Signed: _____ Date: _____



Get to Know My Child

Student's Name: _____ Birthday: _____

What name will your child go by at school? _____

1. How does your child feel about attending school?

2. I have the following goals for my child during this year in preschool.

3. Is there any other information about your family dynamic that you think we should know?

4. Has your child ever spent time away from you before? If yes, how often and how long?

5. My child has the following physical or emotional needs:

6. What is your child's primary language? Does your child speak more than one language? If so, which ones?

7. Some of my child's special interests and favorite things to do are:
8. What strategies do you use at home to transition from one activity to another?
9. Do you have any concerns about your child running from the group? Has this happened before, and if so, how did you handle it?
10. Is there anything else that you would like us to know about your child?
11. After reading the information about Inclusion Services, is this a service that you would be interested in and want us to follow up with you about?
☐ Yes ☐ No
12. If there is any additional information that you want to share with our staff about your child, please contact the Program Coordinator to schedule a meeting or phone call.