



Nature Preschool

Parent Handbook

2023-2024

Stokes Nature Preschool

Location:

*Stokes Nature Center
2696 East Highway 89
Logan Canyon, UT*

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 4204
Logan, UT 84323-4204

Nature Center Telephone: 435-755-3239

Website: www.logannature.org

Staff:

Preschool Director/Lead Teacher: Sadie Enright

Lead Teacher: Kathy Campanella

Teachers: Talor Hall and Stacy Banks

SNC Executive Director: Kendra Penry-Clutter

SNC Director of Education: Michelle Sagers

All of our teachers are certified in child and infant First Aid and CPR. Children are under the direct supervision of a staff person at all times.

Mission:

Stokes Nature Center's mission is to provide nature education and promote outdoor exploration for people of all ages. SNC Nature Preschool shares this mission and aims to provide 3-5 year-old children with the skills necessary to enter the next phase of their lives with confidence.

Philosophy:

At Stokes Nature Preschool we believe that children are intrinsically motivated to learn. The teaching staff promotes individual learning and community building by:

- Providing an environment that encourages discovery, experimentation, and the opportunity to see the results of one's actions.
- Developing activities that encourage growth based on each child's abilities and interests.
- Encouraging problem solving and reflection by asking open-ended questions and providing information in response to each child's ideas, insights, and concerns.
- Assisting children in their interactions with each other and offering opportunities for cooperative learning.
- Appreciating the individuality of children and families and celebrating diversity.



Curriculum:

Stokes Nature Preschool teachers have and will continue to design and implement early childhood educational curriculum based on the following educational guides, while also incorporating Montessori-style learning materials and environments:

[Utah Early Childhood Core Standards](#)

The purpose of the Utah Early Learning Standards: Ages 3 to 5 document is to give administrators, early childhood professionals, and families of preschool-aged students guidance and resources regarding developmentally appropriate standards and goals for young children and students. Early childhood education is comprehensive and promotes cognitive, physical, language, and social emotional development. These standards foster school readiness and build a foundation for later academic and social success.

and

[Nature Based Preschool Professional Practice Guidebook](#)

A nature-based early childhood education program takes an immersive approach, putting nature at the heart of the program. In a nature-based early education program, nature is a setting for the program and an object of study. In addition, the care and protection of nature and the environment are regarded as a key outcome of the program, along with healthy child development. Some describe these nature-based early education programs as learning in nature, about nature, and for nature.

Sample Schedule

We will maintain a loose schedule, with predictable events throughout the day such as outdoor play, snack, yoga, story time and Montessori work time, to give children the security of structure. As the weather and air quality allow, we will spend as much time as possible outdoors. There may be days when this is simply not possible and we will do our best to bring nature indoors. The following is an example of our intended daily schedule:

Arrival

Drop off will be from 8:50 – 9:05am/12:20-12:35 p.m. at the River Trail trailhead. Please be sure that your child has used the toilet right before leaving for school. At 9:05 /12:35, we will begin our walk to the nature center building. Anyone arriving after this time will need to catch up with the group on foot.

Group Meeting

Children take part in conversation, create journal entries, engage in yoga and movement activities, listen to stories, sing songs, and participate in other whole-group activities.

Snack Time

Snack time is usually around 10:30 a.m./2:00 p.m. Each child should bring a snack and water bottle from home. Snacks will often be eaten outdoors so please pack any utensils that may be required or pack only foods that can be eaten without spoons/forks. Children will put away their snack and water bottle, wash hands and go directly to the next activity. Reusable containers for snacks are highly encouraged.

Choice Time (indoors or outdoors)

Children have a block of uninterrupted time to choose an activity among the different areas of the classroom or outdoor discovery areas. This allows children to lengthen attention spans and to develop competency with an activity.

Outdoor and classroom choices include Montessori-style materials, art supplies, books, natural materials for exploration and a variety of materials related to the topic of the week. All materials are well kept and children are taught to respect each item and put everything away after use. Some examples include:

- Blocks and building

- Art activities (e.g., painting, drawing, cutting, gluing)
- Sensory activities (e.g., water play, clay, sand trays)
- Practical Life Activities (sorting, pouring, spooning, tweezing)
- Science and discovery activities (e.g., observing an animal or experimenting with salt & ice)
- Writing activities (e.g., tracing letters in sand trays, journaling, playing with letter blocks)
- Reading activities (e.g., listening to a story or reading with a teacher or peer)
- Dramatic play activities (e.g., building animal homes, pretending to be an animal, performing for peers)
- Math and manipulative activities (e.g., puzzles, using manipulatives, playing a matching game)
- Music and movement activities (e.g., playing instruments, singing, dancing, poetry)
- Games and focused activities (e.g., sorting rocks, matching colors)

Small Group and Literacy

Adult-directed activities such as science experiments or looking at maps occur in small groups. These activities allow children the opportunity to ask more questions, and allows the teacher to evaluate each child's needs and interests. This is an opportunity for more concentrated learning, especially for those preparing for Kindergarten. A basic early literacy program will be presented once a week. This program will focus on letter and sound recognition, word recognition, syllables and the joy of reading.

Active Outdoor Play

Children will play in the outdoor play area as long as they are able to do so safely and comfortably. If the outdoor air temperature is below 10 degrees Fahrenheit or air quality is in the red zone, outdoor activity will be limited. Play area activities include the mud kitchen, climbing, water play, digging, raking, fine motor activities, and dramatic and imaginative play. Children are encouraged to play cooperatively or individually, whichever suits them at the time.

End of the Day

We clean up our materials and walk back to the trailhead. Students are encouraged to dress themselves when transitioning from indoors to outdoors. Teachers will guide each child through this process with the goal of being self-sufficient as soon as possible. In order to support this effort, parents are asked to allow children the opportunity to dress themselves at home as often as possible.

Departure/Pick Up

Parents will pick children up at the gate between 11:55-12:05/3:25-3:35. The teacher will record the name of the adult picking the child up. Please do not arrive later than 12:05/3:35! We do not charge extra for late pick ups but please keep in mind that teachers have schedules to maintain as well.

Schedule of Operation

Stokes Nature Preschool offers a 2-day per week and a 4-day per week program. Parents may choose to enroll their child in the 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. or 12:30-3:30 p.m. session on Mon/Wed, Tues/Thurs or Monday – Thursday.

All sessions will focus on connecting with nature and learning through play, social interactions and child-directed activities. Ages are mixed in all sessions, from 3-5 years old.

The 2023-2024 school year will begin on Tuesday, September 5, 2023 and end on May 16, 2024. Our calendar will closely follow the Cache County School District Calendar. Parents will be sent an electronic copy of the school calendar.

Family field days are scheduled once a month, usually on the second Friday. These are optional family outings and locations will vary throughout the year. Invitations will be sent in advance.

Clothing—Dressing for Success

Discovery-based learning can be messy. For this reason, it is important that children come dressed for messy, outdoor play. Clothing that can be covered in mud, paint, sand and other materials of discovery-based learning is necessary every day! Freedom from restrictive clothing is also necessary. Uncomfortable clothing and costumes get in the way during active play. Children also need comfortable, protective shoes with gripping soles for running, jumping, and climbing. Close-toed shoes are required and flip-flops or other slip-on shoes are not allowed.

Each child will need to bring a labeled bag of spare clothing to keep at preschool. This should include underwear, pants, shirt and socks. This clothing will be used in case of spills or soiled clothing and should be replaced if used.

Layers of clothing for changing weather and moving from outdoors to indoors are needed for children to enjoy the variety of activities offered throughout the day. You should expect your child to be outside every day. Clothing needs for each season are listed here:

Fall	Winter	Spring
Rubber boots	warm long underwear	Rubber boots
Jacket or sweatshirt	fleece pants	Jacket or sweatshirt
Rain jacket w/hood	fleece shirt/jacket	Rain jacket w/hood
Rain pants	Wool/fleece socks	Rain pants
Warm socks	Snow pants/bibs	Sun hat
Sun hat	Winter coat	*Umbrellas are not permitted at preschool
*Umbrellas are not permitted at preschool	Waterproof gloves or mittens	
	Scarf/neck cover	
	Hat/balaclava	
	Snow Boots	

If you would like assistance in acquiring the recommended clothing, please let us know. It is a good idea to ask other parents if they might have extra or outgrown gear before buying it new!

Parent Involvement

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 or her new experiences. It is an opportunity to share the excitement of meeting new people and sharing new ideas. Your preschooler will benefit from your support and understanding as he/she begins to grow outside the home. Recognizing the important connection of home and school, we ask that your involvement include:

- Attending Orientation, on August 30, where you will have a chance to meet the staff and explore the preschool spaces together.
- Watching the online orientation video prior to attending in-person orientation.
- Reading email updates, sent on Friday of each week, let your teacher know if you are not receiving these updates! Information for parents is included in these weekly emails.
- Chaperoning on the trail, if this is a suitable option for you and your child.
- Performing daily health checks prior to bringing your child to preschool.
- Notifying preschool staff immediately if your child has been exposed to an infectious disease such as Covid19, Measles, Mumps, Chicken Pox, Hand and Mouth or other contagious diseases.

Parents are always welcome to schedule a special visit to the Preschool, especially if you have something specific that you and your child would like to share with the class, (ie: art project, family traditions, nature

specimens, etc.). Traditions that are important to your family are a wonderful thing to share with the preschool class!

After school visits are also welcome. If you would like to visit the school, with or without your preschooler, please let your teacher or the preschool director know.

Registration Requirements

Documentation

The child's parent or guardian must provide the following documentation to Stokes Nature Preschool:

- Registration Form and Fee
- Health Form and Photo & Liability Waiver
- Tuition Contract
- COVID19 waiver

Enrollment Policy and Payment Options

Stokes Nature Preschool will accept children who are at least three years old and not older than four years old on September 1, 2023. All preschoolers must be fully independent when using the toilet, including recognizing and communicating the need to use the toilet, undressing, wiping and dressing themselves. Teachers will help a child with hand washing but not with other aspects of toilet-use. If a child is enrolled but is not fully toilet trained, then parents will be asked to withdraw that child and place him/her on the waiting list. If, once toilet training is completed, a space becomes available, then that child may be re-enrolled.

Early Registration for 2024-25, begins on the first Monday in February 2024. All currently enrolled families will be notified on that day and will have two weeks to register eligible children, including younger siblings who are eligible, for the 2024-25 school year. In the event that all available preschool openings are filled by returning students, then younger siblings of those students will be placed on the waiting list. If there are not enough openings for all eligible siblings to be enrolled, then priority will be given to the oldest children in that group.

After Early Registration, families on the waiting list will be notified in the order they are listed and given a one week time period to register or pass before the next family on the waiting list is notified. If all available openings are filled before the waiting list is exhausted, then the remaining families will be moved to the top of the waiting list

Your \$60 registration fee includes a one-year family membership to Stokes Nature Center. Tuition for the 2023-24 school year is \$1,800 or \$200 per month for two days/week and \$3,600 or \$400 per month for four days/week. Tuition is payable via automatic checking withdrawal/credit card payment or monthly online credit card payments. Monthly payments are withdrawn/due on the 10th of each month. Past due payments will incur a 3% late fee for each day past the 20th of the month until payment is received. Returned checks or insufficient funds will incur a \$25 fee and will be considered late until payment is received. Parents may also opt to pay for half or the entire school year in one payment. No tuition refunds or adjustments will be made due to missed days or cancellations due to weather or canyon conditions.

Stokes Nature Preschool is able to accept Department of Workforce Services (DWS) childcare subsidies for tuition payments. If you would like to know more about this service and/or apply for child care assistance, please visit the DWS website: jobs.utah.gov/myCase

Withdrawal Policy

If, for any reason, it becomes necessary to withdraw your child from the class, tuition for the next 30 days after your official withdrawal date is required. You will be asked to fill out an online withdrawal form and you will be charged \$25/day for each school day that your child would have attended during that 30 day period, whether he/she is in attendance or not. A child from the waiting list will immediately be offered the chance to fill the vacancy. Registration fees are non-refundable.

Snow Days & Other School Closings

Stokes Nature Preschool is generally canceled whenever Logan City or Cache County School District classes are canceled, including snow days. Canyon closures may also lead to preschool being canceled. If SNC Nature Preschool is ever canceled for unexpected circumstances, staff will text/call each parent no later than 8:15 a.m. on that day. If an alternative location can be arranged, then preschool will be held off-site that day. Refunds are not given for cancellations, but make up days may be scheduled.

Red Air Days

Stokes Nature Preschool will not be canceled due to air quality. All routines will be followed as usual unless the air quality is in the Red Zone. We will still meet at the trailhead and walk to the nature center on Red air days but all other activities will take place indoors until 11:45/3:15, when we will walk back down the trail. All parents are given the option to drive their child to and from the nature center on Red air days, but must wait until 9:15/12:45 to do so and must arrive for pick up at 11:40/3:10 in order to drive back down before the rest of the class leaves.

Attendance & Health

Regular attendance is important for your child to get the most from preschool. When there are frequent absences, a child may feel uncomfortable, as he/she may not know the schedule, activities, or names & faces of the teachers and other children. Friendships are easier when children attend regularly. That being said, there are times when it is best for a child NOT to be at school.

At-home symptom checks are mandatory before coming to preschool. If your child or anyone in your household is experiencing any of the following symptoms, then you are required to keep your child at home and notify a preschool staff member as soon as possible.

- A temperature of 100 degrees or higher in the past 24 hours,
- A low-grade fever and acting ill,
- An infectious disease,
- Vomiting or upset stomach,
- Diarrhea—more than two loose/watery stools,
- Constant runny nose, (unless it is due to seasonal allergies),
- Coughing,
- Muscle Pain,
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing,
- Chills,
- Sore throat,
- New loss of taste or smell

A parent or emergency contact will be called and asked to pick up your child if any of the above symptoms occur while he or she is at school.

You will be notified if a student in your child's class is known to have been exposed to or contracts any communicable disease. Parents are asked to inform teachers of any health concerns that may affect their classmates, including exposure to an individual who has been diagnosed with a communicable disease.

Because our students are likely on differing immunization schedules, it is each parent's responsibility to know which immunizations have been administered and which diseases are of concern for your child. If possible, please call or text a teacher if your child will not be attending. There are no make-up days or tuition refunds for absences.

General Rules of Behavior

- Respect staff, visitors and other children.
- Keep hands and body to oneself.
- Obscene and inappropriate language or gestures are not acceptable.
- Children will only leave the room or group with a teacher or parent.
- Respect and take care of preschool space, materials, and other people's belongings.
- We ask that children bring only what will fit in their backpacks.
- No toy guns, swords or knives are allowed. We encourage children to play kindly and will not discourage them from using natural objects such as sticks or other useful tools in an imaginary camping or hunting game, but we will ask that they do not pretend to shoot or otherwise injure another human.

Discipline

Positive discipline allows children to solve their own problems with the guidance and modeling of preschool staff. Children learn to use words instead of hitting and pushing. We will use redirection, removal from the group, or if the child is violent we may find it necessary to call a parent for pick up. The staff strives to work closely with parents to make the preschool experience the best that it can be for each child and family. In extreme situations where behavior is detrimental to the learning atmosphere on a continuing basis, a child may be asked to stay home for a day or two while the teachers work with the parents on a plan to help the child participate more appropriately at school.

Our "Safe Place" is a spot where children and teachers can go whenever they need time to regain composure and/or spend a few minutes alone. We practice breathing and calming techniques and try to remind each other of these whenever we sense the need. Emotions are normal and we encourage children to take responsibility for their words and actions, to recognize their emotions and learn to guide themselves through difficult moments.

Snacks

Each child will need to bring a labeled personal water bottle and a snack to preschool every day. Reusable containers for snacks are highly encouraged.

Snacks will not be shared with other students or teachers. Food will not be handed out at preschool.

There are emergency snacks kept at preschool in case a child arrives without a snack and is hungry. These snacks will only be provided to a child after a parent's approval has been obtained via text or phone call.

Only non-food treats may be brought for special occasions, (ie: stickers, pencils, cards, etc.).

Music & Movement

Twice a month, each class will have a 50-minute music and movement program taught by Ewa Wilczynski. Ewa's teaching philosophy is based on the Orff Schulwerk approach to teaching music. In this approach, students make music with activities that are enjoyable and natural for them such as songs, movements, improvisation and music games. Students learn musical concepts and improve their concentration as well as coordination and sensitivity to rhythm and tone through singing, dancing, and playing percussion instruments. Ewa brings her program to the nature center and works with the preschool staff to connect her music program to the nature themes being presented that week. At the end-of-year celebration, students will present a musical performance for parents.

Field Days

One Friday/month, usually the second Friday, we will visit an off-site location in the area. Invites with field day information will be sent out prior to these outings. Children must be chaperoned and siblings are welcome. Field Days are optional.

Animals at Preschool

Animals play a large part in our curriculum. We will occasionally have visiting animals as well as permanent "critters" at the nature center. Please notify your child's teacher of any animal or other allergies your child may have, or other concerns you have regarding animals. We do encounter dogs with their owners as we walk to and from preschool. If your child has a fear of dogs, please let us know so that we can be sure to help them feel safe, (pick them up or stand between them and the dog). **Please do not bring pets to preschool.**

EMERGENCY ACTION & RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

for Stokes Nature Preschool Program

In case of emergencies, call 911 if cell service is available

EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

In case of emergency, dial 911 if you have cellular service.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY – Immediate Evacuation Required – Outside Assistance Is Needed.

1. Ensure scene safety and address immediate health risks first.
2. Assign roles (1st aid, communications, shelter/food/water, SOAP notes).
3. Contact 911 via cell phone or landline
4. State the nature of emergency, location (lat/longs are best), time of initial issue, age, sex, level of consciousness, other known medical issues, & existing/known medications, callback information, what level of provider present with patient. Do not use student names over the phone.
5. Contact parent or approved emergency contact
6. If the injured student is removed from the group by emergency responders, make sure their parental release for medical treatment form goes with them.

NON-URGENT MEDICAL EMERGENCY (OR LOGISTICAL) – A condition not meriting immediate evacuation or outside assistance.

1. Ensure scene safety and address immediate health risks first.
2. Assign roles (1st aid, communications, shelter/food/water, SOAP notes).
3. Determine if the student can stay on the course/program or if evacuation is needed.
4. If the situation requires that the student leave the preschool, contact a parent or approved emergency contact via cell phone or landline and request immediate pick up.

BEHAVIORAL EVACUATIONS- evacuations for non-medical reasons

Preschool teachers have authority to send a student home for inappropriate or unsafe behavior. If someone's behavior could have severe consequences, you may treat it as a high priority medical evacuation. Ideally use a cell phone or landline to contact a supervisor for advice about problem students. Tell them: where you are, the nature of the situation, if a non-emergency evacuation is requested. The supervisors will be responsible for communicating with the student's parents.

For all incidents and near misses, fill out an Emergency and Accident Report form and submit it to the lead supervisor as soon as possible. Also submit a copy to the parent and keep a copy at preschool.

RISK MANAGEMENT POLICIES

- Unaccompanied minors are supervised, meaning within sight, by an instructor at all times.
- First Aid kit must be updated every August and remain in the gear room, out of reach of students.
- Program staff and participants are prohibited from having exclusive or physical relationships with any other program staff or participants during the entire course of the program, regardless of a person's age.
- Program staff and participants are prohibited from using alcohol, drugs, and tobacco during programs.

RISK MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

General

- Preschool Teachers will not administer medication to a student except in the case of a severe allergic reaction, in which case an epi-pen or other approved life-saving medication must be approved and provided by that student's legal guardian in advance.
- Before deciding to remove a student from a program for medical or behavioral reasons, instructors must seek approval from a lead teacher or program director.

Hiking the River Trail

- One teacher walks at the front of the group and another at the rear, with parent chaperones in between.
- Wading in the river is prohibited unless at least two teachers assess the situation and explicitly determine the activity to be permissible. Students are only permitted to be near the river if a teacher is with them.
- Continually monitor the weather; if there is lightning or excessively high wind, teachers and students must go indoors.



Child Care Licensing (CCL) is a state program within the Bureau of Licensing and Certification in the Utah Department of Health. CCL supports families by protecting the health and safety of children in the child care programs we oversee. All regulated facilities have at least one announced and one unannounced inspection each year.

When your child is in a child care program, ensure that you are aware of:

- Behavioral expectations for your child
- Policies and procedures
- How children will be properly supervised
- The caregiver-to-child ratio
- How emergencies will be handled
- Training and CCL background checks for all staff
- The daily schedule and how children's needs will be met

To learn more about the rules and requirements for child care programs, please visit: <https://childcarelicensing.utah.gov/Rules.html>

Having a city business license is not the same as having a child care license, certificate, or approval from CCL.

To contact CCL with questions, concerns, or complaints please visit us at:
childcarelicensing.utah.gov

To find child care providers and view their licensing record, please visit:
careaboutchildcare.utah.gov

To report suspected or witnessed child abuse or neglect, please call:
1-855-323-3237



LICENSE FOR COMMERCIAL PRESCHOOL

Name of Facility: Stokes Nature Preschool
Address: 2696 U.S. Highway 89 Logan, UT, 84321
Director: Sadie Enright
Licensee: Sadie Enright
Total Approved Capacity: 8
Date Issued: August 11, 2022
License No: F22-88421

Date of Expiration: October 31, 2023


Simon Bolivar
Office of Licensing
Director

***Our Vision:** Quality health and safety services for
people in Utah!*



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