

**EPISCOPAL DAY SCHOOL**  
**OF**  
**THE CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD**

**2021-2022**

**Nature School**  
**Parent and Student Handbook**



**EPISCOPAL DAY SCHOOL**

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*Foundations for Life*

**DUALLY ACCREDITED BY:**

THE SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS (SAIS) & AdvancED

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EDUCATIONAL RECORDS BUREAU (ERB)

# EDS NATURE SCHOOL

## Handbook

### Introduction

The EDS Nature School educators are truly looking forward to this coming school year with your child. This handbook is designed to give you all the key information you need to make your child’s experience at our Nature School as successful and enjoyable as possible. Please take some time to familiarize yourself with this information and do not hesitate to reach out to us if you have any further questions.

We recognize that this handbook is not an exhaustive guide, and we will be sending out further relevant information, updates, and reminders through email when needed.

### Important Contact Information

Nature Preschool		Nature Kindergarten	
<b>Lead Teacher:</b>	Wren Moody	<b>Lead Teacher:</b>	David Gardner
	<a href="mailto:wrenmoody@edsaugusta.com">wrenmoody@edsaugusta.com</a>		<a href="mailto:dgardner@edsaugusta.com">dgardner@edsaugusta.com</a>
	(706) 394-6052		(843) 737-2729
<b>Assistant Teacher:</b>	Ashley Williams	<b>Assistant Teacher:</b>	Amy Sutherland Nesbit
	<a href="mailto:awilliams@edsaugusta.com">awilliams@edsaugusta.com</a>		<a href="mailto:anesbit@edsaugusta.com">anesbit@edsaugusta.com</a>
	(706) 836-6973		(706) 373-3058

EDS Administrators		EDS School Nurse	
<b>Preschool Head</b>	Alicia Haltermann	<b>School Nurse:</b>	Mindy Golden
	<a href="mailto:ahaltermann@edsaugusta.com">ahaltermann@edsaugusta.com</a>		<a href="mailto:mgolden@edsaugusta.com">mgolden@edsaugusta.com</a>
	(706) 733-1192 x226		(706) 733-1193 x213
<b>Lower School Head</b>	Karen Dye		
	<a href="mailto:kdye@edsaugusta.com">kdye@edsaugusta.com</a>		
	(706) 733-1193 x218		

## Communication

Communication is very important to us. You will receive information concerning class activities, changes in routine, upcoming events, etc. by phone, text, email, Panther Post, and/or Seesaw app. We will limit our phone and text communication to time sensitive matters. Email will be the most common mode of regular communication, including the all-school Panther Post, which is distributed every Monday afternoon. Regular classroom activity updates can be found through the Seesaw app.

## Helpful Hints

- Please apply bug spray and sunscreen to your child before he/she arrives at school
- Bring a lunch, 1 snack for Kindergarten or 2 snacks for PreK, a water bottle, and a bookbag each day. **We are a peanut free zone - no peanuts or peanut products, please.**
- Water bottles should be double-walled/insulated, and filled with water and ice in the hot months.

## Supply List (Please label all items)

- Reusable water bottle
- 2x change of clothing to be kept at school, to include...
  - Pants
  - Shirts
  - Socks
  - Underwear
  - One face mask
  - Closed-toe shoes
- Sun hat
- Insect Repellent, suggestions:
  - No Natz bug repellent
  - Skin So Soft repellent
  - Repel Insect Repellent (Deet-Free)
- Cedarcide Organic spray (for ticks)
- Neutrogena Kid's Sunscreen
- Regular size book bag (no wheels)

## Only Nature Preschool

- Crib sheet
- Blanket
- Small pillow

## Schedule

**7:45am** Arrival @ Inquiry Studio

**8:10am** Tardy

*If students will arrive after 8:10am parents must text their teacher to make arrangements*

**12:00pm** Lunch

*Followed by nap/rest time for Nature Preschool students only*

**3:00pm** Dismissal

Nature School students will be attending Chapel and several co-curriculars at the Walton Way Campus on Tuesday mornings. The bus will leave the FWC at 8:10am on Tuesdays in order to be on time for Chapel.

## Illness

The Nature School takes precautions to prevent the spread of illness. This means keeping your child home if you suspect he/she is sick or if they are experiencing any of the symptoms below:

- Fever  $\geq 100^{\circ}\text{F}$  OR when your child has had a fever the night before-**must** be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school (fevers tend to rise as the day progresses)
- Significant respiratory distress (e.g. chronic or continuous coughing/wheezing)
- Lice or other infestation
- Cuts or wounds with bleeding or oozing
- Diarrhea, vomiting, or stomach complaints
- Symptoms of unknown origin, such as a rash
- Green or yellow runny nose (clear runny noses are okay)
- An illness during its contagious stage such as “pink eye”
- Your child requires one-on-one care OR more care than staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children in the class

**If any of these symptoms are present during drop off, or if your child is not feeling well, the teacher will request that the child go home to prevent the spread of illness.**

Recovering children are more likely to pick up a new illness. Keep in mind that we spend significant time outdoors daily, so if your child is **not** well enough to go outside, **please** keep him/her at home. If students are exposed to a contagious illness such as flu or strep, an email will be sent to parents within 24 hours of being notified. We maintain confidentiality as to the contagious student to protect your privacy.

### **Medicine At School**

Please be advised that staff will not administer medication to students unless a Medication Authorization Form has been completed by the parent.

### **Clothing**

We embrace all seasons and strive to remain outside during many types of weather. It is *CRITICAL* that your child has clothes and gear that allows him or her to play comfortably. We adhere to the motto:

**“There is no such thing as bad weather, only inappropriate clothing choices.”**

Below you will find a list of NECESSARY items as well as helpful tips and suggestions regarding clothing and gear. For the warmer months, lightweight/quick-drying apparel is recommended. For the colder months, long-sleeve shirts and layers are essential. Rain gear will be provided.

- **Long pants rather than shorts** (protects legs from insects, thorns, poison ivy, etc...)
- Shirts
- Socks
- **Closed-toe shoes** (no sandals or cowboy boots)
- Sun hat
- Winter hat and gloves

### **Challenges Present in Nature**

#### **Ticks**

Ticks are part of nature, unfortunately an unpleasant part. They can carry diseases like Lyme and Anaplasmosis. To keep children as safe as possible from ticks, we do frequent

“spot checks” during class and when we return from our hike at the end of class. We will discuss a few key points about ticks with the students such as what they look like, and what to do if they see a tick. Teachers carry “tick kits” in trail bags to ensure safe removal of a tick if one is attached. Ticks can be very tiny, especially deer ticks. Dressing children in long sleeves and pants that are light colored, and tucking pants into socks are some ways to prevent the ticks getting onto children’s bodies. **We strongly encourage you to check for ticks every day.** We also recommend a bath or shower for children after school.

If you do find a tick embedded in your child’s skin after school, remove it by pinching the base right by the skin to ensure you remove the biting parts. Make sure to keep that tick in a zip-lock bag in a freezer, labelled with your child’s name, date found, and location on the body. It is unlikely that there will be an adverse reaction (especially if the tick is removed within 24hrs of embedding). If your child does develop other symptoms, you will have the tick available for the doctor to ID and run tests on to identify potential pathogens.

You can find more information on ticks at: [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention -https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/index.html)

## **Poison Ivy**

An essential daily activity in Nature School is exploration in the forest, and as such your student may be exposed to poison ivy at times. Our teachers identify poison ivy and steer clear of it on the trails and will remove it from common areas of play. If a student is knowingly exposed at school, the teachers will wash the area with Tecnu soap (<https://teclabsinc.com/>). If you are suspicious of any rash your child displays, place a call to your physician.

## **Bees**

Bees are celebrated at the EDS Nature School! They are the unsung heroes of the food chain. We encourage children to respect, but not touch, our buzzing friends. In the unlikely event of a sting, we will monitor the child’s condition and notify parents.

***NOTE: If your child requires an EpiPen if stung, please give one to your child’s teacher at the start of the school year, along with the required Medication Authorization Form signed by a physician. EpiPen must be kept in the original prescription box.***

## **Mud and Water**

Our bodies and clothes get messy, muddy, and wet. Sometimes all this learning is even in our hair! Because we encourage this kind of whole-hearted, whole-bodied learning, we urge you to dress your child in clothes that are not restrictive, and that can get dirty and wet. Our classes exemplify what it means to learn by doing.

## **Discipline**

The physical and emotional well-being of every child is of utmost importance. Every child will be made to feel safe and protected while in our care. We cultivate a calm, empathetic atmosphere with clear expectations for all participants. To maintain this atmosphere, a balance of structured learning and self-directed play means that children are engaged in positive activities. Adults are always available to model or facilitate appropriate strategies for children to solve social problems, such as sharing or including peers in group play.

Whenever a child is having a hard time controlling his or her behavior, adults assist in a calm, helpful manner. We practice conflict resolution that encourages children to identify and express what they are feeling to become more emotionally literate and empathetic. We help children understand the connection between their behavior and consequences.

Our discipline and behavior management is centered around positive reinforcement. Other methods of discipline include setting clear rules, redirection, reminders of expectations and encouragement.

Teachers routinely observe the children to become aware of triggers that may predict challenging behavior. These may include particular events, activities, interactions or other contextual factors unique to an individual child. Through close observation and assessment of the function of the child's behavior, teachers are better equipped to develop individualized plans for each child's success.

We communicate regularly with parents. If a student is not responding to disciplinary efforts, we will work with parents/ guardians to address behaviors of concern and implement an education support plan designed to meet the child's unique needs. We balance the needs of the entire class with the support necessary for individual children to be successful.

## **Safety**

## **General Forest Rules**

**No Toys** - Nature provides all the materials necessary for playing outdoors, so toys from home are not necessary.

**Boundaries** - Children are expected to stay within the boundaries that have been established by teachers.

**Climbing trees** - Children may climb trees at school while under adult supervision. They may not climb higher than twice their height and only after they have demonstrated competence.

**Sticks** - The children may not play with sticks that are longer than their arms, unless it is clearly and responsibly being used as a walking stick, a tool (digging, for example), or for building, under the supervision of the teachers. Running is not permitted while holding a stick.

**Ingestion** - Children will not eat or drink any substance found in nature without teacher permission.

## **Physical Safety**

We are committed to keeping our children safe. We adhere to the following guidelines to provide consistent boundaries in the name of safety. The children are always within eyesight and earshot of a member of the faculty. Each class stays together in designated areas specific to each portion of the day. Teachers carry emergency forms and an official first aid kit at all times. There are always two or more adults onsite at all times.

## **Site Assessment**

The site and structures are checked for safety each morning before the children arrive at school.

## **First Aid at School**

All of our faculty are First Aid, CPR, and AED certified and our lead teachers are Wilderness First Aid certified. Teachers have easy access to First Aid kits at all times.

In the case of a minor injury, the teachers may administer basic first aid. The parents will be notified of any injuries at pickup (or after school via phone call if the child is picked up by another adult). In the case of a more serious injury, the teachers will call 911, the



parents' emergency contact, and apply first aid until medical help arrives. Children will always be sent to the nearest hospital if such extreme measures are needed.

## **Emergency Evacuation**

In the unlikely event that we would need to evacuate the property, all parents would be notified via phone call and/or text.