

**Wild Hearts Nature School
at The Garden Montessori**



Community Handbook

2019-20

“When children come into contact with nature,
they reveal their strength.” ~Dr. Maria Montessori

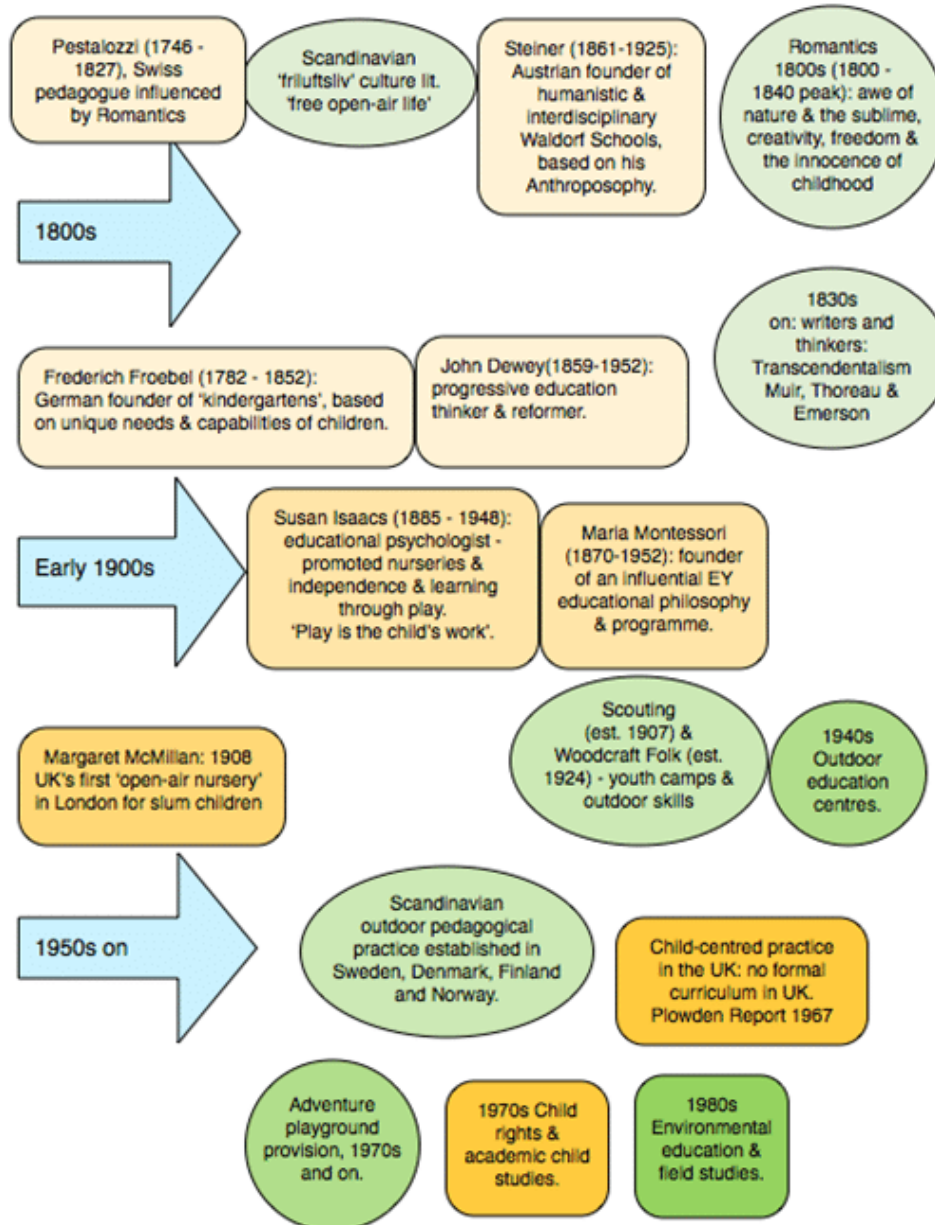
Maria Montessori lived her life as a passionate child advocate. One thing she emphasized after many years of observation and research, is that the process in which a child goes through to gather knowledge is more important than the knowledge itself. The spontaneous joy of discovery brought on by repetition and concentration develops a firm foundation for the child’s self-esteem. She found that as the child’s sense of awareness grows, the child realizes their capabilities and thus understands their place in the world. The child grows to become a responsible adult who develops a “passion” for serving humankind. Wild Hearts is based on Montessori principles while also utilizing other progressive and alternative early education philosophies. This program is designed specifically to be a complete nature immersion experience for preschool-aged children, highlighting the importance of outdoor play and learning.

Your child will be experiencing some important opportunities that a classroom setting alone can’t always provide. Things they may experience on a camping trip, on a farm or on a hike are just some of the lessons they’ll be putting into practice during their days at Wild Hearts. We also place a heavy emphasis on process-based art opportunities for the children, offering a wide variety of quality art supplies and inviting children to create without the need for a final “product.”

We encourage your child to explore, experience, and learn in a safe environment with knowledgeable guides. Through a wide variety of materials, some found in nature, some created by guides and some purchased to enhance their experience, our goal is to help your child develop the values of cooperation, sharing and respect, along with a deep love of the arts, nature and the outdoors.

The staff at Wild Hearts would like to take this opportunity to thank you for allowing us to share an important time in the life of your child. We appreciate and value the trust you have placed in us. This handbook should be read as a living document, welcoming to new ideas and suggestions by all members of the community. Any changes that are made to policies in this handbook will be announced to all enrolled families.

History of Forest Schools



Introduction to the “Classroom”

We ask that you rid yourselves of your preconceived notions of a traditional classroom setting. The Wild Hearts “classroom” will have no walls; its only boundaries will be those put in place to keep our students safe. It is also important to acknowledge the fact that children are instinctive learners who are fully capable of leading their own education; the adults are simply guides who allow this natural process to unfold. Below, the various areas of learning are outlined and explained. Please be sure to read more about our “emergent curriculum” section following these areas.

Practical Life

Practical Life skills are important because we use them during our entire lifetime. We all need to learn grace and courtesy in order to maintain balance and control over our body and mind. We need to prepare the hand so that we can learn to write and manipulate objects and tools we come in contact with everyday. We need to know how to take care of our own person first, and then we can experience the freedom to take care of our environment. Children will learn to grow food and will understand the connection between gardening and being sustained with energy so we may function fully, and between gardening and the sustainability of our world. Practical Life exercises must be learned so that the child will develop to their fullest potential and take their place in the history of our world. It is our role as caretakers of the adults of tomorrow to entice the child to work with purpose in everything they do!

Sensorial

A young child first perceives their world through their five senses; taste, touch, smell, hearing and seeing. Dr. Montessori designed Sensorial activities that give children the opportunity to develop order, broaden and refine their senses. As the child becomes independently involved, they discover their own capabilities. Therefore, a Montessori child becomes self-disciplined and develops an organized approach to solving problems, a positive influence in the world. The outdoors are full of opportunities for sensorial experiences: everything one sees in the forest has a texture, a smell, a size, a shape, a color and all of these things can be explored and understood through open-ended activities or even simple discovery and observation.

Language

Readiness for Language begins at home in infancy as the child absorbs oral language. A young child needs to be talked to and read to from birth on. Preparation for Language takes place in both Practical Life and Sensorial activities. In Practical Life the child develops control of the hand. In Sensorial the child learns visual discrimination. Carefully chosen children’s literature and music (and activities) are one of the main foundations for this program. Through language, children can connect ideas to what they’re seeing and doing in nature every day. These activities teach the child who can express themselves orally how to analyze the sounds of the language. The child learns that these sounds are represented by symbols. We communicate by how we use these symbols to represent our speech pattern. It is our role as caretakers of the adults of tomorrow; to teach our children today that communication is the means by which human beings share their passion for life with each other!

Mathematics

Mathematics is a way of looking at the world around us. It is a language for understanding and expressing measurable relationships in our world. The purpose of developing Mathematics is to aid the child in acquiring those tools which allow them to function in society and to interact with others. Montessori is a reality-based philosophy, so what better place to learn it than in the real world? Our world is dependent upon Mathematics...from counting pennies to cooking oatmeal. Children come into contact with numbers early on in life. The goal is to understand math...logical mathematical thinking...not in computing. Mathematical ideas are awakened in the young child first through the use of practical life exercises. These activities develop coordination between the brain and the senses. Sensorial exercises develop concrete manipulative experiences in discovering perceptual relationships. Mathematical concepts are all around us, and guides will allow children to discover them in a natural environment; whether it is counting acorns, drawing numeral shapes in the sand, lining up sticks from smallest to largest or simply examining the shape and outline of a leaf; all of these little things are naturally creating a foundation for mathematical thinking.

Cultural Studies

Cultural studies encapsulates all of those areas of learning about which children are naturally curious. *Physical science* promotes this sense of inquiry. Why, What, When, Who and How are some of the first words they learn. There is no better place than the outdoors to learn the fundamentals of science. *Ecology* allows children to learn to value the earth around them as they become increasingly aware of what is needed to maintain the balance of nature. As responsible guides, it is our responsibility to model respect for our living world. Children realize through the study of *Geology* that the Earth's past has been recorded in the rocks. Hopefully, this helps children recognize the treasures at their feet, as well as the realization that our planet is in a constant state of change. Children realize through the study of *Botany* that without plants we couldn't breathe the air that we need to sustain life. An early appreciation of plant life will develop a sense of wonder and love for all living things. Through the study of *Zoology*, a sense of wonder and love for all that is living develops quickly as a child becomes aware of their place in the Animal Kingdom. Our children must learn at an early age how to live with others inhabiting our planet in order for there to be Peace on Earth! Children need to be introduced to Geography to help them place themselves on this planet. The actual spot we occupy: Rooms, Houses, Neighborhoods, Cities, Counties, States, Countries, Continents, Air, Land, Water. Hopefully, this will lead to a love for the land and for its peoples. History is the recorded progression of humankind's impact on the earth. In order to appreciate our past achievements, children need to be introduced to abstract historical concepts at an early age. History helps a child locate their place in time so that human development will continue to be appreciated. Astronomy gives children the idea that there are other orbs than just the Earth's. Moon phases, planets, stars...these all give them a realization of their relationship to the cosmos, which hopefully will develop a sense of wonder, excitement and quest for the future.

Music

Children love songs and music from a very early age. The world is a delight when a child is introduced to music. Concepts of loud and soft, high and low, short and long, fast and slow, carry over to other parts of their world. Music is also very beneficial for language development, literacy and even math skills, research has proven time and again this is one of the best ways to introduce children to these concepts.

Art

Foundation for artistic development is laid in the early years of a child's life. Eye and hand coordination is refined while using a brush, sculpting play dough, sewing, cutting, etc. Children will have access to a wide variety quality art supplies and will be invited to participate in open-ended art opportunities daily. This is where our Reggio inspiration will really show, guides will also carefully document children's artwork and provide detailed insight for parents into the creative minds of their children. Introduction to artists and styles of art connect the child to the colors, forms and textures of the world and its peoples. What a priceless gift we give children when we encourage them to express their love of nature, self and others in the art that they make!

Yoga

We have found that offering children the opportunity for yoga and mindfulness practice regularly has a deep impact on their behaviors and their emotional skills. Daily yoga and mindfulness, whether as a whole group, or just for an individual needing a moment to his/herself will be the core of our discipline approach, offering children the opportunity to reflect on their feelings, express them, breathe them out strengthens their coping skills.

An EMERGENT Curriculum

For the majority of learning happening at Wild Hearts, teachers will utilize an Emergent Curriculum, which means they will carefully and closely observe the activity of the children in the program and will base learning opportunities on these observations. This means the curriculum will change based on the children's specific needs and interests and will continue to grow and evolve to directly reflect the children's growth throughout the course of the year.

General Information

Early Childhood Goals

1. To provide an environment in which curiosity and the joy of discovery and understanding motivates learning.
2. A place where children are encouraged to learn to question, to become involved, to live and work together, and to learn by helping one another.
3. To provide an atmosphere which frees the child's potential for self development.
4. To help the child to discover the joys of intellectual and artistic endeavor, and to grow through activities that stimulate and fulfill individual abilities.
5. To provide an extended family that will enhance the well-being of the community.
6. To provide opportunities for parent education and involvement in their children's learning experience.
7. To foster a deep love of nature and respect for the world around us.

Program Purpose and Description

The purpose of Wild Hearts is to provide an environment that encourages all children to develop to their fullest potential while immersed in nature and all of the opportunities that affords. We provide the highest quality of early childhood education and care based on an emergent curriculum. We are open between the hours of 9am and 12pm Tuesday through Thursday during the school year. The program serves children age 3-6 years. The program takes place fully outdoors (barring unsafe weather) and will maintain at least a 6:1 child: adult ratio at all times.

Staff

The administrative staff at Wild Hearts is comprised of CEO & Founder, Ellen Graham (Admissions & Financial Office in Charlotte); Operations Director, Kathryn Hall and Program Coordinator, Karen Entin, who is also the lead guide for Wild Hearts. Both Kathryn & Karen work out of our Linden Rd campus in Pinehurst. The CEO & Founder, Ellen Graham, will manage the financial and business operations for Wild Hearts. The Operations Director, Kathryn Hall, will serve as staff supervisor and will oversee all daily operations. The Program Coordinator, Karen Entin, will develop the curriculum, manage the children's development and safety and implement all aspects of the program daily. A second guide will assist Karen in overall daily management and implementation of the program. Staff qualifications and child/teacher ratios often exceed local and state requirements. Our staff is always available to discuss any special needs or concerns you may have. Parent-teacher conferences will be scheduled bi-annually.

Parent Involvement

Parent involvement is encouraged. Your child will benefit most from our center if parents and staff communicate regularly in both formal meetings and informal conversation. By working together, we can design a program that will respond to the individual needs of your child. Parents meetings will be held throughout the year and child care will be provided so that parents can attend. Parents are encouraged to make appointments to observe during operating hours, to volunteer in the classroom and to participate as much as is desired by both parties. Also, an appointment for a parent-teacher conference may be made at any point in time by a parent. Meanwhile, feel free to ask any questions that arise. If a parent has a particular interest or skill to share with their child's classroom, we hope you will let us know so we can set up a time to do so. We also hope that parents will get to know each other and arrange for children to spend time together outside of the classroom, class picnics on the playground after school ends are also welcome.

Rest/Nap Time

While, we will not have a time set aside for all children to rest, if any child shows signs of needing it, quiet time will be provided in a comfortable place. Please provide any comfort items needed if you think your child might need to rest while in our care.

Holidays

Please see our Parent Portal for a full calendar.

Note: Monthly fees do not changed based on days of attendance, including scheduled holidays. See information below about Make-Up Days.

Weather

If the local public school district is closed due to snow, ice or other inclement weather, The Garden/Wild Hearts will also be closed. If the local public school district does not close schools due to inclement weather, you may assume that we are also open. Likewise, if the local public school district calls for schools to close early due to inclement weather, we will also close early. Tuition will not be reduced for such closing. If the local public school district calls for a delayed start, we will make our own decision regarding whether to open or not. Parents will be notified of any unscheduled closings by email, Remind app and updates will be posted on our Facebook page.

NOTE: Monthly fees do not change due to missed days due to inclement weather.

Understand the Weather

Wind-Chill



- 30° is *chilly* and generally uncomfortable
- 15° to 30° is *cold*
- 0° to 15° is *very cold*
- -20° to 0° is *bitter cold* with significant risk of *frostbite*
- -20° to -60° is *extreme cold* and *frostbite* is likely
- -60° is *frigid* and exposed *skin will freeze* in 1 minute

Heat Index



- 80° or below is considered *comfortable*
- 90° beginning to feel *uncomfortable*
- 100° *uncomfortable* and may be *hazardous*
- 110° considered *dangerous*

All temperatures are in degrees Fahrenheit

Child Care Weather Watch

Wind-Chill Factor Chart (in Fahrenheit)										
		Wind Speed in mph								
		Calm	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40
Air Temperature	40	40	36	34	32	30	29	28	28	27
	30	30	25	21	19	17	16	15	14	13
	20	20	13	9	6	4	3	1	0	-1
	10	10	1	-4	-7	-9	-11	-12	-14	-15
	0	0	-11	-16	-19	-22	-24	-26	-27	-29
	-10	-10	-22	-28	-32	-35	-37	-39	-41	-43

Comfortable for out door play
 Caution
 Danger

Heat Index Chart (in Fahrenheit %)														
		Relative Humidity (Percent)												
		40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100
Air Temperature (F)	80	80	80	81	81	82	82	83	84	84	85	86	86	87
	84	83	84	85	86	88	89	90	92	94	96	98	100	103
	90	91	93	95	97	100	103	105	109	113	117	122	127	132
	94	97	100	103	106	110	114	119	124	129	135			
	100	109	114	118	124	129	130							
	104	119	124	131	137									

Wild Hearts will use the above chart to determine weather safety and closings of Wild Hearts. The following actions will be taken based on the chart above:

1. Wild Hearts will announce closings, early dismissals or delayed starts no later than 8am daily if conditions are predicted to be in the RED zones.
2. Wild Hearts staff will bring children indoors if real-time conditions change or differ from predictions and enter the RED zones during school hours; depending on the amount of time left in the school day, parents may be contacted for early dismissal.
3. When conditions are or are predicted to be in the YELLOW zones, Wild Hearts staff will take the following safety actions for COLD weather:
 - a) Ensure children are fully covered with appropriate clothing (gloves, winter coats, snowsuits - if applicable, warm hats, warm socks and rain or snow boots, warm layers)

underneath). *If parents fail to send the appropriate clothing with their child to school, the parent will be contacted to bring appropriate clothing and/or pick their child up from school while s/he remains in the office.*

b) Plan and promote activities that involve movement; take indoor breaks for story-time or sedentary activities as needed.

4. When conditions are or are predicted to be in the YELLOW zones, Wild Hearts staff will take the following safety actions for HOT weather:

a) Ensure children are appropriately dressed and prepared for the weather (sun hats, lightweight clothing, sunscreen, bug spray, swimsuits or moisture-wick clothing). *If parents fail to send the appropriate clothing/products with their child to school, the parent will be contacted to bring appropriate clothing/products and/or pick their child up from school while s/he remains in the office.*

b) Plan and promote activities that involve water play and/or keep children shaded areas only; indoor breaks for story-time or sedentary activities as needed.

c) Provide consistent reminders for mandatory water breaks every 20 minutes. *If parents fail to send in a water bottle, cups of water will be provided, but please try to remember to send in a water bottle daily!*

5. When thunderstorms, lightning, tornadoes, hurricanes, tropical storms or any other extreme weather (that is considered dangerous to be outdoors in OR creates hazardous road conditions) is predicted at a percentage higher than 50% during school hours, Wild Hearts staff will make a call for delayed start, early dismissal or closing by 8 am daily and parents will be notified by Remind, email & updates posted to the Facebook page.

6. Wild Hearts will remain open in rainy weather and children are expected to be sent to school with the appropriate gear needed to participate in outdoor programming. Gear includes rubber/plastic rain boots (or insulated snow boots for colder weather), hooded water resistant coat or jacket, umbrella (if desired), water-resistant clothing (especially pants), change of clothes (in case of mud), small towel, rain hat if desired. There is a lot to be learned in the rain and outdoor programming will continue in these conditions. *If parents fail to send the appropriate clothing/products with their child to school, the parent will be contacted to bring appropriate clothing/products and/or pick their child up from school while s/he remains in the office.*

Make-Up Days & Refund Policy

The Garden has a week of make-up days built into the calendar for cancellations due to thunderstorms or other weather that is unsafe for children (on days that The Garden Toddler Community/indoor programming remains open). Up to 3 days will be offered for make-up at the end of the school year, we are unable to offer additional make-up days or refunds for cancellations beyond 3 days. Wild Hearts will do their best to offer make-up days for thunderstorm closings, but parents should acknowledge upon enrollment that it may not always be possible.

Two Households

When parents are living separately, we make every effort to provide correspondence to both parents. We consider both parents important to the child's school experience and avoid expressing any alliance with either parent over the other. It is necessary for us to refuse to become involved in disagreements the parents may have. Parents should come to terms of agreement for purposes of instructing the center as to their wishes regarding their child. Custody agreements should be presented to our administration upon enrollment. Wild Hearts, The Garden or any other related administration or staff member will not participate in custody hearings regarding enrolled or non-enrolled students. Should any legal matter arise regarding custody or disagreement between two parents or guardians that involves Wild Hearts, The Garden or Graham & Keane, LLC, parents are responsible for any legal fees incurred due to their child's enrollment in the program.

Arrival and Departure; Release of Children

Children must be dropped off in the morning between 8:45 and 9:00 a.m. using the carpool line at the playground area. Parents should remain in the vehicle and allow the staff member to remove the child from the car and sign them in for the day. Parents should not allow their children to leave their car until a staff member is there and ready to receive children.

Parents must park in the spaces facing the playground during pick-up time (12:00-12:15pm). A staff member will bring you the sign-out sheet and your child will be brought to the car. Parents must sign the sign-out sheet with the proper time of pick-up at the end of the day, children cannot be signed out later than 12:15pm.

It is very important that parents do not bring a child to the school earlier than the scheduled arrival time and be prompt to pick him/her up at dismissal. We appreciate your promptness, we have other children arriving for school during the times just before and just after Wild Hearts drop-off/pick-up times, so it is extremely important for the safety and organization of all families enrolled that each family adheres to his/her designated drop-off/pick-up times.

Your child will be released only to parents and persons for whom the center has **written authorization**. Staff unfamiliar with any person picking up a child may stop to check the child's file, see the person's I.D., and then have the person sign the child out. Please do not call us on the phone to give authorization for a pick-up. **It must be in writing.**

We cannot by law refuse a parent access to his/her child without a court order instructing us to do so. Please provide the Administrative office with a copy of a court order if you are instructing us not to release your child to his/her other parent.

Discipline

We use several disciplinary techniques which help children to internalize rules and become self-directed in their behavior. These include giving choices, problem solving, natural and logical consequences, redirecting, yoga, meditation, and "cooling off" periods. Wild Hearts guides will never use rewards or punishments in response to behavior or in order to manipulate behavior. Details are listed separately in our Discipline Policy.

Assessment Statement

In keeping with our belief in the value of early intervention for children with developmental problems, our staff is alert to normal developmental behavior. They may express concerns to parents (in a private setting) if they see reason to further evaluate a child's behavior. This is our attempt to be of support and help to parents and is considered our professional responsibility. Staff members are not trained to diagnose special needs. We instead attempt to point out variance from typical development and recommend further assessment, appropriate programs, activities or other helpful information if parents desire.

Snacks

Children should bring with them to school a healthy snack each day in a reusable container. Please do not send in sugary foods or foods in packaging that the child cannot open him/herself. Please be sure to submit the proper paperwork if your child has any food allergies to see what accommodations can be made. Please do not send in food to be shared with other children.

Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect

It is our intent to build a partnership with parents to help them provide the most suitable environment possible for children. Toward this goal, we have many resources and referrals available to parents upon request. It is important, also, for parents to be aware that state laws require that any and all incidents of suspected child abuse or neglect be reported to the appropriate agency. It is the responsibility of this agency to investigate each reported case.

Health Information

In order to maintain a healthy environment, we ask that you not bring your child to school if they are showing signs of illness. A quick daily health check will be conducted by a teacher upon the arrival of your child. If your child becomes ill during center hours, you will be contacted immediately and requested to pick them up.

You will be contacted if your child shows any of the following symptoms:

- A temperature greater than 99.9 degrees
- Discharge from ears
- Discharge from eyes or red eyes
- Stomach ache
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Any rash
- Skin lesion that blisters
- Excessive signs of cold, tiredness, sore throat, runny nose, sneezing, or coughing.

(Please do not send your child to school if s/he is exhibiting any of the above symptoms), if your child is exhibiting these symptoms and your doctor has said it is safe to return to school, a signed doctor's note must be submitted and approved prior to your child attending school with these symptoms.

Please have a “back-up plan” on days you are unavailable to come for your child should you be called to do so. When a child is sick at school, we will call the parent listed as the preferred first contact; if s/he cannot be reached, we will then call the person/parent listed secondly. If we cannot reach either parent, we will call the first person on the emergency list and so on. Parents are expected to pick up their child as soon as possible, but within 30 minutes of receiving a call.

Children cannot be admitted into the school with signs of a communicable disease. **Children must be free from a fever or other symptoms for at least 24 hours before returning to school.**

Please notify us of illness or planned absences, as the teachers often become concerned when a child is absent. The school will notify parents when another child comes down with a communicable disease.

Medication

State law requires a prescription **for all medicines** that are to be administered in a school facility. Over the counter products – such as Tylenol, Benadryl, even diaper cream - may be administered only with a note from a physician. All prescription medication must be in the original container bearing the name of the medicine, date filled, pharmacy label and number, physician's name, child's name, and directions for dosage. In addition, medication will be dispensed only upon your **written order. If at all possible, please administer medication to your child prior to sending them to school. Please also apply sunscreen and bug spray prior to sending your child to school.**

The center will keep a daily record of any medication given to your child.

Medical Conditions

It is important that you inform the staff of any special food allergies or medical conditions your child has. This will assist us in being better prepared to handle any emergencies that may arise. Please be sure to submit the emergency medical forms and additional allergy action plan and any other forms required for your child's specific condition.

Emergency Procedures

Parents need to keep a current "**Emergency Authorization Form**" on file with our office staff. Parents will be contacted immediately in the event of an emergency. If other listed contact people cannot be reached, we will call the physician specified by you on your form. In case of a serious emergency, the closest hospital will be used via an ambulance service.

Registration & Enrollment

The Garden admits children of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities available to children at the center. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in the administration of its education and other policies and programs. Admissions are based on availability of space and determination by the staff and parents that a child is ready. Prospective parents are invited to tour the campus and observe the programs prior to enrollment.

Admissions & Tuition

A completed application form must first be submitted to be considered for admission to the program. The application must be accompanied by payment of \$75.00 in order to reserve your child's spot on the waiting list.

*Note: application fee not required for existing students or for programs without a waiting list

A non-refundable registration fee along with a 10% tuition deposit and a \$75.00 supply fee is required upon enrollment in order to reserve your child's spot in the program. ALL payments must be processed through our tuition processing site, at www.TADS.com. Processing fees charged by TADS will vary and are the full responsibility of the parent. Tuition is configured annually, however, parents may choose to pay the annual tuition in 1, 10 or 12 monthly payments. Financing fees apply. Parents utilizing the monthly payment plan must sign a tuition agreement and commitment to the full academic year. Exceptions to the agreement are made only for families with military relocation orders or serious medical concerns verified by a doctor's note that impact their child's ability to complete the academic year.

Please see our Tuition & Fees sheet for details on pricing.

Payments

All monthly payments must be paid by the 1st of each month through TADS by credit card or bank draft. A 15% late fee is applied on the 2nd of the month for any unpaid invoices. Any outstanding tuition unpaid by the 15th of the month could result in withdrawal from the program.

Withdrawal/Dismissal

A 30-day written notice made to the Administrator/Director is required to withdraw a child from the program. Parents are responsible for carrying out the terms of the tuition agreement, regardless of the number of actual days of attendance. If the school deems it necessary to withdraw a child from the program, written notice will be given as soon as the decision is made with details including an exact date of termination of services.

In the event that Wild Hearts or The Garden Administrators must dismiss a child from the program, our staff will try to suggest other programs or alternatives for the parents. A child may be dismissed for failure of parents/lawful custodians or caregivers to comply with the policies and procedures of the center. We do not dismiss children from the program for behavioral reasons, except in extreme cases where we feel it is no longer the best place for the child. Decisions regarding withdrawal are not taken lightly and are only made after careful consideration and in determination of the best interest of the children, school and staff.

Late Pick-Up Fees

Please be on time in both drop-off and pick-up. A verbal or written warning is given after the first offense. A late fee of \$5.00 per minute will then be charged for children remaining at the school after the allotted pick-up window. This is strictly enforced. If parents are consistently late for drop-off or pick-up, a verbal warning will be given before consideration of withdrawal from the program.

Parent Responsibilities

Labeling

To prevent children's belongings from getting lost, we ask that all personal items and accessory clothing such as jackets, mittens, hats, etc., be labeled with the child's name.

Appropriate Clothing

Children should be dressed for freedom of movement, art activities and play. We recommend comfortable play clothes that can get "messy". In order to provide your child with plenty of opportunities to create and explore, we use lots of washable paint and other messy art media. Please keep this "messy" aspect of growing up in mind when dressing your child for school. Please see our weather policy above for details on required clothing for daily outdoor play.

Personal Property

Please do not send in toys or personal items of value. Sharing personal toys is difficult for young children. Also, we cannot be held responsible if a toy is lost or broken.

Supplies/Items Needed at School

All children will need a tote bag of some kind to carry artwork, communications from the center and other belongings to and from school. School tote bags will be provided upon request. In addition, all children should provide an extra change of clothing including socks, underwear, top and bottom appropriate for the season. Extra clothing may be kept at school.

All children need to bring a full water bottle each day, to be refilled as needed.

Toileting

Children who are not toilet-trained are not eligible for enrollment in the Wild Hearts program. It is important that parents have their children use the toilet prior to drop-off in the mornings. The children will take toilet breaks as needed throughout the morning, but will be required to walk indoors to use the facilities. Children should be able to complete the toileting process from start to finish (undressing, wiping and dressing), guides are not responsible for wiping or dressing children.

Food

We ask that all candy, gum, soda and any other sugary foods such as these be kept at home.

Birthdays

We love to celebrate birthdays at Wild Hearts! Please send pictures of representative times of your child's life that we may borrow to discuss their growth.

Please coordinate with your child's guides if you would like to join your child on his/her birthday for a group celebration. We ask that parents don't bring cupcakes or sugary foods to share. Approved alternatives if parents are interested in bringing something for the group include stickers, temporary tattoos or a favorite book to read during story time.

Parent Donations

We welcome donations of almost any kind! Items needed are listed on the Parent Portal and updated regularly. We also have an Amazon Wish List specifically for the Wild Hearts program. This can be found online here:

<http://a.co/iedFYj4>

The Garden & Wild Hearts participates in Scholastic Book Club. Flyers are regularly distributed. All books purchased give credit to The Garden/Wild Hearts to purchase additional books for our library. We also participate in Montessori Services/For Small Hands school donation program. Purchases made from either website gives the school credit to purchase items from these sites when our school account code is used: #401239

Daily Schedule

Schedule	Objectives	Procedures
8:45-9:00 a.m. ♦Arrival ♦Playground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦To make each child feel welcome and comfortable. ♦To greet each parent and take a few minutes to discuss any questions or concerns. ♦To allow children freedom to explore and play in the fenced-in playground area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦Greet each child and parent with a cheerful hello or good morning. ♦Do a quick health check. ♦One guide remains in fenced area to supervise children, one guide assists children from their cars to the fenced area.
9:00 – 9:15 a.m. ♦Circle Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦To promote social interaction within a structured group situation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦Start off each morning with a short meeting to talk about the plan for the day. ♦Children are invited to share suggestions or ideas with the group.
9:15-10:00 a.m. ♦Art/Drama ♦Gardening/Building/ Other Centers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦To encourage communication and participate. ♦To increase skill levels and knowledge in arts and mathematical concepts. ♦To develop socialization skill. ♦To develop cooperation, self-reliance and creative expression. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦Area is setup with quality materials and opportunities based on interests. ♦Stage is available for dramatic play; costumes, puppets and props are rotated throughout the year depending on interests. Children work and play in the garden, mud kitchen and building or other areas based on interest/study.
10:00 – 10:15 a.m. ♦Toileting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦Visit the indoor restroom. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦Each child washes hands and uses bathroom facilities, fills water bottles if needed.
10:15– 11:15 a.m. ♦Snack Time ♦Forest Play/Nature Hike	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦To promote good eating habits. ♦To provide an opportunity for social interaction. ♦To peak curiosity and interest in the natural world, to explore and discover new and interesting things found in the forest. ♦To develop a love and appreciation for nature. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Children setup picnic tables, wash hands, and eat snack. ♦Guides follow the children’s lead and offer suggestions for ways to explore the forest based on learning objectives for the day. Children are free to explore independently or with the group as long as they stay within eyesight of the guides.
11:15 – 12:00 p.m. ♦ Yoga/ Music/ Story Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦Language and Literacy Development ♦To wind down after a long morning, rest and refocus. ♦To teach peace and mindfulness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦Yoga/Mindfulness, Music and Storytime are offered as a group activity *
12:00-12:15 p.m. ♦Departure *Playground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦To prepare child to go home and say their good-byes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦Make sure everyone has all their belongings. ♦Say good-bye until the next day.

Handbook Acknowledgement

Please sign the portion below and return it with your enrollment packet to verify that you have read and agree to all terms, policies, practices and other items listed here.

Please note that this Handbook is a living document and policies are subject to change. All policies listed here are subject to annual approval by the MMCS Board of Directors, changes will be presented as they are made and parents will be notified of any changes made and asked to sign stating that they have read and agree to any changes. Should you have any questions, requests for additions or edits of this document prior to signing, please contact us.

I, _____, and _____ parent(s) of my (our) child, , have read this handbook thoroughly and do hereby agree to abide by all policies and procedures, terms and agreements listed here. I understand fully the philosophies, practices, costs, procedures and any other information provided to me here in the handbook, as well as on all required enrollment forms and acknowledge them fully.

By signing below, I agree to the above statement.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

All legal parents and guardians of any enrolled student must sign this agreement in order to proceed with enrollment.