

*Forest Preschool Parent Handbook*

  2018-2019

Preschool Address Mailing Address

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**Welcome Forest Families**

Lime Hollow Forest Preschool is Cortland County’s only outdoor school. Choosing outdoor schooling as an alternative to traditional school speaks to your commitment to nurturing your child’s relationship to the natural environment. Forest Schooling is also a developmentally healthy choice for the young child, and prepares them well for lifelong learning. We hope you find a community you will enjoy in the parents and children you will meet here.

**Lime Hollow Forest Preschool Philosophy**

Forest Preschool is guided by the idea that children are naturally drawn to nature, need nature to thrive, and learn with enthusiasm and a sense of wonder when they spend ample time in natural spaces. The forest and fields offer an ideal setting for children to learn about themselves, each other, and their place in the natural world.

Our program is modeled on the German style Waldkindergarten in which children spend their entire school day outside in rain, shine, or snow, coming inside only in extreme weather. Playing and learning outside in all types of weather allows children to develop self-care skills, confidence, and resilience. Open-ended, unstructured play and discovery in a natural environment supports the development of the whole child and inspires spontaneous, meaningful learning. We empower children to be active in their own learning process by encouraging and supporting each child’s innate curiosity and paying careful attention to personal interest in the context of what nature presents us each day.

**Mission**

Lime Hollow Forest Preschool’s mission is to foster a deep connection to nature in young children by providing rich experiences and unstructured time in nature. Our teachers support children’s learning in nature by facilitating emergent (child-led) curriculum, modeling respect for the creatures we encounter and each other, choosing peacemaking, and expressing gratitude. We are committed to creating an environment that fosters a culture of inclusion, diversity, equity and a sense of belonging for the families in our community.

**Curriculum**

We trust that the individual child can best determine their educational needs in the moment. By respecting the individual learner, and responding to their inquiry with leading questions, a child can build on the knowledge they already have. By providing a happy, joyful and playful experience, our students learn that the forest is a happy place. By living daily, seasonally, and yearly in the forest, our students learn that it is a place they belong to. By using their natural curiosity, having their questions carefully considered, our students learn to be lifelong learners. By running, jumping, climbing, wrecking, building, splashing, balancing, digging, and swinging our students learn to enjoy their physical fitness. By modeling peacemaking and respect, our students learn to be peacemakers and respectful. By practicing gratitude, we all become grateful for the gifts of our natural world and the love all around us.

We believe that making these connections is the first step toward learning about the natural world and becoming a steward of the environment. As all of this is happening, children will be using all of their senses while strengthening their physical bodies.

**Children will be engaged in:**

- Authentic learning while engaged in place-based activities

- Life skills such as self-care, self-advocacy, practical skills (cooking, gathering) and social skills (conflict resolution, emotional regulation)

- Becoming good risk assessors by balancing, tree climbing, and other physical play

- Using natural materials for art and construction

- Emergent (child-led) curriculum

**Children will learn to:**

- Notice if something is hurting a friend’s feelings or body

- Respect others’ space and listen to their words

- Think ahead (such as when planning to climb)

- Assess their own abilities

- Begin to take part in responsibility for their own safety

- Express feelings with words, in a safe and effective way

**Program Information/Schedule**

**Classes**

Class Options 2018- 2019

Half day morning classes are offered from 9 AM- 12 PM

Full day classes 9-4 PM

Early Care and After Care are offered for additional cost.

7:30-8:45 AM & 4:15-5:30 PM

**Tuition**

**Forest Preschool Program Yearly Commitment**

**September 2018 –June 2019**

**Available Programs**

Half Day Morning Tuesday/Thursday: $2270

Half Day Morning Monday/ Wednesday/Friday: $ 2980

Half Day Morning Monday-Friday: $4870

Full Day Tuesday/Thursday: $3425

Full Day Monday/Wednesday/Friday: $4660

Full Day Full Day Monday-Friday: $7550

**Additional Care**

Early Care 7:30-8:45 (Extra $7 daily) After Care 4:15-5:30 (Extra $7 daily)

**Payment Options:** Weekly, Monthly and Seasonally (Sept, Jan, March & June)

**Tuition Policy**

Each family is responsible for tuition regard-less of their child’s attendance. Tuition for our calendar year (September-June) can be paid weekly, monthly or seasonally. We are happy to arrange a payment plan for your family.

*NOTE: There is no reduction in tuition for missed days due to sickness or vacations. At the end of the year, we do allow current students to join us on our free play days.*

**Cancellation Policy**

If you cancel once you have started the program, you are still responsible for the remaining tuition unless Lime Hollow Forest Preschool is able to give another preschooler your spot for the rest of the year.

**Staffing and Supervision**

Our teachers are committed to creating a safe and nurturing learning environment. We keep a ratio of one teacher per six students in the 3-5 year-old class. Children will be with the group and supervised at all times, inside and outside. The supervising adults will be Lime Hollow Preschool teachers and staff. Volunteers and interns are required to pass a background check, and do not count in the ratio as teaching staff. Lime Hollow will have fully-stocked first aid kits and other emergency supplies, both in the inside classroom and with the preschool staff when outside. All Preschool teachers and staff will stay current with First Aid and CPR training and certification.

**Typical Schedule**

Each day is structured with a familiar pattern to support children as they engage with the natural world and one another.

7:00-7:15 AM: Staff arrive

7:30 AM: Early care starts

7:30-8:40 AM: Early care available for families that need it for additional cost. Children will participate in quiet time activities located in the Sun Room or at the Windswept Logjam Play Area

8:45-9:00 AM: Normal arrival, drop off at Windswept Logjam Play Area

9:30 AM: Morning circle

9:45 AM: Bathroom stop, hike out into the forest

11:45 AM: Half-day students hike back to Logjam Play Area

12:00: Morning session ends for half day, pick-up at Windswept Logjam Play Area

12:00 PM: Lunch for full day kids

12:30-1:00 PM: Quiet time, resting and story time

1:00-3:30 PM: Hike, forest play or craft

3:30 PM: Gratitude circle, hike back to Windswept Logjam Play Area

4:00 PM: Normal departure. Parents will pick up preschoolers at the Windswept Logjam Play Area

4:30-5:30 PM: After care available for families that need it for additional cost. Children will

Participate in quiet time activities located in the Sun Room or at the Windswept Logjam Play Area

5:30 PM: After care ends

If you are running late, please text/ call Maryfaith at 646-369-2653. She will give you directions to our location.

**Nap/Quiet Time**

At Lime Hollow children do not have to close their eyes or sleep if they are not tired or choose not to, however children must rest their bodies quietly. Children will be given this opportunity every day, even on days that the group is on a field trip. Nappers can nap until they awaken naturally.

**Adjustment to Forest Preschool**

Starting preschool is a big step for most kids. Some children are excited to participate and they easily acclimate to class. Other children are nervous at first but quickly ‘warm up’ as they get engaged in activities. Still others may have a longer adjustment period as they gradually become comfortable with a new environment and expectations. Occasionally a child who is eager at first may have difficulty later when they realize the change is permanent. This adjustment is not necessarily related to a child’s maturity level; every child handles new situations in his or her own way. We acknowledge these differences and provide support and encouragement to help each child adjust to our program. As a parent/guardian, you have unique insight as to how your child reacts to new settings. There are many ways to prepare your child for class, such as talking about it a few weeks before school starts. As your child asks questions, answer them honestly. “You’re going to explore outside, meet animals and new friends, sing, make art projects and learn lots of new things. It will be a fun adventure!” You may want to set up a visit to Lime Hollow with your child to get familiar with the trails. When you drop off, assure your child that you will be excited to hear all about the day when it is time to be picked up. You might even give your child a challenge: “While you are in class today, pick something special to tell me about — I can’t wait to hear about your day!” If your child is experiencing a very difficult transition, please share your concerns with the teacher so that she can help provide a happy, smooth transition.

**What to Bring to Preschool**

**Backpacks, Clothing & Footwear**

This is an outdoor-based program. It is imperative that your child be dressed in proper clothing to ensure that she/he is protected from the elements. We will spend our entire time outside, rain or shine, except in the case of extreme cold or lightening. The Sun Room Forest Preschool classroom is located inside the Education Center, and will be used for our activities in such cases.

If your child is warm, she/he will be happy and able to participate in the fun! We believe there is no such thing as bad weather, just inappropriate clothing.

Please dress your child in appropriate clothing for being outdoors in the weather. **Flip-flops, Crocs, and ballet flats are not appropriate footwear for Forest Preschool.** Children must wear socks with their shoes. Your child will get muddy and dirty while at Forest Preschool.Your child will need to bring rain gear when it is rainy or has been raining, and a hat and mittens when the months grow cold. We are always available to help with gear questions.

**The following list of clothing is required:**

• Rain pants

• Rain jacket with a hood (or with a rain hat)

• Long underwear bottoms and top (wool, wool/silk or synthetic)

• Wool sweater or fleece top

• Snow pants

• Winter jacket

• Socks (wool or wool/silk blend)

• Rain boots and Bogs or Muck style boots

• Hat (wool or fleece) plus neckie, or a balaklava, please no scarves

• Mittens (water proof shell plus wool mittens works well ) 2 pairs

**What to Wear Early Fall/Late Spring**

Check the weather forecast for the day and dress accordingly. We prefer long pants to protect from scrapes and bug bites. Waterproof pants are useful over a lighter pair, as we are often in wet environs. We like layers on top that can be shed or added as needed. Wool or silk blend socks are preferred over cotton. These paired with rain boot work well. Merino wool under layers are soft, not scratchy and most kids accept them. On the hottest days, water shoes without socks are fine. A waterproof rain jacket should be sent in the backpack, it makes a good windbreaker. A sun hat is a good idea.

**What to Wear Winter/Early Spring**

Base layer: Silk/wool, polyester, or wool long underwear, wool socks.

Bulk layer: Wool or fleece pants and shirt.

Waterproof Layer: Either waterproof pants/jacket, or winter jacket/snow pants.

Waterproof mittens

Bogs or Muck boots

Hat/neckie combo or balaclava

**LAYERING is the key**, as your child will be very active outdoors and, at times, sitting. Whatever a child is not wearing, will be stored in her/his backpack. Long underwear (i.e.; poly-propylene or capilene, wool, or silk/wool blends) is essential as it wicks moisture off of the body. Hats are required in cold weather. We suggest getting a pair of boots that is one size larger than your child’s foot. This will create “dead-air space” to assist in insulating the foot. The best insulation for the feet is one or two pairs of wool socks with water-proof boots that have wiggle room.

To ensure a positive experience for everyone involved, all children are required to wear the proper clothing. If you need help with some of the above items, please ask. We sometimes have extras or can help you locate others.

Please see our policy about proper clothing.

**Finding Good Gear**

Finding good gear takes some care, but it is critical to your child’s enjoyment of nature. LL Bean carries a good set of rain gear, as does Polarn O. Pyret and Grundens. Make sure it really is waterproof by looking at the seams (they should be sealed). These brands have good winter coats. Columbia carries an excellent winter jacket. Gordini mittens are unstoppable. Polarn O. Pyret sells a rain mitten which when paired with a woolen mitten is perfect for our climate. We recommend utilizing thrift shops such as Thrifty Shopper, Salvation Army, Mama Goose (Ithaca), Jillian’s Drawers (Ithaca) and also Craigslist. Good deals can be found on Poshmark.com, a used clothing website. Joining an email listserve for homeschoolers can yield good gear (as well as educational books and toys) The ‘funschooling’ list is our local one, on Yahoo groups. Bogs Boots can be found on Craigslist frequently. We encourage fellow Forest Preschool families to sell your outgrown gear to each other. If you are having trouble finding or affording the gear your child needs we often have lending item(s). Please don’t hesitate to ask.

**What Goes in the Child’s Backpack**

Children carry their own backpacks at Lime Hollow Forest Preschool. It is important that they have a pack that is the right size, and is very comfortable. It can take some effort to find a good backpack.

Your child’s food and water bottle go in the backpack. Take care to find a small water bottle. An adult sized water bottle is too heavy. In the early fall and late spring, the backpack might contain a wool sweater or fleece.

**What Extra Clothes to Leave With Us**

Even on dry days, we might end up wet or muddy during play. It is important to have a change of clothes available. On the first day of program please send a full set of clothes (including underclothes, and especially socks) packed in a bag, labeled with your child’s name. Please, no thin grocery bags. Throughout the year, you will need to replenish the extra clothes as they get sent home muddy. Please always send your child to Forest Preschool in clothing and footwear that can get dirty. As the seasons change, you will need to send different items for the extra clothes bag.

**Snacks and Lunch**

We burn a lot of calories hiking, climbing, running and splashing. The children carry their own backpacks and choose a place of their own to store them. They have access to them at any time during the program day, and frequently take time out to snack. If your child is a ‘grazer’, but has a hard time settling down to eat a meal, pack lots of high quality snacks, or pack a sandwich, a few snacks a drink and a water bottle. Choose a small reusable canteen. Many manufacturers are making small child sized reusable water bottles that will last many years. All packaging will be carried home for recycling. **Some years, depending on our needs, Lime Hollow Forest Preschool is a peanut free school. TBD in September.**

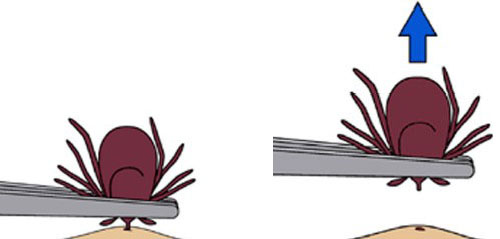
**Proper Clothing Policy**

Lime Hollow reserves the right to ask a parent to bring their child back home if they are not properly dressed.

**Hazards**

At Lime Hollow, the safety and security of our campers, preschoolers and guests is at the top of our priority list. Given the location of our campus and the programming that Lime Hollow provides, there are potential hazards associated with attending our summer camp. Our staff is responsible for identifying these risks and doing everything possible to mitigate exposure to potential hazards. Please read this information carefully.

**Ticks**

Of course, a school with a focus on nature is going to spend time in wild, natural areas! Ticks transmit various disease-causing agents from animals to humans. Ticks are found at Lime Hollow. Forest Preschool. Teachers will conduct multiple tick checks throughout the day.

All embedded ticks will be removed by Lime Hollow personnel during the day and parents will be notified.

Adopting a routine of tick awareness, being smartly dressed, using repellent and doing complete tick checks on a regular basis is our best defense against tick borne illnesses. At Lime Hollow, we have a three-tiered tick defense system.

Tier 1: The Preschooler. At preschool, our teachers educate our preschoolers about ticks. We even teach them about “social grooming” and checking themselves and their buddy.

Tier 2: The Teacher. Our teachers are trained and knowledgeable about identifying and removing embedded ticks. Teachers will conduct multiple tick checks throughout the day.

Tier 3: Parents and Guardians. Because there are areas that our teachers cannot see, it’s imperative that parents and/or guardians perform additional tick checks at home.

**Before Going Outside:**

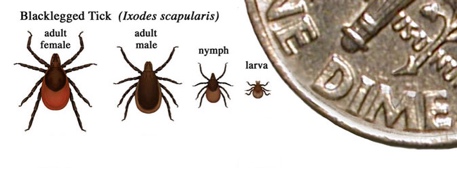
* Wear light colored clothing to spot ticks easily.
* Wear enclosed shoes, long pants and a long-sleeved shirt. Tuck pant legs into socks or boots and shirt into pants.
* Check clothes, gear and any exposed skin frequently for ticks.
* The CDC recommends repellent that contains 20 percent or more DEET, picaridin, or IR3535 on exposed skin for protection that lasts several hours and using products that contain permethrin on clothing. Treat clothing and gear, such as boots, pants, socks and tents with products containing 0.5% permethrin. It remains protective through several
* Many Forest Preschool parents use essential oil blends and other natural insect repellants.

**After Going Outside:**

**Check your clothing, gear, and pets for ticks.** Ticks can ride into the home on clothing and pets, then attach to a person later, so carefully examine pets, coats, shoes, and day packs. Tumble dry clothes in a dryer on high heat for 10 minutes to kill ticks on dry clothing. If the clothes are damp, additional time may be needed. If the clothes require washing first, hot water is recommended. *Cold and medium temperature water will not kill ticks effectively.*

**Shower soon after being outdoors.** Showering within two hours of coming indoors has been shown to reduce your risk of getting Lyme disease. Showering may help wash off unattached ticks and is a good opportunity to do a tick check.

**Tick Check**. Conduct a full-body tick check upon return from potentially tick infested areas. This includes your back yard. Use a hand-held or full-length mirror to view all parts of your body. Done properly, we believe that a thorough tick check after going outside is the most effective technique to protect our campers from tick borne illnesses. We encourage all families that spend a great time in their backyards, walking in the woods, and playing outside, to adopt an every 12 hour tick check protocol. During tick checks, pay particular attention to these areas:

* Under the arms
* In and around the ears
* Inside the belly button
* Back of the knee
* In and around hair
* Between the legs
* Around the waist

**How to remove a tick.**

* Ticks can attach to any part of the human body but are often found in hard-to-see areas such as the groin, armpits, and scalp. In most cases, the tick must be attached for 36 to 48 hours or more before the Lyme disease bacterium can be transmitted.
* If you find a tick attached to your skin, there’s no need to panic. Several tick removal devices are available on the market, but a plain set of fine-tipped tweezers will remove a tick effectively.
* Use fine-tipped tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin’s surface as possible.
* Pull upward with steady, even pressure. Don’t twist or jerk the tick; this can cause the mouth-parts to break off and remain in the skin. If this happens, remove the mouth-parts with tweezers. If you are unable to remove the mouth easily with clean tweezers, leave it alone and let the skin heal.
* After removing the tick, thoroughly clean the bite area and your hands with rubbing alcohol, an iodine scrub, or soap and water.
* Dispose of a live tick by submersing it in alcohol, placing it in a sealed bag/container, wrapping it tightly in tape, or flushing it down the toilet. Never crush a tick with your fingers. Concerned parents who may want to have the tick tested for Lyme disease can refer to the Cornell Animal Diagnostic Center for more information at: <https://ahdc.vet.cornell.edu/programs/tick/>
* Lime Hollow mentors will notify parents/guardians if an embedded tick has been removed during camp.
* Parents should consult with their health care professional if your camper develops any of these symptoms: fever, chills, headaches, restless sleep, muscle and joint aches, swollen lymph nodes, or a “bulls-eye” rash which occurs in approximately 70 to 80 percent of infected persons. The rash begins at the site of a tick bite after a delay of 3 to 30 days (average is about 7 days).
* For more information please go to the following web sites

Center for Disease Control: [www.cdc.gov/lyme/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/lyme/index.html)

NYS Department of Health: [www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/lyme/](http://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/lyme/)

**SUN SAFETY**

Extended exposure to ultraviolet radiation (UV) from the sun can cause painful sunburn and over a long period of time can lead to skin cancer. The CDC recommends that individuals spending long periods of time outdoors wear a “broad spectrum” sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher.

* Please make sure your child wears sunscreen to camp every day, even on cloudy days they are exposed to UV.
* Teachers will make sure sunscreen is re-applied as needed throughout the day.

Other precautions to prevent over exposure include wearing a wide-brimmed hat, sunglasses and long pants and sleeves.

**SOILS**

Preschoolers at Lime Hollow spend their days in and around nature. This involves getting dirty. preschoolers will be in areas where wildlife and domestic animals have been and have the potential to come in contact with fecal matter. Camp Gustafson on Gracie Road is the former site of a lumber mill where wood treated by the CCA (copper-chromium-arsenate) process was prepared and stored. Camp Gustafson was cleared of debris and the soil on site has been tested.

As a precaution to minimize any chance of harm from incidental soil contact it is suggested that:

* Preschoolers will wash their hands before eating. Ingestion is the primary pathway for anything in the soil to enter the body. If your child has a condition where they are prone to such activities (such as Pica) please let the staff know. Wash thoroughly at the end of each day. This can be combined with a careful tick-check.

**HYDRATION**

Proper hydration is important for everyone to prevent dehydration and heat related illnesses. Those who are active in the outdoors should drink frequently.

* Please make sure that your preschooler has a refillable water bottle with them every day.
* If your child complains of headaches and/or has dark colored urine they may not be drinking enough throughout the day.

**ALLERGIES**

Allergic reactions can range from mild and uncomfortable to severe and potentially life threatening.

* If your child carries an epi-pen please notify the staff and we will prepare a health plan.

**Program Event Calendar September 2018-June 2019**

Lime Hollow Forest Preschool will begin on September 10, 2018 and end on June 7, 2019.

**Lime Hollow will not have Forest Preschool on the following days:**

Monday, October 8, 2018

Monday, November 12, 2018

Wednesday, November 21, 2018

Thursday, November 22, 2018

Friday, November 23, 2018

December 24-28, 2018

December 31-January 4, 2019

Monday, January 21, 2019

February 18-22, 2019

April 15-19, 2019

Monday, May 27, 2019

**Free Play Days**

During the week of June 10-14, 2019 Lime Hollow will have a week of free play days. This week is to introduce the program to new families.

It is also an option for current enrolled families to grab an extra day if they happen to miss one during the year, and for make-ups for snow days.

**Family Festivals**

Lime Hollow Forest Preschool aims to build community through school-wide festivals. Preschool is a great time for our youngest to meet friends, and parents to find like-minded folks to collaborate with. Love of our children, our Earth and each other brings us to work together.

Fall Harvest Celebration, Wednesday October 17, 2018

Lantern Festival Celebration, Friday December 21, 2018, 5:30-7:30pm

Spring Picnic Celebration, Wednesday, March 20, 2019

May Day Celebration, Wednesday, May 1, 2019

These dates are subject to change to meet specific needs. We will keep parents updated if we do have to change anything.

*All festivals are open to all current students, even if it falls on a day that your child doesn’t normally attend Forest Preschool.*

**Policies**

**Sick Policy**

Not feeling well? A sick child, or a child coming down with an illness can have trouble maintaining their body temperature. If a child becomes ill at Lime Hollow Forest Preschool, we will call for a parent or caregiver to come pick him or her up.

**Parents will be asked to pick their children up from preschool or keep them home under the following conditions:**

*1) Temperature over 100 degrees F*

*2) Vomiting*

*3) Diarrhea*

*4) Signs of communicable diseases such as Pink-eye, Hand Foot Mouth Disease*

*5) Lice or scabies: For head lice, children and staff may return after treatment and no nits; for scabies, return after treatment.*

*6) Stomach Flu*

*Please note: Any outbreak of communicable disease will be communicated to all parents.*

Should your child become ill during the day, we will contact parents immediately. Please ensure that your phone number and other contact information is kept up-to-date. If parents cannot be reached, we will call an emergency contact. During this time, the child will be cared for in a quiet, calm area. The Visitor Center may be used. In this case, the parents will be notified of the location for pick-up.

**Walking Field Trips**

Lime Hollow preschoolers will take daily walking field trips into the 451 acre Lime Hollow Nature Center grounds for the purpose of nature study and nature play as well as for other curriculum and development related activities. Lime Hollow Forest Preschool will not take field trips off the grounds of Lime Hollow during the school day. Parents give their permission for these walking field trips via the enrollment information form at the time of enrollment.

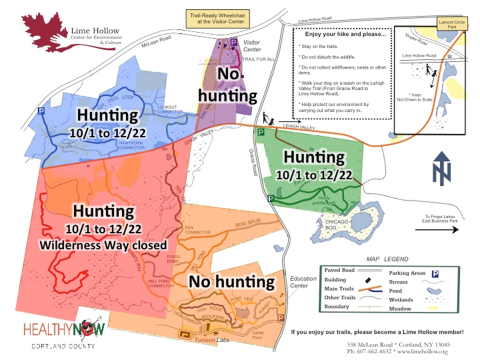
**Hunting on Property Policy**

Lime Hollow Nature Center is involved with an archery-based deer management program from October 1- December 31.

All hunters will follow all Lime Hollow Nature Center rules and regulations, and to conduct themselves in a safe and ethical manner.Certification to hunt on Lime Hollow Property consists of a written test, an archery proficiency test and an interview by the Lime Hollow Associate Director. Hunters will be selected based on a variety of criteria including (but not limited to): past hunting success, safety record, archer proficiency, willingness to abide by program rules, understanding of deer management for biodiversity conservation, and communication skills.

The hunter’s location and times will be tracked on a Google calendar, and monitored by the Lime Hollow Staff at the Visitor Center. Forest Preschool staff will be updated daily on where the hunters will be and from what time. To further help ensure the safety of our preschoolers, children will be required to wear blaze orange bandanas while hiking the trails.

Below is a map of the trails showing the hunting zones.

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**Behavior Policy:**

When a negative behavior occurs in the preschool, staff will seek to resolve it directly with the child, in the moment. For persistent issues, it is important that parents and teachers work together so the child can have happy and healthy relationships at school. Lime Hollow Forest Preschool teachers will open a dialog with parents to work together on cultivating positive behavior. Every effort will be made to work with children and parents to provide a pathway to success. If a determination is made that we cannot provide the support a child needs, or a child’s behavior endangers others, a child may be excluded from the program.

**Potty Training**

We require that children are mostly potty trained (though we understand that this process is different for all children), and comfortable using the toilet away from home. We will make potty runs (bringing groups inside to use toilet) and assist your child with gentle reminders, routines, & expectations. On occasion, students might be in the forest and too far from indoor toilets. In those situations, they will be guided about bathrooming outside.

Accidents happen: If your child does have an accident, we will utilize your child’s extra clothes and help them change.

**Medication Administration**

All medications, sunscreen and bug spray should be administered by a parent. By NYS Health Department regulations, all medications must be self-administered unless the child is unable to do so.

**Immunization Policy**

Children must have a current physical (within the last calendar year) and a record of required immunizations before he/she can attend preschool.

You may submit a letter for religious exemption of immunizations.

**Weather Closures**

Lime Hollow Forest School is the only outdoor school in Cortland County, and we draw families from many surrounding areas. We use the Cortland School District’s weather related closings as our guide to unsafe weather for travel to Lime Hollow. If local area public schools have canceled for the day, we will follow their lead and do the same. We will notify you in two ways: by email and by telephone (text or call).

**Wind Chill Index Policy**

Lime Hollow Forest Preschool uses the NOAA wind speed/air temperature chart to guide our time outside during winter, and protect against cold injuries.

**Emergency Plan Policy**

Every room in the Education Center Building has a primary and secondary egress. Group Leaders and Assistant Teachers must know these routes. (see attached floor plans). For example, the primary egress from the Sun Room classroom is out the main door, through the vestibule, and out the front door of the building. Proceed to the Old Sawmill Pavilion. If this egress is unsafe, our secondary route is out the back classroom door, through the middle classroom, out the back classroom door, and out the back building door. Proceed to the Old Sawmill Pavilion via the backyard of the building. The safe evacuation of children is Lime Hollow’s first priority. Children will never be left unsupervised.

When assembled in the Old Sawmill Pavilion, students will sit while the Forest Preschool Director and Group Leaders do a name to face roll call head count to verify attendance. Parents are notified with a phone call or text.

If the Old Sawmill Pavilion is not a safe option then we will proceed to our secondary relocation which is our Visitor Center located at 338 McLean Road. At this location, students will sit while the Forest Preschool Director and Group Leaders do a face to name roll call to verify attendance. Parents are then notified.

We do not reenter the Education Center building until clearance is given by the Fire Department. No one may remain inside the building during evacuation.

If parents can’t get to the children at the normal pick up time, our teachers will remain with the children and play quiet activities to help entertain the children and distract them from getting nervous about their parents being late. Children will be encouraged to participate in story time, journaling or a small craft project. Lime Hollow also has extra food on site if we need to feed our preschoolers.

**Fire Drills & Shelter in Place Drills**

Fire drills are executed and documented a minimum of one time each month. The Forest Preschool Director conducts fire drills, with Group Leaders directing children. The entire group must be in the safety zone within 2 ½ minutes. If the drill lasted more than 2 ½minutes, a drill should be repeated within that month.

**Non-Discrimination Policy**

The Lime Hollow Nature Center Forest Preschool does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, age, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, veteran status, marital status, or any other characteristic protected under federal or state law.

**Confidentiality**

Lime Hollow Forest Preschool respects the privacy of every child and family and holds confidential all records regarding your child’s personal information. All records will be kept secure in the child’s file in the office. Only the school directors and lead staff have access to these records. Lime Hollow Forest Preschool will always seek your permission to share information with other professionals.

**Facilities**

Lime Hollow encompasses nearly 451 acres of beautiful rolling hills and shallow glacial valleys (kame-and-kettle topography), forests, fields, streams, numerous ponds, including many marl ponds and vernal (seasonal) pools, a peat bog, and a great diversity of flora and fauna. Located on the border between Cortland and Tompkins Counties, in beautiful upstate New York, we offer over 12 miles of open-to-the-public, entrance-fee free trails, public nature programs, and adventure day camps for youth.

**Community Value**

The Lime Hollow Nature Center is a valuable resource to the central New York Community. From summer camps, and school programs, to our guided nature hikes and primitive skill workshop series and miles of trails to discover, Lime Hollow Nature Center has much to offer anyone who wants to learn about and enjoy the natural world. We hold many public events throughout the year, some at little to no cost to you. Please consider becoming a member of Lime Hollow Nature Center and enjoy the benefits of discounts on special programs camps as well as forest preschool tuition. For membership information contact: info@limehollow.org. Also consider “friending” us on Facebook receive regular postings and stay abreast of what’s happening at Lime Hollow! Thank you for becoming part of the Forest Preschool community at the Lime Hollow Nature Center.

We look forward to getting to know you and your children this year!