

Nature Academy

Policies, Procedures, & Agreement

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1. Hours of Operation

Nature Academy is open Monday-Thursday from 8:00 AM to 5:30 PM. Children may not arrive before 8:00 AM, and must be picked up by 5:30 PM. Early drop-off or late pick-up may result in termination of care, if not communicated and discussed. Teachers usually sign students in and out for attendance, but if parents would prefer to do this on paper and sign each time, you may request this.

2. Communication

Children may call their parents at any time. Parents may also come get their children ANY time, without notification.

Parents are welcome to pick up their child at any time.

- Phones are not permitted at school for the safety of others, but they can let a teacher know they would like to call their parents. If desired, they can have a private conversation with their parent if needed.
- If they have a device that they can call parents on, children are required to ask a teacher for permission before calling and they must complete the call somewhere and at a time that does not interrupt learning. This will be facilitated by a teacher. Please help your student to understand that if it is not urgent - they may have to be patient and wait for a time to call you when it won't disrupt the school.
- Please refer to #17 for more info about our policy on screens and devices.

3. Absences

Please notify us by call or message if your child will be absent on a scheduled day. Regular communication is essential.

4. Authorized Pickup

Children will only be released to individuals listed on a signed authorization form. No exceptions will be made without written and signed consent from a parent or guardian with proper notice. Children's safety is of the utmost importance to us.

5. Custody & Parental Agreements

If parents are separated or divorced, one designated payer must be agreed upon, and both parents must sign this agreement unless there is a court order granting sole legal authority. We will not mediate or participate in custody disputes. If either parent disrespects these policies or if custody issues interfere with our program, we may terminate care. If one parent is not authorized to pick up

the child, a legal court order must be provided.

6. Photography & Media Use

We may take photographs and short videos of children during activities. Anything used publicly will blur or block faces or identifying features.

7. Food & Water

Water and balanced and nutritious meals and snacks are provided. Due to students preferences, or allergies, it is the responsibility of the parent to provide alternative meals and snacks if needed. We are NOT a nut-free facility. We cannot accommodate severe allergies. We do have a full BAN on artificial dyes and flavors.

- Arrival and Breakfast: Breakfast is served at 8:00am and all food is cleaned up at 9:20am.
- If your child arrives after 8:30am - please ensure a quick and quiet drop-off as we immediately begin lessons and cannot have any distractions as much as possible.

8. Payment Policy

Tuition is due by the first day of each month. If payment is not received, your child will not be permitted to attend until the account is brought current. Monthly fees are required regardless of attendance. We do not prorate or refund tuition for holidays, illness, closures, or absences.

9. Holidays & Closures

A Yearly and Monthly Calendar are posted by the front door and posted in the School Updates chat. (Refer to #11 for more school chat info.)

- We are open most single day holidays.
- Christmas - closed for 2 weeks
- Closed 1 week for Thanksgiving
- Closed for 2-5 days for Spring Break
- Closed 1 week to transition from school to summer and 1 week to transition from summer to school.

You will be notified in advance to allow for backup care. Tuition is still due during closures. We are open year-round.

10. Emergency Closures

Due to the policies of the Utah Department of Health and Human Services, we will close in case of major illnesses to prevent spreading. These closures may be last minute notice, so please ensure you are checking the School Updates Chat daily. No tuition refunds will be given for illness or closure due to health concerns.

If your child has had a fever, vomited, or had diarrhea, they need to be symptom free for an entire 24 hours before returning to school at the bare minimum. If you know they have been directly exposed to anyone with vomiting or diarrhea - please consider keeping them home.

Your child must stay home or will be sent home if:

- They have green nasal discharge or are severely congested.
- They have a heavy, phlegm-y cough.

- They have a fever.
- They have vomiting or toilet issues.
- They are lethargic and otherwise unwell.

11. Our School Chat & Updates

We use an app called GroupME to communicate all important information and updates. It is a free app that works on any device. We have a School Chat and a School Updates chat.

It is absolutely crucial to check for updates DAILY. It is suggested that you turn notifications on. The “Nature Academy Updates” group does not have all the pictures, videos, and discussions of daily life at school, so this one is recommended to check each day at the minimum.

- Emergency announcements are made through the School Updates chat. These updates are often last minute and may not always provide the 24 hour notice. Due to the nature of working with children, illnesses sometimes come on last-minute and without warning. We always strive to communicate as quickly and effectively as possible.
- Aside from emergency announcements, all the information about upcoming events, plans, closures, concerns, activities, parties, and anything else noteworthy - are all communicated through the School Chat. Again, it is absolutely vital that this chat is checked and read through in its entirety daily.
- We will NOT individually call or message any parent, unless it is about a specific need or concern to an individual child.

The School Chat is a place where all parents and guardians can enjoy pictures and videos and updates of their kids. It is welcomed to reply and comment encouraging messages to foster our Nature Academy family relationship.

The School UPDATES chat is strictly for teachers to ONLY share emergency updates and vital information.

Parents and Guardians must NOT discuss concerns in either chat. Non-urgent concerns or discussions will be addressed with care, but please note that from 8-5:30pm we are actively caring for, teaching, and engaged with the children. Any non-urgent concerns or discussions outside of Nature Academy's hours will be addressed, but it may not be same-day responses. We ask that you be mindful of when you contact the school or staff outside of school hours as we all have our own families and children.

Please schedule a call or appointment if a longer or in-depth conversation is needed.

12. Liability Waiver

Nature Academy Daycare & School places high priority on safety, but due to our emphasis on outdoor learning and physical play, minor injuries may occur. We are not liable for injury or death unless it is the result of proven negligence. The Liability Waiver is an agreement to not bring legal action against Nature Academy or its staff. Parents acknowledge the inherent risks involved in outdoor and physical play. Nature Academy does not carry liability insurance.

13. Toileting

We do not offer potty training services. They must be fully potty-trained before attending. Please also provide a COMPLETE seasonally appropriate spare outfit to be kept at the center at all times, in case of accidents. If soiled, please immediately replace the clothes. Please refer to #18 for more on dress code and seasonally appropriate clothes.

Potty Trained children MUST be able to:

- Pull down and up their own pants.
- Properly handle wearing a skirt or dress while using the toilet.
- Utilize the proper amount of toilet paper.
- Wipe themselves correctly and independently.
- Wash their hands correctly and independently.
- Be otherwise alone in the bathroom to ensure privacy for all children.

ALL students must sit on the toilet for every usage as to prevent splashes and spills and maintain a hygienic bathroom.

In case of repeated accidents, pull-ups or diapers must be worn. Pull-ups and diapers must be provided by the parent/guardian. If school back-up pull-ups/diapers or clothes are used, replacements are required the next day.

14. Parties, Gifts, Celebrations

We ask that you seek approval of any food items by Kayla, prior to bringing them in. We have a full BAN on all artificial dyes and flavors. We ask that any gifts, especially around Christmas and Valentine's time, are given with mindfulness and discretion - as to ensure we make everyone feel loved and included.

15. Birthday Invitations

Physical invitations to private birthday parties are not permitted. Please ask Kayla, the owner, over text, to help communicate directly to the parents in private of the students that are being invited to private parties. Please handle with discretion as to not hurt feelings. We are a very inclusive school and everyone has a relationship with each other and we like to encourage this and not leave anyone out.

16. Part-Time Students

Part-time students will be included in every activity and lesson that they are present for. Supplies for projects and activities are provided for the children who are present during that scheduled project/activity. If an activity or project is only on a Mon/Wed then Tues/Thurs students will not be participating. And vice-versa.

- Supplies will only be sent home if a child had an absence on that particular day. Part-time students will not always be able to do every project and activity. Rest assured, many activities and projects happen over the course of several days and some even weeks - so everyone does get to participate.

- We encourage parents/guardians to not share every project and activity plan with their part-time student(s) if it does not fall on a day that they are present.

- Every party/celebration for holidays or special events will always include every child and we often celebrate two days in a row or all week.
- However, birthday parties will only be celebrated on the day closest to each student's actual birthday and on a day that the birthday child is present for. Meaning, if the birthday child is absent on their school birthday celebration - we will celebrate it the next day they are at school.

17. Screen Policy

We are a nature and outdoor-focused school. Our bread & butter is the freedom to play, be in the great outdoors, and preserve the magic of childhood. As such, cellphones are not permitted. Devices to call parents are limited, but if proven to be an issue, will also not be permitted.

- Our school only allows very limited, thoroughly vetted, and teacher-ONLY operated TVs and school iPads. There is an exception to the evening, around 5:00pm, some students are allowed to play Minecraft or video games (Kayla's own children have had a long day and they are allowed to do this in the late afternoon). However, we will seek approval from the parent before allowing their own child to play any kind of video game.

- TV: Daily quiet time or inclement weather are the only times a teacher will turn on an age-appropriate, gentle, and/or educational show, ad-free Youtube video, or movie. Children are never required to watch the Quiet Time shows/movies and are always provided another option. The TV is often used to display slide-shows and presentations for Music and Science as well as to occasionally watch short, informative and educational videos. We also very occasionally enjoy interactive exercise videos including, but not limited to, Cosmic Kids Yoga or Danny GO or similar, especially during inclement weather or holidays.

- School iPads: Very occasionally, there are videos and audiobooks that are a part of the student's curriculum that we use the iPad for. The videos and audiobooks come directly through the curriculum's app. The Letter Tiles app is the only other curriculum app that we utilize occasionally. It is not every day, oftentimes not even every week. But it is a fun tool in our toolbelt we use sometimes to educate the children. These are always teacher-operated and not freely accessible to students.

- The School Phone and Speaker: We often enjoy listening to music during school. We choose only appropriate music with clean lyrics. We often enjoy ambient music, classical music, popular clean versions of music, and popular Disney or other movies' music like, but not limited to, The Greatest Showman or KPop Demon Hunters.

18. Dress Code

Children should be dressed for play in clothing that may get dirty. Clothing should be easy for them to manage independently. We play outside in most weather conditions, as long as it is safe to do so.

- We are a nature and outdoors focused school. Children must wear seasonally appropriate clothes or provide the school with back-up clothes.

- Shoes: Shoes must be able to be put on and taken off independently. They must be safe for playing outside. We live in a very hot climate and with lots of kids - smelly feet tend to happen. Please choose shoes and/or wear socks to prevent the build up of smell occurring. This also prevents foot fungus and other health concerns.

- We DO allow bare feet outside often, but encourage shoes during certain seasons for safety.
- Children must keep a complete set of clothes, that are seasonally appropriate, at school at all

times. If used, parents must replace it immediately.

- SUMMER: cool clothes and any sun protection desired. Shades are provided in the backyard and we do a lot of water play.
- WINTER: warm clothes and proper socks and footwear and a winter jacket. Any additional hats or gloves are also welcome. Sweaters, light jackets or hoodies, or thin rain-coats are not enough. We are outside in freezing temperatures as well. We do have some spare winter gear, but it may not be enough for all.
- SPRING/AUTUMN: Mornings are cold and sometimes wet. Afternoons can often be very hot. Layers are a must. Options are a must. Please provide your children with appropriate clothing that can layer. AKA: be put on or taken off accordingly and appropriately.
- RAIN/MONSOON SEASON: Please ensure that your children have shoes and outerwear to be able to still play outside. There is mud and there are puddles. And yes, we still go outside.

We stay indoors during extreme and severe weather. This is a rare occurrence in St. George, UT.

19. Personal Belongings

While we allow students to bring personal belongings, staff cannot maintain the location of or the quality of said belongings. It will solely be the child's responsibility.

- If they are not old enough to be responsible for their items, they cannot bring them, or there is risk they could get lost or broken. Any battery-operated or noise-making items are not permitted at school.
- Any dangerous or inappropriate items or creations will be immediately confiscated. This includes personal journals and diaries or any student-made item.
- Please check your student(s)' cubby and the front hall for their belongings upon pick-up every day.
- A lost and found bin will be by the front door and is emptied at the end of every month.
- No live animals or pets are allowed to be brought in without previously discussing and planning with Kayla well in advance.

20. Withdrawal

A 30-day written notice is required to terminate care for children 5 and under. Payment is still due for the 30-day notice period, regardless of attendance. For students ages 6 and older, there is a 60-day notice required as this is a more difficult age group to fill as most are already settled into their schools.

21. Termination by Provider

We reserve the right to terminate care at any time, with or without notice, for reasons including (but not limited to): nonpayment, disrespect, failure to provide documents, inability to meet the child's needs, chronic, major behavior issues, or breach of this agreement.

22. Educational Approach

We honor each child's individual pace of development. While we offer and will provide a full education and developmental monitoring, we do not guarantee specific educational milestones.

- We will conduct periodic progress evaluations and meet with parents to support each child's growth in a personalized way.

- Our approach is that - it's our job to provide the lessons, opportunities, and guidance, but children all learn at a different pace.
- This is true in any school setting. If there is a concern, we will happily have a parent meeting to discuss options and solutions.
- Our overall main goal is that each child's emotional and mental well-being is considered first, above all.

23. Discipline & Guidance Philosophy

We use gentle guidance techniques rooted in relationship-building, problem-solving, and self-regulation. We never use physical punishment, food or sleep withholding, shaming, or behavior charts. Parents must uphold these values and refrain from using physical punishment or neglect. We are mandated reporters and will report any suspected child abuse or neglect.

24. Appropriate Conversation

We do not discuss politics, religion, or any matters that are not age appropriate. We ask that parents encourage their children to make sure they are not using any inappropriate language so other children are not exposed to adult language or content. We mainly use The Good and the Beautiful curriculum and this is a Christian-made curriculum where God is mentioned, but we do not actively teach belief in Christianity or any other religion or belief system. We stay rooted in facts and general accepted knowledge and open-mindedness and respect all families in their choices and beliefs. We do not discuss anything that is not age-appropriate in any way.

Halloween: We only allow the fun and lightly "spooky" age-appropriate celebrating of Halloween. We also include our love of Harry Potter at school. Anything gory or scary is not permitted. Everything is kept age-appropriate. We do themed decor, food, activities, and games. We do allow appropriate Halloween costumes on the days that are scheduled and announced to celebrate.

Christmas: We do not actively teach about Santa or Jesus, but we do celebrate Christmas with themed decor, games, and activities. We do themed food and give gifts.

Easter: We do not actively teach about Jesus or the Easter Bunny, but we do celebrate Easter with themed decor, food, games, and activities.

Valentines: We celebrate with themed decor, food, games, and activities. We decorate boxes and hand out non-food Valentines to the entire school. We focus on loving our family and friends.

25. Environment & Code of Conduct

We are committed to maintaining a peaceful, respectful, and emotionally safe environment. Any form of aggression, hostility, or disputes by children, the parents, or others - will not be tolerated on our property.

- We absolutely do not tolerate any actions or talking about anything sexual in nature. We do not allow discussions of having a "crush" on someone. Nor do we allow teasing others about having a "crush".
- Even innocent questions must be handled at home and we will direct the child to their parent or guardian for answers.
- We will handle anything that comes up immediately and with care and without shame, but if it is an ongoing problem - it will not be tolerated and termination of care may occur.

- Protecting all children from anything sexual of nature or bullying is the most crucial boundary we uphold and one of the biggest reasons this school was created. We handle these topics extremely seriously.
- We teach and encourage all students to respect boundaries and to speak up and inform teachers immediately. We foster a relationship, as teachers, that each child feels safe to speak to us.
- Our school does not tolerate tickling of any kind.
- We do not tolerate rhymes/songs or sayings or memes or “fad” words or phrases that are inappropriate or unkind or disruptive in any way. Such as, but not limited to: “6 7” or “(name of child) and (name of child)... sitting in a tree...” , etc.

26. Disrespect of this Code of Conduct

Disrespect of this Code of Conduct in any nature may result in termination of care. Please have these conversations at home and support our school in maintaining these boundaries.

Conversations and boundaries set and enforced at home will bring the most success and respect to our school.

27. Handyman Class and Arts & Crafts Class

Acknowledgment of Risk: I, the undersigned parent or legal guardian, understand that the Children's Handyman Class at Nature Academy involves the use of tools and materials including, but not limited to, hammers, screwdrivers, nails, wood, and other basic hand tools. I acknowledge that participation in these activities carries inherent risks, including but not limited to cuts, scrapes, bruises, splinters, pinched fingers, or more serious injuries. I knowingly and voluntarily assume all risks, both known and unknown, associated with my child's participation in this class. I will not hold Nature Academy liable or bring any action against this facility for any of this.

28. Utah Fits All Scholarship Recipients

Students must attend at least 3 days a week full-time to adhere to the scholarship policy. Tuition encompasses all the offered education - including Spanish, Language Arts, Math, Science, Music, PE/Yoga, Social Skills, and Activities. We will have the students on a planned curriculum schedule to meet their skill and grade level needs. If your student misses a day, the lessons will be provided to complete at home if they are unable to get caught up on them at school. If you need to withdraw, you are required to give the same 60-day notice as other students. If a refund is due, it must be sent back to Odyssey (the current UFA program manager) and absolutely no refund will be given to the parents of the scholarship student. You do have a right to switch to a different confirmed private school through Odyssey. We will always comply with the antidiscrimination provisions of 42 U.S.C. Sec. 2000d. UFA students will be charged the same fees and tuition rates as all other students attending here for the same schedule. We are required to notify Odyssey within 5 business days of any changes to enrollment.

Our goal is to have our home feel like your child's second home. They should feel loved, welcomed, and safe at all times. If you have any concerns, please let us know. We value clear and direct communication. If we don't know something is a problem, we can't find a solution.

Acknowledgment & Signature

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read, understood, and agree to abide by the terms outlined in this Disclosure Statement and Parent Agreement.

Child's Name(s):

Date of Birth:

Parent / Guardian Name(s):

Signature:

Date:
