



Redwing  
Pond House  
Preschool

Family Handbook  
2016-2017

21 Milan Street Ansonia, Connecticut 06401

Telephone: 203-734-RWPH(7974)

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## Contact Information

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Ansonia, Connecticut 06401

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## Mission Statement

At the Redwing Pond House Preschool, we are committed to promoting children's love of nature, while supporting their social, emotional, cognitive, and physical growth within a warm and loving environment.

## Philosophy

We are a nature based preschool with a curriculum guided by seasonal events. We believe that parents are a child's first and primary teacher, and we look to them as our partner in creating a comfortable and enriching learning experience at school. We support children as they learn about their environment, their feelings and those of others, and work to create a community in which children explore their surroundings and learn to get along with others. We strive to instill in children a love of learning and good problem-solving skills. We work to foster in children a positive self-image, as well as a sense of competence and mastery in which the roots of confidence are anchored. Above all, we recognize each child's uniqueness and we encourage individual expression and development.

Children learn best through play and first-hand experience and need many opportunities to explore the world around them directly. We feel that a balance of independent activity and teacher input gives children room to gather information and helps them make connections which lead to the formation of broader concepts.

The classroom has its own structure and order, created by the arrangement of areas and materials, daily schedule and routines, within which children have many choices. Activities include a great deal of time playing and exploring outdoors, artistic exploration with a wide range of mediums, block building, group meetings, water and sand play, gardening, language and math experiences, dramatic play, cooking, music, and movement. Our children have available to them materials to support their developing interest in reading, writing, and numbers. Children pursue these interests at their own pace, and each child's individual readiness is supported and deeply respected.

## Our Curriculum and Goals

The curriculum at the Redwing Pond House Preschool is nature-based and determined by the seasonal changes around us. The grounds of the preschool and nature center will be used daily for exploration and discovery. The classroom is rich in educational supplies to further our learning and understanding of the limitless lessons taught throughout the school year. Our goal for each of the children is to learn and grow at their own pace, while providing them with exceptional skills with which to enter kindergarten.

# Calendar

Important Events - and dates when school will not be open are as follows:

## September

1 & 2-Visiting days (9:00-10:30)

6-First Day of School

## October

10-Columbus Day

## November

8-Professional Development Day-no school

23-25- Thanksgiving Recess

## December

23-January 2- Winter Break

## January

3-School reopens

16- Martin Luther King Day-no school

## February

20-21-February Break

## March

## April

10-14- Spring Recess- no school

## May

11 & 12- Mother's Day Tea (11:30 dismissal)

29-Memorial Day-no school

## June

5 & 6- Last days of school (tentative)

# Daily Schedule

## Morning Program:

8:30-9:00	Arrival / Table Activities
9:00-9:15	Morning Meeting
9:15-9:45	Classroom Activities/Projects
9:45-10:15	Snack/ Prepare to go outside
10:15-11:15	Outdoor Exploration
11:15-11:30	Story time/Reflect on our day
11:30	Dismissal

## 'Full' Day Program:

11:30-12:00	Lunch
12:00-1:15	Extension of morning exploration/activities
1:15-1:30	Reflection of day/story time
1:30	Dismissal

# Drop-Off & Pick-Up Times

Drop-off: Arrival time is between 8:30-8:45am

Pick-up: Pick-up is between 11:20- 11:30am for the morning program  
1:20-1:30pm for the full day program

\*Please note 'Arrival and Departure Procedures' below for important details.

# Releasing A Child

An adult must accompany your child to and from the classroom every day and must sign them in and out.

In the event that an adult who is not listed on the 'permission to release' form is picking up your child, parents/guardians need to submit a written note with the full name and driver's license number of the person picking up. The teachers must be shown the person's driver's license at pick up time in order to release the child.

\*Under no circumstances will a child be released to anyone other than those adults listed on the 'permission to release' form without prior approval from the child's guardian.

## Arrival & Departure Procedures

We have provided drop-off and pick-up time 'windows' to allow flexibility for your schedule and to allow your child time to acclimate to the classroom as our day is beginning. Please respect the drop-off period. Arrivals before 8:30am interfere with important meeting and preparation time for teachers, and arrivals after 8:45am may prevent the group from moving to the next activity and often makes the transition into school difficult for the child who is arriving late.

Your child looks forward to your return at the end of their day, therefore children should be picked up promptly by or before the 11:30am/1:30pm closing times. Please be considerate of the children who are staying for the full day, and the teacher's meeting time at the end of the school day at pick up times. Also, please let the teachers know if you will be picking up your child prior to the end of our scheduled day, so we can be sure to be back at the classroom early if necessary.

\*No child is to be left unattended in a car for any amount of time.

If your child has not been picked up within 15 minutes of the designated pick up/closing time, a staff person will:

1. Call the child's parents or legal guardian at the work and home phone numbers provided.
2. If Parents/guardians cannot be reached, the staff will call the emergency and/or alternate contacts listed on the emergency cards.
3. If every effort to reach caregivers has been made and the child has not been picked up, the Ansonia Police may be called to assist.
4. Late fees will be charged if your child is not picked up on time. After ten minutes beyond dismissal time a \$10 fee will be charged, with \$1/minute accruing after the ten minute period.

\* Two staff members will be with children at all times.

## Admissions

Admission to the Redwing Pond House Preschool involves the completion of the Application, including the application fee, acceptance by the director into the program, the return of your signed enrollment paperwork (including a completed health form indicating that the child has been immunized in accordance with state law) as well as the receipt of your deposit.

## Application

Applications may be obtained from the Director of the Redwing Pond House Preschool and submitted at any point for the upcoming school year. They will be held and considered if an opening becomes available during the present school year. Applications are accepted only when filled out completely and must be accompanied by the non-refundable \$30 application fee.

## Enrollment Considerations

Your commitment to our mission and your partnership with us for your child's benefit is taken into consideration when enrolling. We make every attempt to balance our class by age and gender. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, or for any other reason. If your family is in need of financial assistance to attend our program, please contact the RWPH Preschool Director, Jacqueline Lema at 203-734-7974, or email Jackie@rwphpreschool.org for further information. All financial assistance information will be kept in confidence

## Enrollment & Withdrawal

Enrollment commences with the return of your signed enrollment paperwork and deposit, and is for the entire school year.

\*Fees will not be pro-rated for absences, or days lost to inclement weather.

\*Tuition is based on a full school year.

Should it become necessary to withdraw your child for any reason, written notification must be sent to the Redwing Pond House Preschool Director as soon as possible. If your child is withdrawn for any reason, no refund of fees paid, or waiver of fees owed to the Preschool will be made. Extenuating circumstances should be discussed with the Director. Once a child has been officially accepted into the program, a deposit is received, and the enrollment agreement and Handbook receipt have been signed, the family assumes responsibility for the child's tuition for the full school year. There will be no reduction or rebate of tuition due to a child's absence or withdrawal.

The Redwing Pond House reserves the right to withdraw a family for reasons of noncooperation, delinquency of payment, or the inability of the child or the family to adjust to the program.

## Tuition

Tuition payments may be made in full for the school year, paid in two installments, or ten equal payments.

\*The following represents the yearly tuition - divided into ten payments.

	<u>Morning Program</u>	<u>'Full' Day Program</u>
<u>Two days/week</u>	Monthly Payment \$306	Monthly Payment \$459
<u>Three days/week</u>	Monthly Payment \$388	Monthly Payment \$632
<u>Five days/week</u>	Monthly Payment \$622	Monthly Payment \$1036

Installments are due on the 15th of the previous month.

The first payment, whether lump sum or installment, is due on August 15th.

The next payment will be due on September 15th, additional payments will be made on October 15, November 15, December 15, January 15, February 15, March 15, April 15, and May 15.

If a student's tuition installment has not been paid by the end of the month in which it is due, and arrangements have not been made with the director, that student may not attend school, and another child may be admitted to fill the vacancy.

A \$30 fee will be charged for any returned checks by the bank.

## What to Bring to School

In addition to the items listed below, your child may bring special treasures, found objects, and any other nature oriented materials to share with the class.

\*Please do not allow your child to bring toys or other objects from home except on specified days

\* A pair of slippers to wear in the classroom.

\* A small, filled water bottle.

\* Appropriate weather-related clothing each day. See below...

\* Two complete, seasonally appropriate change of clothes to leave in your child's classroom (including a shirt, pants, underpants, and socks) Please send these items with your child on or before the first day of school.

## What to Wear?

“There is no such thing as bad weather- just bad clothes.”

Being a nature based preschool, we encourage children to develop a comfortable and healthy relationship with nature and the outdoor environment. Our students spend a large portion of each school day outdoors. We will be taking the children outside year-round, regardless of the weather. The only exceptions would be during thunderstorms, extreme wind chills, and /or extreme temperature conditions. The following guidelines will help parents ensure that their children come to school appropriately dressed for outdoor fun:

\*We expect our preschoolers to get dirty as a natural part of their explorations; therefore, your child should wear durable, washable, seasonally appropriate play clothes at all times. Please do not send your child to school in clothing that is for special occasions. Play is important, and we don't want your child to worry if they happen to get dirty or wet. We expect them to!

\*Please send your child in footwear that they can manage themselves (or with some support), avoid shoes with ties, as these are very difficult for the children to do themselves at this age.

\*On rainy days, children should wear rain boots and a waterproof raincoat with a hood. Rain pants are highly recommended, especially on very wet days, and will keep kids dry and comfortable if they happen to slip and fall in the mud.

-(For safety reasons, please do not have your child bring an umbrella to school.)

\*During the winter, children should have a hat, mittens, a warm jacket, snow pants, and warm boots.

\*In the warmer months, children should bring appropriate outerwear for the temperature range, such as a wind jacket, sweatshirt, or sun hat.

\*Please send in slippers for your child to wear indoors.

\*Sandals and flip flops are not appropriate for outdoor exploration.

\*Sunscreen and bug repellent should be applied daily outside or at home before your child is brought into school.

\*Please label all outerwear, including coats, boots, snow pants, and rain pants.

For the safety of our students, a teacher will not be able to remain in the classroom with a student who is not properly dressed to join us outdoors. If a child does not come to school with outdoor clothing for that day, and if we are not able to provide that child the necessary items from our spare clothing, we will have to call the child's parent or guardian and ask them to either bring the appropriate clothing or pick their child up from school at the time the class will be going outdoors.

## Snacks

A healthy snack will be offered every day. The teachers will prepare the snack that families have brought in. Families are given the opportunity to sign up for a

'snack day' approximately once per month. Please refer to the Snack Calendar on the Parent Board to see what day is available for your child to provide a special snack for the class!

\*Please send in all purchased snacks in their original packaging to help us monitor allergies and sensitivities, and provide an ingredient list for all baked goods.

\*We are a nut free school, please avoid all nut products.

(Please be sure that your child has had a healthy breakfast prior to arriving at school.)

## Lunch

Children who attend the 'Full' day program are required to bring a healthy lunch to school. We will sit together and have lunch as a group. Please adhere to the allergy list when packing your child's lunch, and keep in mind that they may be sitting with a friend with an allergy. Please pack lunch each day with an ice pack in the lunch bag.

\*We are a nut free school, please avoid all nut products.

## Birthdays

Birthdays are an important event in each child's life, and will be celebrated with the class. We welcome you to bring in the snack on your child's special day (Please maintain our healthy snack request). Keep in mind that we have a strict nut-free policy. If you would prefer that we prepare a celebratory snack at school for your child, please discuss this with the director or the teachers beforehand-we will be happy to do so!

\*Our snack and birthday snack policies may change if there is a severe allergy in the classroom.

## Parental Involvement

We believe that parents are a child's first and most important teachers, and we therefore aim to partner with parents in the learning process and encourage them to actively participate in their child's education outside of the home. Throughout the year there will be numerous opportunities for parents to participate in the program through volunteering, communicating regularly with teachers about their child's progress, assisting with special activities and events, and visits to share talents or interests with the class. Please check the Parent's Board for special requests from the staff (and children), and let us know when you would like to spend time with us!

## Message Boxes

Individual message boxes (above your child's cubby) will be used to deliver notices, forms and information as well as children's artwork and projects. Please be sure to check this box daily.

## Communication

Daily verbal communication with families will occur at arrival and dismissal times, in addition, notices and messages will be sent home with the child in their message boxes. Communication will also occur through monthly newsletters, phone calls, emails, and scheduled meetings. (Please schedule a time to discuss matters that may require a significant amount of the staff's time away from the class.)

## Family/Teacher Meetings

Family/Teacher Meetings will be made available in the Fall, as a meeting or a telephone discussion, and scheduled with each family in late Spring. Additional meetings will be scheduled at any point during the school year that a parent or teacher has any news regarding the child or the family.

## Health Policies

### Health Recommendations for Exclusion from School

Mild illness is common among children and many children will not need to be excluded from their usual source of care for respiratory illnesses of mild severity, since transmission is likely to have occurred before the child became symptomatic or from children with asymptomatic infection. Illness risk can be reduced by following common-sense hygienic practices.

Children need not be excluded for a minor illness unless any of the following exists:

- The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in program activities.
- The illness results in a greater care need than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children.
- The child has any of the following conditions: fever, lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, or other signs of possible severe illness.
- Diarrhea or stools that contain blood and/or mucus.
- Vomiting in the previous 24 hours.

- Mouth sores associated with an inability of the child to control his or her saliva, unless the child's physician or local health department authority states that the child is noninfectious.
- Rash with fever or behavior change, until a physician has determined the illness not to be a communicable disease.
- "Pink Eye" (defined as pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge, often with matted eyelids after sleep and eye pain or redness of the eyelids or skin surrounding the eye), until examined by a physician and approved for re-admission, with or without treatment.
- Tuberculosis, until the child's physician or local health department authority states that the child is noninfectious.
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated.
- Strep Throat, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated, and until the child has been afebrile for 24 hours.
- Head lice, until the morning after the first treatment, and the child must be checked to confirm nit/ lice free upon return to school.
- Scabies (body lice), until after treatment has been completed.
- Chicken Pox, until the sixth day after onset of rash or sooner if all lesions have dried and crusted.
- Whooping Cough (Pertussis), until five days of appropriate antibiotic therapy has been completed.

- Mumps, until nine days after onset of parotid gland swelling.
- Hepatitis A virus infection, until one week after onset of illness or jaundice if symptoms are mild) or until immune globulin has been administered to appropriate children and staff in the program as directed by the responsible health department.

## Medication

### Administration of Medicines in School

1. The Redwing Pond House Preschool will store and administer prescribed inhalers, epi-pens, non-prescription topical medication and emergency oral medication (i.e. Benadryl) with a parent's signed consent. All prescribed medication must be in the original packaging, have an Authorization form completed by the child's health care provider, and be kept in the school office.
2. All medications will be stored in a cabinet in the office, in the refrigerator, or carried with the staff while outdoors.
3. Only staff members trained in accordance with state law and state regulations prior to administration will be allowed to administer medication.
4. All administered medications will be logged and signed for in ink with legal signature on designated form provided for by the Bureau of Nursing. The form will be kept with the medication. Narcotics will be counted according to regulations.

5. Field trip forms will be utilized when children requiring inhalers are outdoors.
6. Medication incident report forms will be filled out when a medication error has occurred and will be kept on file with the Bureau of Nursing and in the child's file. The procedures for notification of medication error will be followed.
7. Medications will be monitored and accounted for by the Director, and in her absence, by the teachers.
8. The Director is responsible for the safe administration of medications in school and will assure compliance of State Medication Policies and Statutes (10-212 a and b) and the Nurse Practice Act.

Please be advised that the Health Consultant is required by law to adhere to the State regulations and will insure compliance.

## Accident/Incident Reports

Any accident requiring first aid treatment must be documented with an accident report. One copy is given to the parent and the other is for the child's file in the office, both will be signed by the staff and family member. For all but the most minor situations it is advisable for the Director/Teacher to notify the family of the child's injury in person or by phone before the child goes home.

## Medical Emergency Procedures

Should the child require medical attention i.e., broken bone, concussion, etc., the child should remain immobile with an adult who will administer simple first aid as required. The family will be called and if necessary the ambulance squad (911). If the family cannot be reached and the child must be transported to the hospital, the Director will accompany the child and remain with him/her until a parent or guardian arrives. The child's medical records and emergency card must be taken to the hospital if the parent or guardian cannot be reached. The school will continue to try to reach the parent or guardian. The Director must be apprised of the situation at all times.

## Emergency Phone Numbers

General Emergencies	911
Ansonia Police Department	203-735-1885
Griffin Hospital	203-735-7421
Poison Control	800-222-1222
State of Ct. Dept. of Public Health	800-282-6063

## Mandated Reporting

As mandated by the State Department of Public Health, The Redwing Pond House Preschool has written Child Abuse and Neglect Policy and Procedures.

The staff are among those mandated by law to report suspected child abuse and/or neglect to the State Department of Children and Families.

## Behavior Management Policy

The Redwing Pond House Preschool is committed to providing your child with a healthy, safe and enjoyable experience. The purpose of discipline is to teach children self-control and acceptable social behavior. We believe that this direction and guidance should be provided in a positive manner promoting healthy learning and self-confidence.

When discipline is necessary we will follow these guidelines:

- \*Use positive guidance
- \*Teachers and staff will model appropriate behavior and serve as positive role models for the children.
- \*Set clear limits to allow the child to self-regulate their behavior
- \*Redirect the child to another activity
- \*Use natural and logical consequences in response to negative behavior.

Under no circumstances will teachers use physical contact, abusive language, or humiliating words when disciplining a child. No child will be physically restrained unless it is necessary to protect the health and safety of the child or another child or adult.

## Weather Related Closings

The Redwing Pond House will follow the Ansonia Public School District closings (notifications are on WTNH). If the Ansonia Public School District has a delay the morning program will be cancelled and the full day program will begin at 10:30

am. \*There will be no adjustments to tuition rates for days that school is not open.

## Staff Information

The goal of the Redwing Pond House Preschool Staff is to create a warm, nurturing learning environment that offers young children daily opportunities to explore nature and provides them with a unique, hands-on learning program designed to build a solid foundation for future school experiences. Our teachers and volunteers bring to the classroom diverse backgrounds and experiences to share, Education degrees, Environmental Studies degrees, certifications in First Aid, CPR, and Medicine Administration, and many years of experience.

Additionally, all staff are required to pass a criminal background check, including fingerprinting prior to employment, they must submit a statement of good health every two years and receive a negative reading on a TB test in order to be employed at the center.

Jennifer Shuart: Teacher

Kevin Peterson: Teacher

Aubrey Meyenburg: Substitute

Amy Henricksen: Substitute

Christine Boulay: Bookkeeper and Classroom Volunteer

Anne Smith: Classroom Volunteer

Jacqueline Lema: Director/Head Teacher

Email: [jackie@rwphpreschool.org](mailto:jackie@rwphpreschool.org)

\*Visitors throughout the school year will enrich our classroom as well

Revised August 2016

