



**Wildflowers Playschool is a holistic, play-based, child-centered preschool.**

**2016-2017**

## **Parent Handbook**

Dear Parents,

I am so excited about having you and your child become a part of the Wildflowers Playschool community! This handbook should give you some information about the program. If you have any additional questions, feel free to contact me.  
In light and love,

Tess Lindsay, Director and Lead Teacher

[Wildflowersplayschool@gmail.com](mailto:Wildflowersplayschool@gmail.com)

802-380-1798

### **Our Philosophy**

#### **\*Child Centered and Child Directed Curriculum**

-Curriculum and activities at the pace of the child and following their spark of learning. We believe that children are born learners, and want to facilitate their curiosity.

#### **\*Problem Solving**

- Children actively involved in developmentally appropriate conflict resolution in order to learn respect for others, feel empowered, take personal responsibility, stimulate intellectual and emotional growth, gain social skills, and be involved in their community

#### **\*Experiential Learning**

- Our learning is centered around process, not product. At Wildflowers Playschool we play and through that play we learn about ourselves and the surrounding world. We learn about science, math, and language through play, child directed and teacher directed activities. We activate our creative minds and take opportunities to follow the excitement of learning. We do not have computers, video or TV, but instead use

materials that support development of fine and gross motor skills, as well as materials that are tactile and natural.

**\*Social Justice**

-We incorporate age appropriate anti-bias work into our curriculum. We respect cultural diversity in our classroom. We have a non-authoritarian approach to education. We do not use extreme incentives, rewards, punishments, or coercive behavior towards children.

**\*Parent involvement**

- Children need their families involved in their education. Through various efforts we provide parents with opportunities to get involved as well as to connect with other families

**\*Unconditional Positive Regard**

-We borrow from Carl Rodgers' philosophy that children need to be accepted for who they are to develop a positive self-concept. At Wildflowers Playschool we embrace the whole child. We help them to feel emotional safety with whatever they are feeling be it anger, sadness, jealousy, etc.

**\*The Natural World**

-We believe that people are healthier beings if they spend time outdoors. We spend some time every day outside despite the weather to move our bodies and connect to our planet. We learn about the seasons and have teacher directed seasonal activities.

**\*Creativity**

At Wildflowers Playschool we provide materials and curriculum every day to support the flow of creativity. We do this through art, music, dramatic play, stories, dance and more!

## **Wildflowers Daily Routine**

*830am-1230pm*

830: Arrival, Wash Hands With Parents

830-910: Free Play Inside

910-925: Morning Meeting (Play Plans, Problems, and Sharing)

925-10: Wash hands and Snack

10-1115: Activities and Free Play Inside and Out

1115-1130: Clean up/Wash Hands

1130-12: Lunchtime and Story

12-1230: Play Outside

1230: Parent Pick Up

Special Teacher-Directed Activities:

Monday: Painting (watercolor, finger, with tools, nature)

Tuesday: Seasonal (fall/winter/spring themed)

Wednesday: Tactile (messy, water, modeling clay, baking)

Thursday: Movement (dance, stretching, yoga, games)

**Wildflowers Aftercare\*:**

*(\*Aftercare hours are tentative at this time. There will be aftercare from 1230-230 as long as at least 2 children are interested, but I am working out a licensing change to go until 3pm and wont know until April)*

1230pm-3pm

1230-1250: Play outside

1250-110: Brush teeth and read books on couch

110-130: Rest on mats

130-2: Quiet Activity for those awake

2-220: Snack

220-3: Free play Outside

## **Wildflowers Playschool**

### **\$\$ TUITION \$\$**

*For the 2016-2017 School Year  
Monday-Thursday 830am-1230pm.*

3 days: Sliding Scale \$3020-3860 Plus Collective Work

4 days: Sliding Scale \$3537-4847 Plus Collective Work

2 Full days: (830-3pm\*) \$3950-4510 sliding scale plus Collective Work

Tuition is due in *9 installments*.

The first payment is Sept 1<sup>st</sup>; the last is on May 1<sup>st</sup>.

Any payments received after the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month will be charged a \$15 late fee. If money is not received by the 20<sup>th</sup> of a month, the child will be asked to not participate in school until payment is complete.

(Note: tuition does not include the \$50 enrollment fee)

**Late Pick up fees:** If you are 10 minutes late or more, you will be charge \$5 every 10 minutes that you are late. These fees will be added to your monthly tuition bill.

*(\*Aftercare hours are tentative at this time. There will be aftercare from 1230-230 as long as at least 2 children are interested, but I am working out a licensing change to go until 3pm and wont know until April)*

**\*AFTERCARE 1230pm-3pm**

The cost for each day of aftercare is:

\$645 for one day

\$1290 for two days

\$1935 for three days

\$2450 for all four days.

Drop in charge will be \$8 an hour.

**COLLECTIVE WORK:**

As tuition alone does not cover all work and money needed to support a school there will be some required work from parents. This includes each of these 5 requirements:

- 1) Attendance of at least one family member to each of the two required works days, (one for the community center to keep our rent low, and one for our school.)
- 2) Active participation in a fundraising event (pre-event supply gathering, shift at the event, set up, clean up)
- 3) Picking at least 2 jobs from this list:
  - Taking the school laundry once a week
  - Vacuuming/sweeping the school once a month
  - Clean bathroom every other week
  - Maintain our first aid kit
  - Design and print brochures 2x a year
  - Help edit and print Seasonal newsletter 3x a year
  - Do one sewing project for the school
  - Do dishes after school twice a month
  - Donate 3 movement/yoga classes
  - Fix small broken wooden toys 3x a year
  - Do dishes afterschool twice a month
  - Solicit 4 healthy free snack donations
  - Mop the school once a month
  - Building project for the school
  - Donate 5 hrs from Brattleboro Time Trade

*Jobs are to be done from 815-830am, From 1230-1245, or 230-245; not during school hours.*

- 4) Picking at least 1 organizing job from this list:
  - Be on a fundraising committee (help to organize fall, winter and spring fundraisers)

- Be on workday committee (help to organize a fall and a spring workday)
  - Be in charge of organizing one parent meeting with a topic idea or guestspeaker or movie
- 5) Each family will be asked to contribute these supplies towards our communal yearly supplies:
- 3 rolls of toilet paper
  - 2 rolls of paper towels
  - 1 container of natural hand soap
  - 1 box of tissues
  - 1 50lb bag of play sand
  - One cloth hand towel labeled for your child
- (total approximate cost: \$20)
- These will need to be brought to school the first day.*

### **FINANCIAL AID:**

Child Care Subsidy Program offered through Windham Childcare. This wonderful program pays a portion of your child's tuition based on financial information. For an application call 802-254-5332 and ask for subsidy application. Or stop by their office at 130 Birge Street, Brattleboro, VT.

### **Scholarships**

Starting Fall 2016, We will offer 2 small scholarships for families who are in need.

### **Refunds/Withdrawal/Schedule Changes:**

Our current refund policy is:

Prepaid tuition before Sept 1<sup>st</sup> is 100% refundable.

We are a small program and base our budget upon enrollment, so it is very important to have good communication if you decide to withdraw your child. You must give at least 1-month notice, and will be responsible for any tuition payments that fall within that month.

(For instance, if you say on Nov 15 that you will be withdrawing on Dec 15<sup>th</sup>, you will still owe Dec 1<sup>st</sup> tuition payment in full) Starting March 1<sup>st</sup> tuition for the rest of the year is non-refundable. If you choose to withdraw your child on March 1<sup>st</sup> or later you will be still be expected to pay the rest of your annual tuition.

We will not refund or make up for snow days, or illness of a child. If in the rare and unlikely situation school has to be closed because no sub is available and the teacher is out sick, families will be obligated to pay for a maximum of 3 days.

### **OUR SCHOOL DAY**

### **Arrival/departure:**

Arrival is 830am. At this time you can enter into the school and start the day. The time before 830am is important for teachers to prepare the classroom so please wait until 830 to enter. Children must be escorted in and out of school, and be signed in and out. Please make sure the teacher is aware of the child's arrival. Children may not be left unattended at any time. If a child is to be picked up by someone other than a parent or designee, notification in advance is required. Pick up is promptly at 1230pm. Fees are applied for tardiness.

### **Saying goodbye:**

Each child will approach goodbyes in a different way. Some children handle it fairly well, some show signs of distress and then settle in shortly after, and for some it can be a real challenge. We are here to support you and your child's needs.

We will help you establish a routine that works for your family for saying goodbye at school.

### **Snack and Lunch:**

Each day we will have snack and lunch together at the table. Families will need to pack a healthy lunch and snack everyday. Details are still being worked out if we will be able to provide snack, pending funding from the state. We will have a refrigerator available for use. Please make sure to let us know of any food allergies your child has.

### **Clothing and Supplies:**

Please have a cloth bag that can live in the cubby with the following labeled items:

- 2 pairs of pants
- Two shirts including one long sleeve
- Three pairs of socks
- Extra underwear
- One sweater or sweatshirt
- One pair of slippers
- Water bottle
- Diapers, wipes, and diaper cream if needed

Fall/Spring Additional Items: a pair of rainboots, rainpants, rain jacket, sunscreen and bugspray.

Winter Additional Items: snowpants (extras if you have!), warm socks (not cotton), long underwear, warm snow boots, neckie/balaclava, hat, 2-3 pairs of mittens with at least one waterproof and indoor gym sneakers.

We will go outside every day, rain or shine, snow or sleet, so please bring clothes so your child will stay comfortable and warm. If it is below 10 degrees we will not go outside.

### **Medical:**

A complete first aid kit is kept on premises. Parents will be notified of all accidents. If your child becomes ill during the day you will be notified.

*Exam and Vaccinations:* It is necessary for us to have up-to-date (within the last 12 months) physical exam on file. You can use the provided medical form or receive one from your doctor.

*Immunizations:* Vermont childcare regulations require that each child enrolled in childcare must be “immunized appropriate to age”. However, no child is required to be immunized if immunizations are medically contradicted or against a family’s religious belief. Please be sure to have an up to date vaccination record or a physician signed exemption form on file. *NOTE: Starting July 2016 the state no longer recognizes Philosophical Exemptions*

*Medication:* All prescriptions must be in original container and labeled with the child’s name. An authorization to dispense medication must be given to the teacher. This is a note with date, medicine name, amount to be given at specific time and then signed by parent. Please notify teacher of any special health issues.

*Emergency:* In case of serious injury or life threatening situation we will first notify you, next your listed emergency contact, then we will call 911. A staff member will accompany your child to the hospital and stay until you or an emergency contact arrives. We cannot personally transport your child to the hospital.

### **Illness:**

The best place when your child is not feeling well as is at home. State law requires that parents not send your child to school until they are symptom free for 24 hrs. If your child becomes sick at school we will contact you or someone on your emergency contact sheet to pick your child up. If your child has one of the illnesses listed below, please call the school and let us know they will not be attending.

- Fever of 101. 4 degrees or higher
- skin rash
- pink eye
- vomiting
- impetigo
- head lice
- diarrhea

### **Neglect and abuse:**

As required by state law, Wildflowers Playschool is required to report any indication of abuse or neglect by staff or family to the appropriate authorities.

### **Smoking:**

Smoking is prohibited in and around the school and play area at all times.

#### **Celebrations:**

We love to celebrate your child! If you would like to celebrate your child's birthday or anything special in their life you may bring in a treat in the morning for us all to share after lunch. Keep in mind to try to keep treats as healthy as possible.

#### **Toys From Home:**

You may bring toys from home, to help with transitions, but they will need to stay in the child's cubby for safekeeping during the day.

#### **Snow Days:**

In inclement weather check out the local radio station: 96.7 FM or

<http://www.wtsa.net/?gallery=-51-Cancellations>

When Putney Central School is closed, we are closed. If you decide to stay home because of the weather but there is not a cancellation please give us a call and let us know not to expect your child. (This applies to any absences)

#### **Curriculum:**

At Wildflowers Playschool we believe in holistic, play-based, child-centered learning. We work with each child and their family's individual needs. Our curriculum includes both child-directed and teacher-directed curriculum. Our classroom is a place for children to feel confident and develop who they are. Emotional growth is a priority, and we offer emotional support for frustration, separation, connection, cooperation, self-reliance, and foster age appropriate conflict resolution. We incorporate social justice activities into our play. We play outside everyday and connect to our natural world. Our classroom is an environment that is intellectually stimulating and safe.

Children at this age are full of the spark of curiosity. We work to follow their excitement and support their learning. We strive for school to be a place where confidence and courage can thrive. We work to aid students in developing a sense of who they are and finding ways to express themselves creatively. We create a safe space that is respectful to children and dedicated to honoring and supporting their own learning paths.

We encourage and create opportunity for imaginative play. We share ways to become creative thinkers. Through play children learn about resolving conflict, sharing, risk taking, imagination, self-confidence, tactile skills, motor skills, language skills and more.

Teachers bring activities that develop a connection to nature, sensory skills, communication, creativity, moving their bodies, and problem solving.

The world is surrounded by words and numbers and through play, drawing, songs, stories, puppetry, and free play children learn about language and the written word. Math skills are learned naturally by manipulatives, categorization, cooking, counting, and



spatial skills. We learn by watching the changes of nature. We offer support in the emotional development process and help them develop who they are and how they relate to others. Our curriculum unfolds naturally.

### **Behavior and Discipline:**

We believe firmly in Carl Rodger's idea of "Unconditional Positive Regard" It is our job to support your children in being successful and honoring their process. We believe that approaching conflict with positivity works best. We model expected behavior. We create and support consistent rules and clear expectations.

In the event of a conflict any child involved will be given time to sort out their feelings as well as figure out positive conclusions and redirection. Time out will not be given. If a child is being unsafe to other children and not able to shift their behavior, they will be helped to take some time with a teacher or alone somewhere to cool off depending on what works best for the child in that situation.

Parents will be informed of any behavioral issues. We hope to work as a team to provide the support needed to each child so that they can experience success. If the behavior creates a situation in which other children or themselves are not able to learn and be safe, or if the family is not willing to work to resolve the issues, the family will be given two weeks notice to find other care.

If in an extreme case where a child is having dangerous behavior repeatedly in a way where the child is not able to be safe or needs one on one attention for a significant amount of time, the family will be asked to come pick up their child.

### **Family Communication:**

We feel that family communication and connection to your child's school experience is very important. Feel free to call our school number to check on your child. We will have parent-teacher conferences twice a year to talk about your child together. The dates of the conferences are posted on the school calendar and a sign up sheet will be available the week before. We will also post important information on the school bulletin board. Your child's cubby will have spot for notes, invitations, projects, and artwork. Be sure to check your child's cubby every day. We will also be having optional Parent meetings with specific relevant topics.

If you have questions at any time feel free to email [Wildflowersplayschool@gmail.com](mailto:Wildflowersplayschool@gmail.com).

### **IMPORTANT DATES:**

Please note there is a required orientation for all families on Sept 8<sup>th</sup>. This is a great time to see the space with your child, meet the teachers, and ask any last minute questions.

First day of school is Sept 12<sup>th</sup> 2016. See the attached calendar for parent conference dates, school vacation dates, and workdays.

## OUR STAFF

We maintain a maximum staff ratio of 1:5.

**Tess Lindsay, Director and Lead Teacher**



Tess graduated from Antioch College in 2008 with a degree in Childhood Education: Dimensions of Child-centered Learning. She has worked at Play Mountain Place in Los Angeles, renowned for its philosophy and support of self-motivated experiential learning.

She has over six years of experience teaching and creating programs for children of all ages. She has worked primarily in alternative schools and home schooling communities working to create radical education opportunities.

*“Tess brings great skill and an inherent ability to honor every child. She teaches children to navigate social conflict and challenge in a way that is empowering to all involved, creating a positive and respectful school community. She believes in the importance of focusing on learning as a process, not an outcome.” –Lisa Crocker, Director of The Journey School*

Tess lives in Putney Vermont, and is a beekeeper, gardener, artist and lover of nature. She helped create “The Future Collective”, a local arts and music organization in Brattleboro.

### **Assistant Teacher:**

Our Assistant Teacher is to be determined for 2016/2017

### **Intern:**

We are hoping to hire an intern! They are also to be determined for 2016/2017

### **Admission requirements:**

- Enrollment Form with \$60 nonrefundable fee
- Emergency contact form
- Permission slips form
- Parent handbook agreement and tuition commitment
- Physical exam
- Record of age required immunizations OR exemption