



HARTLEY NATURE
PreSCHOOL

PARENT HANDBOOK

2014-15

Hartley Nature Center

218-724-6735

State Dept. of Human Services

(Licensing) 651-4316500

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Welcome!

Thank you for enrolling your child in Hartley Nature Preschool!

Hartley Nature Preschool (HNP) offers experiences typically found in a preschool classroom including child-directed learning through play, chances to explore and learn with all of the senses, large and small motor activities, and chances to create art, make friends, and develop social skills. But, HNP does all of these things, and more, in the context of the natural world! Your child will be busy learning about cooperation while building a snow fort under the pines, learning about colors while playing in the crisp fall leaves, and practicing balancing and coordination by climbing on logs and stumps, among many other activities.

HNP's curriculum is based on what's happening in the natural world. We provide a predictable structure for each preschool session, including indoor free play, circle time, snack, bathroom break, and outdoor play time, while also making the most of what nature has to offer on each day. Your child will spend approximately 2/3 of each preschool session playing outside in all seasons and all (safe) weather. At HNP your child will learn through playing in and with nature as he/she learns from and about nature, all while building relationships with other children and with HNP's professional and nurturing staff.

We hope this Parent Handbook provides you with the information you need; please hold on to this handbook as a reference for the preschool year ahead. We look forward to welcoming your family to Hartley Nature Preschool! Please feel free to contact HNP staff with any questions and/or concerns about what your child will experience at HNP or about the enrollment process.

Sincerely,

Kaitlin Erpestad
Preschool Director

Mission

Hartley Nature Preschool's mission is to inspire life-long connections with nature through education, play, and exploration in a premier preschool environment that supports the whole child's development while preparing children for school.

This mission builds directly off of, and supports, Hartley Nature Center's Mission. Hartley Nature Center is dedicated to inspiring life-long connections with nature through education, play, and exploration.

Educational Philosophy

Organization

Hartley Nature Preschool (HNP) is a licensed child care center located at Hartley Nature Center in Duluth, MN. HNP is a unique nature preschool program for children ages 3-5, which provides a developmentally appropriate preschool program rooted in the local environment and Duluth community. HNP staff members are licensed educators who have experience in both early childhood education and environmental education. The educators are nurturing, supportive, and model positive environmental attitudes, values, and behaviors. HNP is committed to providing a safe and peaceful educational setting, serving diverse populations, and engaging parents in their children's preschool experiences.

Hartley Nature Preschool is licensed as a child care center by the MN Department of Human Services.

Learning and Curriculum

HNP believes that young children learn best through play. Through a mixture of child-directed and teacher-directed activities, children use all of their senses, explore, get dirty, and actively move their bodies as they are busy learning both indoors and out.

HNP teaches pre-literacy, pre-numeracy, science, social skills, and environmental literacy through a seasonal, place-based, experiential, and developmentally appropriate curriculum. The HNP curriculum includes a mixture of inquiry-based and hands-on activities, group and individual activities, indoor and outdoor activities, and active and quiet activities.

Independent and self-help skills are also emphasized as children learn to dress themselves for all seasons and play outside in the natural environment of Hartley Park.

Nurture Nature

HNP believes that nature is a child's natural habitat. As such, children will spend the majority of each nature preschool session out in Hartley Park in all seasons and all weather. Children will play in and with nature while learning from and about nature. These experiences, in combination with careful planning by HNP staff, will provide opportunities for the development of environmental literacy and the acquisition of knowledge about the natural world. Children will become naturalists and scientists in their own ways.

Child Development and Nature Preschool Benefits

HNP supports each child's whole development, including their social, cognitive, emotional, and physical development. HNP helps children develop their individual strengths as well as their courage, enthusiasm, confidence, and independence. HNP teaches children to be compassionate and caring towards themselves, other children, the staff, and the natural world. As they participate in HNP's programs, children learn to interact positively with and cooperate with their peers. As children play and learn at HNP they develop positive attitudes towards learning and a sense of curiosity, wonder, and discovery. Through regular experiences in Hartley Park, children develop their creativity and observational skills and a connection with nature.

History

Hartley Nature Center (HNC) is a 501 (C) 3 non-profit funded through memberships, user fees, grants, and gifts from individuals, foundations, and organizations. HNC averages 25,000+ visitors annually of which over 12,000 are students on K-12 field trips. The HNC facility was completed in the summer of 2003; the \$2.8 million project was funded with state, county, and city contributions along with nearly \$1 million raised by Hartley Nature Center. HNC has a membership of about 750 members including individuals, families, and businesses. The Nature Center is located in Hartley Park, a 660 acre City park in the center of Duluth. Hartley Park is owned by the City of Duluth though HNC owns the 22 acres of land

adjacent to the former Kenwood school, the Naymark Property, and 8.5 acres across Woodland Avenue called the Zamzow Property. The nearest adjacent landowner is ISD #709 who owns 33.8 acres next to the driveway along Woodland Ave.

HNC is open to the public Monday-Friday 9am-5pm, Saturday 10am-5pm, and on Sundays in the winter (usually January-March) from 12pm-5pm.

Hartley Nature Preschool began in 2012 with a feasibility study conducted by Green Hearts, INC, though the idea for a preschool at Hartley has been around for much longer. A task force composed of HNC board members and staff and community members was created to bring the recommendations in the feasibility study to life. HNC received grants for the 2013-2014 fiscal year to hire a part-time Preschool Director to get HNP licensed and up and running. The preschool was licensed as a child care center by the MN Department of Human Services on July 10, 2014 with an opening date of September 2, 2014.

Facility

HNP is located in Hartley Nature Center at 3001 Woodland Avenue. Entry to the preschool classroom is through the main Nature Center entrance. There is currently one preschool classroom at Hartley Nature Center and the classroom is carefully prepared and equipped to meet the needs of the children. In addition to facilities and furnishings for eating, washing, learning, and playing, great care is taken to provide ample amounts of natural light. The classroom's space and materials are carefully designed for the developmental needs of children aged 3-5 and include a variety of interest areas and materials. The restrooms are located in the main space of Hartley Nature Center across from the office's main desk and children are always supervised while using the restroom facilities.

Classroom Access

The preschool classroom is a secure space and requires keycard access. Two of the classroom doors are interior doors; these doors are locked and alarmed. The third classroom door, the one closest to the restrooms and the HNC office, is for families to use and is equipped with an access control security system that requires a programmed keycard for entry. The programmable system allows for a card to be deactivated, for example in the case

of a lost keycard or in the case of a parent who loses custody of a child. Visitors and members of the public are unable to enter the classroom without receiving permission due to the secured doors. Parents, visitors, and volunteers must sign-in at the main office desk before entering the classroom.

Staff

Each preschool session is staffed by a head teacher and assistant teacher who meet or exceed the requirements from the State of MN. Teachers stay with the same class for the entire preschool year to ensure continuity of care and an environment rich in personal contact and meaningful relationships. The State of MN required ratio is 1 adult for every 10 preschoolers. However, at HNP the staff to child ratio is always 1:8 or better. Parent and community volunteers also help out in the classroom on a regular basis; volunteers are not counted as part of the required ratio and are always supervised. Staff and volunteers are carefully screened and trained and must pass a background check before working with children.

All staff members participate in program trainings throughout the year. These trainings include, among many others, Medication Administration, abusive head trauma, and orientation to and implementation of all policies and procedures. Staff are certified in first aid and CPR and participate in trainings as necessary to maintain these certifications.

Meet the Staff

Kaitlin Erpestad—Preschool Director and Lead Teacher, Tues/Thurs AM and PM classes

I grew up exploring the parks, lake shore, and green spaces of Duluth and learning to ski on the ski trails of Hartley Park. I earned a BA in Social Studies Education and a MN teaching license for K-6 elementary and 5-8 social studies from St. Olaf College in Northfield, MN. I then had the pleasure of living in the country of Finland for three years where I taught preschool for 3-7 year old Finnish and international children and explored the Finnish woods with my husband, Matti. I returned to MN and completed a naturalist training program at Wolf Ridge ELC and earned a Master's degree in Environmental Education from UMD. I love

to be active outside in all seasons, to cook and bake, to watch and read Nordic crime series, and to eat chocolate!

Dani French--Lead Teacher, Mon/Wed/Fri AM and PM Classes

As a native to Duluth, I spent my childhood enjoying the lake at my cabin, and exploring the woods surrounding my house. I have always felt a sense of peace when surrounded by nature and I love to share that with my family now. My husband and our 2 daughters love to hike the many trails in town and enjoy being outside whenever we can. I have always loved working with young children and found my calling when I decided to study at WITC in their early childhood program. I am one who believes you should never stop learning and pursued a bachelor's degree in Child Development from Concordia University a few years after graduating WITC. Just last spring I completed yet another Bachelor's program in Unified Early Childhood Studies from UMD. Between schools I have taught in various settings around the area and worked with students from 6 weeks to 6 years. In my off time I like to read, take pictures and go geocaching with my family.

Caitlin Johnson—Assistant Teacher, Mon/Wed/Fri AM and PM Classes

I have always loved exploring the natural world and learning as much as I can about it! It wasn't until I attended the University of Minnesota Duluth that I realized how much I enjoy teaching about our natural world and introducing children to its many wonders, which is why I obtained a degree in Recreation/ Outdoor Education. Since college I have worked as a teacher for Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center in Finland, MN and Deep Portage Learning Center in Hackensack, MN. I then decided I wanted to explore the mountains a bit and moved out to Aspen, Colorado to work at Aspen Center for Environmental Studies as a naturalist. The mountains were beautiful, but I missed the lake so I moved back to Duluth. I love exploring the woods in Duluth with my family and our dogs, mountain biking, cross country skiing, making jewelry and creating things in the kitchen.

Maria Hopkins—Assistant Teacher, Tues/Thurs AM and PM Classes

All my life I have enjoyed being outdoors and learning about my surrounding environment, which is why I chose to study biology as an undergraduate in Minnesota. Upon receiving my degree, I began to pursue outdoor education, which sparked my interest and passion for

teaching children and engaging them with nature. In December 2011, I received my M.Ed. in Elementary Education, with a focus in environmental education, from Antioch University New England. Upon receiving my degree I worked as an Education Coordinator for a Nature Explore Classroom in Cape Cod, Massachusetts. While there, my dedication for teaching young children outdoors grew even stronger. I am very excited to be back in the Midwest and to begin my journey as Assistant Teacher for the Hartley Nature Preschool!

Darcy McAuliffe—Substitute* Teacher

I live in Duluth with my husband and two school aged children. I have been a stay at home parent since we moved here nine years ago. My children have enjoyed many hours at Hartley while attending Nature Nook and multiple camps. I look forward to sharing the joy of discovery with Hartley Nature Preschool.

Julie Bates—Substitute* Teacher

My name is Julie Bates and I have lived in Duluth for the past 24 years. My husband and I have raised a son and daughter in a home adjacent to Hartley Park. I was a stay-at-home mom and am now employed at the J. Skylark toy store in Canal Park. I was born and raised in Minneapolis and attended the University of Minnesota where I obtained a degree in recreation and environmental/outdoor education.

*Additional substitutes will be hired as the year progresses.

Child Care Program Plan

HNP has a written Child Care Program Plan, parts of which are included in this handbook. The full Child Care Program Plan is available in the director’s office for parents/guardians to view at any time. The Preschool Director sees that the Child Care Program Plan is carried out and reviews the plan annually. It is the policy and practice at HNP that all children are supervised by an approved staff person at *all* times, meaning that a child is always within sight and hearing of a staff person. Children are the responsibility of their parent/guardian or other authorized adult before the child is signed in and after the child is signed out each session on the sign-in/sign-out form located in the preschool classroom. At HNP all program adults are responsible for protecting the health and safety of all enrolled

children, although teaching staff assigned to specific morning or afternoon sessions have primary responsibility for continuous supervision of children enrolled in that session.

HNP is an equal opportunity employer and educator. HNP offers a non-sexist, non-racist, nature-based curriculum and environment and does not discriminate against staff, volunteers, parents/guardians, or children on the basis of sex, gender, gender identity and expression, age, race, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, marital status, income, status in regards to public assistance, religion/spirituality, language, physical or mental abilities, or veteran status. HNP promotes an inclusive, welcoming, and safe environment by representing many different kinds of families within the curriculum, books, toys, activities, and teaching materials in the classroom, providing opportunities for children to experience different cultural activities and ask questions, and by not celebrating any particular culture's holidays.

Throughout this document the term parent/guardian is used, however it is understood that a caregiver such as a nanny, babysitter, grandparent, or other adult may accompany your child to and/or from HNP or may be the child's primary caregiver. Please share this information with all of your child's caregivers as it is a valuable resource for all of the caregivers who will be involved in your child's preschool experience.

Ages and Numbers Served

HNP serves preschool aged children. The MN Department of Health and Human Services in Chapter 9503.0005 defines a preschooler as a child who is at least 33 months old and who has not yet attended the first day of kindergarten. To enroll in HNP, children **must** be toilet trained and 3 years old by September 1st of the year in which they will enroll.

HNP is licensed to serve 20 children per class, however HNP will limit class sizes to 16 children. HNP will maintain a ratio of one teacher to eight or fewer children. This ratio does not include the presence of volunteers. During the first two years of programming, HNP will serve a maximum of 64 children if enrollment in all classes is at capacity; classes will not overlap.

Days and Hours of Operation

HNP is open Monday-Thursday between the hours of 8:30-3:30 and Fridays from 8:30-11:30 with staff meetings and staff development occurring on Friday afternoons when no children are present. HNP will be closed when the Duluth Public Schools (ISD #709) close due to severe weather (see the Weather Emergency Closings section for more information). HNP offers morning sessions from 8:30-11:30 and afternoon sessions from 12:30-3:30.

Children cannot attend both the morning and afternoon sessions. HNP is a 9-month program and requires a commitment for the entire year. The following sessions will be offered in the 2014-2015 school year:

Days of the Week	Time	Age	Monthly Tuition	Yearly Tuition
Monday/Wednesday/Friday	8:30am--11:30 am	3—5 year olds	\$264	\$2, 376
Tuesday/Thursday	8:30 am--11:30 am	3 year olds only class!	\$176	\$1,584
Monday/Wednesday	12:30 pm--3:30 pm	3—5 year olds	\$176	\$1,584
Tuesday/Thursday	12:30 pm--3:30pm	3—5 year olds	\$176	\$1,584

Yearly Schedule

HNP will be open from the Tuesday following Labor Day to the last weekday of May. HNP will be closed on Federal Holidays including Labor Day, Thanksgiving (and the Friday after), Christmas Day, New Year's Day, and Memorial Day. HNP will also be closed for approximately two weeks surrounding the winter holidays and for a spring break week that aligns with the Duluth Public Schools spring break. Families will be notified of the yearly schedule and scheduled closings via a HNP calendar provided with enrollment materials, at parent meetings before the start of the school year, and via a calendar posted online and on the preschool bulletin board. Extra copies are available upon request. These days are considered to be part of the scheduled billing.

HNP will not operate in the summer months. However, summer camp and parent-child nature programs for preschool aged children are available at Hartley during the summer months.

Program Enrollment

HNP does not discriminate in admission on the basis of gender, race, religion, creed, national origin, disability, or source of payment. There are no geographical boundaries for enrollment to HNP. HNP accepts children with special needs when, in the opinion of staff, parents, and, if necessary, appropriate professionals, those needs can be met by our program.

Application for Enrollment

Parents/guardians interested in enrolling their child are encouraged to visit the program prior to registration. Schedule a visit by contacting the preschool director:

- ❖ Phone: 218-724-6735
- ❖ Email: psdirector@hartleynature.org

A completed Application for Enrollment and a **non-refundable** Application Fee of \$75 is required to be considered for enrollment. The fee covers the administrative work necessary to place a child in a class, contact the family, keep records, create the enrollment packet, and conduct parent and child orientations. Submission of an Application for Enrollment and Application fee does not guarantee a child a place in a HNP session. Applications will be reviewed in the order in which they are received; incomplete applications will not be considered. HNP staff do their utmost to place a child in the family's preferred session. However, this is not always possible for a multitude of reasons. Please rank your choices of sessions when submitting an Application for Enrollment to aid HNP staff in creating balanced classrooms and in meeting the needs of your family.

A completed Waiting List Application Form and a **non-refundable** Waiting List Fee of \$25 is required for a place on the waiting list. Please see Waiting List Policies for more information.

Securing a Child's Place at HNP

You will receive an enrollment packet when there is an opening for your child. In order to secure your child's place at HNP, you must return the completed Contract for Preschool Services, a HNC membership form and fee, and a **non-refundable** deposit of one's month's preschool tuition. The deposit will be applied to your September tuition payment

(or first payment if the child starts mid-year). Once the Contract for Preschool Services and deposit have been submitted, the deposit will not be refunded if you withdraw your child from HNP. If you have more than one child attending HNP, you must submit a Contract and non-refundable deposit for each child.

Hartley Nature Preschool Contract for Preschool Services

Please carefully review the Contract before signing it. The contract outlines your family's contracted fees and hours of service and includes parent/guardian information. For new children, contracts are completed at the time of securing a child's place at HNP. For returning children, contracts are completed at the time of re-enrollment in the program. Once contracts are signed, families are responsible for the tuition costs for the entire year, except when a child's care is terminated. See Withdrawal of Child Care Services for more information. You must file a contract amendment or a new contract whenever contracted services change. Changes to enrollment will only be possible if openings exist and match your family's request.

Hartley Nature Center Membership

Preschool families are required to be or to become members of Hartley Nature Center at the family level (\$50 level) or higher. Your family can receive a reduced membership rate if you qualify for assistance from a local, county, state, or federal assistance program. You are responsible for the annual renewal of your membership. We want all preschool families to be part of the HNC community and to be fully involved in the many events and activities for families and young children that take place throughout the year at the Nature Center. Please contact Preschool Director Kaitlin Erpestad with any concerns regarding the membership fee.

Required Enrollment Forms

When there is a space for a child at HNP, families are given the required Enrollment Forms and the Parent Handbook, which includes helpful program information and information required by State of MN licensing regulations. The following documents must be completed and submitted before the child's first day of preschool:

Emergency Information Sheet

This is the most important part of a child's paperwork. This sheet contains all of the emergency contact information and authorized pick-up information for a child. This form is with the staff at all times—both in the preschool room and outdoors. This form must be updated by parents/guardians whenever the information changes and reviewed annually.

Immunization History

MN state law requires that every child entering a child care center have verification of immunizations. Parents/guardians must submit a record of immunizations at the time of enrollment. **There are no exceptions.** An updated report is required when children receive additional immunizations. If a child is missing an immunization that is required for their age, they will not be able to attend HNP, unless they oppose certain or all immunizations (in which case you must state this on the form and have it notarized), or unless there is a medical reason that an immunization was not obtained (in which case the form must be signed by the child's physician). Staff will review immunization records and be aware of children who have not received specific immunizations so that a family can be notified immediately should a child at HNP become ill with a vaccine-preventable disease.

Health Care Summary

State law requires that each child's physician complete this form to verify the child's current physical status. **This form must be completed and submitted within 30 days of enrollment.** An updated health care summary is required anytime there are changes and anytime a child older than 24 months advances to an older age category (as per MN Statute 9503.0140 Subp. 4). When a child is overdue for any routine exam, parents/guardians must provide evidence of an appointment for the exam to maintain enrollment in the program.

Enrollment Information Form

This form provides HNP with information about the child including the child's interests, previous preschool experiences, and home languages as well as the following permissions:

Dietary and Medical Needs

This section informs HNP of any allergies, medical needs, or dietary restrictions which may require extra planning and communication with parents/guardians. If your child has a severe or life-threatening allergy or medical condition, you must contact the Preschool Director for an Individualized Child Care Plan (ICCP) that you will complete with your health care provider. You can also use the ICCP to inform HNP about mild allergies and how to respond. We ask that you work with HNP staff to make a plan for your child's care for both mild and severe allergies based on your health care provider's recommendations. You can also find the ICCP form on the HNP website, as well as ICCP forms for asthma, eczema/dermatitis, and seizures. Please contact the preschool director if you need help deciding which form to use.

Animal and Pet Permission

The Animal and Pet Permission indicates that you understand that Hartley Nature Center is the home to a variety of animals including turtles, snakes, and frogs. HNP children may have daily interactions with animals in the Nature Center and/or when playing outdoors. For more information, please see the sub-section labeled Animals in the Additional Program Information section.

Observation Permission

The Observation Permission gives permission for students from Duluth's local colleges and universities such as UMD, St. Scholastica, Lake Superior College, and UWS, to perform observations of a HNP classroom as a whole. Students may not perform individualized observations of a certain child. If there is a request to do so, HNP will provide a separate written permission form for you to consider. Similarly, this form does NOT include permission for research or for children to participate in public relations activities. Separate written parental permission will be obtained before each occasion of research, experimental procedure, or public relations activity involving a child.

Information Release

This gives permission for a child's name and family contact information, such as parent/guardian name(s) and phone number(s), to be listed in a HNP family directory.

Photo/Video Permission

The Photo/Video Permission allows HNP to take and use pictures and videos of children for HNP purposes such as publicity on social media sites and in the monthly newsletter. Parents have the option to deny their permission, in which case staff carefully monitor who is in photos/videos. Photo/Video permission needs to be given annually.

Walking Field Trip Permission

This gives permission for children to take daily walking field trips on the grounds of Hartley Park and Hartley Nature Center.

Permission to Transport in an Emergency

This gives permission for HNP to transport children to the alternate meeting site at Concordia Lutheran Church in an emergency when Hartley Nature Center must be evacuated. The primary means of transport to the alternate site would be walking on foot through Hartley Park and down Fairmont Street. However, motorized transportation, such as a bus, will be arranged if necessary and this gives HNP permission to transport children in this manner to the alternate meeting site. HNP's full Emergency Response Plan is available to view upon request.

Payment Option Form

Tuition for the nine-month school year can be paid annually or monthly. A \$35 discount (for M/W PM and T/Th AM and PM classes) or \$50 (for the M/W/F AM class) is made to non-scholarship accounts paid in full for the entire preschool year by **check** by August 31st, 2014.

If you wish to pay monthly, Hartley Nature Center prefers that you pay monthly tuition payments via an automatic withdrawal from a bank account in order to make payments smooth and efficient. You must give authorization for these automatic monthly withdrawals via this form. Automatic payments will start with the Oct. 1st tuition payment and end with the May tuition payment. The September payment, which is also the non-refundable deposit for enrollment, must be paid via check, cash, money order, or credit/debit card at the time the Contract for Preschool Services is submitted in order to

secure a child's place at HNP. You also have the option of paying by check, card, or cash on a monthly basis. Please contact HNC's bookkeeper to discuss alternative methods of payment or questions and concerns about the automatic withdrawal option.

Parent/Guardian Acknowledgement of Parent/Guardian Handbook

Please sign and return the last page of this handbook. It states that you have read and understand the policies and procedures presented in this handbook and will abide by them.

Additional Forms

Prescription and Over-the-Counter Medication Administration Forms, if applicable

These forms provide HNP staff with information about medications that your child is taking that need to be administered while the child is at HNP. This includes medications for allergic reactions such as an EpiPen as well as over-the-counter medications such as sunscreen or hand lotion. See Medication Administration Policy for more information.

Individualized Child Care Plans

You must submit an Individualized Child Care Plan if your child has a learning disability, special needs, a mild or severe food allergy, asthma, seizures, or other medical conditions that need special attention. The form should be completed in cooperation with and signed by the child's medical provider.

Waiting List Policy

HNP maintains a waiting list for two purposes: families may apply to be on the waiting list for a class that is currently full and families may place a young child on the waiting list for a class that begins in a future fall. Families may apply to be placed on the waiting list by submitting a Waiting List Application Form and a **non-refundable** \$25 Waiting List Fee. The fee covers the administrative work necessary to put a child on the waiting list, contact the family, arrange a placement for the child, and so forth. Families will receive a letter of confirmation when their child is placed on the waiting list. The date of application, preferred year to begin enrollment, age of the child, and priority level determine a child's

position on the waiting list. As openings at HNP occur, enrollment of a child in any one of our four classes is determined by these criteria in the following priority order:

1. Internal movement of a child from a 3 year olds only class to a 3-5 year old class, or internal movement of a child from a 3-5 year old class to a 3 year old class, on the basis of a child's age, individual readiness, and available opening.
2. Sibling of a child currently enrolled at the time of the sibling's conception or initial adoption application. Prior tuition payment history will be considered before an offer of enrollment is made.
3. Hartley Nature Center Member—parent/guardian must be a HNC member at the \$50 level or higher prior to HNP receiving the Enrollment Application Form and Application Fee.
4. General Public.

*Every effort is made to contact families on the waiting list by email, mail, and telephone when spots become available. **If we are unable to get in touch with a family, HNP will move on to the next family on the waiting list.**

Drop-off and Pick-up Policies

Children benefit from routine arrival and departure times and parents/guardians are encouraged to keep to regular schedules whenever possible. Regular arrival and departure times also help HNP plan for staffing needs. Arrival and departure times provide opportunities for you to communicate with your child's teacher about their day and discuss any questions you may have. If you are late in dropping off your child, please respect that the teachers will be involved in classroom activities and may not have a chance to chat with you at that time.

Hartley Nature Center is open to the public during HNP's program hours. As a result, preschool classroom doors are always secured and locked. All families will be issued up to two keycards for the access control system on the classroom door nearest to the restrooms and HNC office. The keycards will give you access to the classroom during HNP's hours. At HNP children are taught that it is an adult's job to open the door. **Please do not allow your**

child to open the classroom door when arriving or departing. This policy helps us supervise the children and control access to the classroom. Your help with this policy is greatly appreciated.

You must “sign-in” your child each morning upon arrival in order to transfer responsibility of care from parent to authorized program staff. Upon departure you must “sign-out” your child. Once your child is signed out, he/she is no longer the responsibility of HNP and the HNP staff.

Signing children in and out is extremely important. When a child is signed-in the responsibility for that child’s care is transferred from the parent/guardian to authorized program staff. HNP staff use the sign-in sheets to track the number of children present and use it as a roster in an emergency situation. A parent who fails to sign their child in/out creates a safety issue; beginning with the 4th time of failure to sign in or out, parents will be fined \$10.00 per time they forget to sign in or out, payable immediately or billed to the family.

Drop-off Policies

Please do not attempt to drop-off and sign-in your child earlier than 8:25 for morning sessions and 12:25 for afternoon sessions as the time before classes is set aside for teachers to set up activities and prepare for the day. Children are not allowed to be dropped off before these times. **Parents must accompany children into and out of the building at all times.** The sign-in/sign-out form also has space for you to leave special contact information for the day. Please leave this information if you will be away from your regular telephone number so that you can be reached in case of an emergency.

When you arrive, please let (or help) your child remove outdoor clothing, put away their outdoor clothing and snack, and put on their indoor shoes. Make sure your child visits the restroom (even just to try!) and washes their hands in the sink outside of the restrooms before accompanying them into the classroom and signing in.

If your child will be late for their session, please call HNP or email your teacher so that we know you will be arriving late. If your child will not be attending on any particular day due to illness or other reasons, please inform HNP as soon as possible. Due to safety concerns, if

a child does not arrive for a scheduled session and parents do not inform HNP of the child's absence, HNP staff will attempt to contact the parents to check on the whereabouts of the child.

Please move other children and conversations with other parents outside of the classroom as soon as possible after dropping off your child to allow children to settle in and teachers to start the session. Families are always welcome to enjoy the comfortable benches and the sunshine in the Exhibit Hall.

Pick-up Policies

Out of respect to children and staff, please be prompt in picking up your child at the scheduled time. The morning sessions end at 11:30 and children must be picked up at 11:30. Afternoon sessions end at 3:30 and children must be picked up at 3:30. Families are welcome to remain at the Nature Center or in Hartley Park after children are picked up. Once a child is signed-out, which he/she must be in order to leave the program space, he/she is no longer the responsibility of the HNP staff or program. Please respect the teachers' needs to clean the classroom and prepare for the next day and exit the preschool classroom by 11:45 or 3:45. In addition, parents are asked to remove boots/shoes before entering the preschool classroom in order to keep the classroom clean and free of mud and melted snow. If you wish to play in the fenced outdoor area, please note that the deer enclosure gates are locked at 4:00pm daily.

If you will be late, please call HNP to let us know. This way we can let your child know that you will be late and we will not attempt to call you or contact alternate adults to pick-up your child. In the case of car malfunction, traffic, snow storm, being stuck in an elevator, etc., it is expected that you would be in contact with HNP by the end of your child's session. Please see Emergency Procedures Related to Child Pick-up for more information about what HNP would do if no one came to pick up a child.

Late Pick-up Fee

A fee of \$1.00 per minute is charged for each child being picked up 5 minutes or more after the official end time of the session. The fee is assessed as of 11:35 or 3:35 to allow for potential differences in clocks. Late pick-ups are documented on the daily sign-

in/sign-out form and also on a separate late pick-up form. The parent/guardian is required to initial the form when he/she arrives and the teacher will enter the time. Late pick-up penalty fees will be billed to the family or paid on the spot. Families picking their child up late more than four times in three months may have their child care services terminated. The late pick-up penalty may be appealed to HNP's director within five program days of the late pick-up.

Authorization to Pick-up a Child

Children will only be released to parents/guardians or authorized people listed on the child's Emergency Information Sheet. HNP cannot and will not allow a child to leave with an unauthorized person. Any parent/guardian or other person who is listed on a child's Emergency Information Sheet is considered authorized to pick up a child from HNP. These adults may be asked to show an ID at any time when picking up a child. If a new person will be picking up a child from HNP, staff must be notified in writing. Staff must check that person's photo ID when he/she arrives to pick up the child. If the person does not have a photo ID they will not be allowed to pick-up the child. Again, HNP cannot release a child to an unauthorized person.

Any parent denying pick-up authorization to a non-custodial parent must submit a court order supporting that denial to the Preschool Director. Families involved in visitation schedules with children must have specific date and time information submitted to the Preschool Director by the child's legal guardian. HNP will make every effort to comply with these schedules. HNP asks that families involved with special conditions regarding custody and visitation meet with the Preschool Director and teaching staff to ensure that all needed information and schedules are in place.

Parking Lot

Hartley Nature Center's parking lot is used by preschool families, Nature Center visitors, and Hartley Park users. Please drive slowly on the driveway as there may be children and families walking on the driveway. Please park in the lot and not in front of the kiosk or path to the Nature Center as that area needs to remain open for emergency vehicle access. *For the safety of all children, please hold your child's hand at all times in the parking lot.*

What to Bring Each Day

Please send the following items with your child each day that they attend preschool. Please label all items. More information about each of these items can be found in the relevant sections of this parent handbook.

- ❖ Hearty, health snack (with no peanut or tree nut products)
- ❖ Small backpack
- ❖ Water bottle that is easy for your child to drink from without assistance. For example, your child can remove and replace the lid or flip-up the nozzle on his/her own.
- ❖ Indoor shoes
- ❖ Seasonally appropriate outdoor clothing and foot wear
- ❖ 1-2 complete changes of clothes (can be kept in the preschool classroom)

Sample Daily Schedule

The HNP curriculum values spontaneity and takes advantage of seasonal changes and happenings in nature. However, many people, especially young children, benefit from having a regular schedule. HNP maintains a loose but structured schedule with predictable events such as circle time, snack, and outdoor play time during each session.

Below is a sample HNP daily schedule for all classes*:

Sample Daily Schedule		
AM		PM
8:30	Arrival	12:30
8:30	Free play in the classroom	12:30
9:00	Circle Time	1:00
9:15	Snack Time*	1:15
9:30	Outside Play Time	1:30
11:30	Pick Up Time	3:30
*in fantastic weather, snack may be eaten outdoors!		

Arrival

Parents bring children into the building, help them hang up their outdoor clothes and backpacks on their hooks, help them go to the bathroom and wash their hands, and

accompany children into the classroom. Parents sign their child in on the sign-in/sign-out sheet and note any changes in contact information for the day.

Free play in the classroom

Children can choose from the many possible activities offered in the preschool classroom's interest areas including dramatic play activities that vary by the season and by theme, building blocks, art activities, or sensory activities such as the sand or water table. Other possible activities include literacy activities such as listening to a story or playing with puppets, writing activities, math and manipulative games and activities, or adult-directed activities such as a cooking or craft project. At the end of free play time children clean-up to prepare for circle time.

Circle Time

This is a time when children learn about the calendar and the days of the week, record the daily weather, participate in songs, finger plays, and rhymes, and usually hear a story. Children may play instruments, dance, or do stretches, a Hartley Nature Center naturalists may visit the classroom with an animal, or a special guest may visit during this time. Children are also invited to share observations from nature or natural objects they have found. Children are strongly encouraged to participate in circle time, though participation is not required and children may engage quietly in alternative activities.

Snack Time

After washing their hands, children eat the snack they brought from home while sitting at the tables. Children learn and practice good table manners in a calm, friendly setting while eating the healthy, hearty snack provided by their parents.

Outside Play Time

Children explore, play, and learn outdoors in the fenced play area, nature playscape, and/or on a walking field trip in Hartley Park. Activities may include climbing and balancing on logs, playing with balls, playing on/in/with the play area equipment, sand play, fort building, dramatic play, digging, building with rocks and tree branches, and running. Activities may include a mix of child-directed and teacher-directed activities, individual, small group, and large group play, as well as active and quiet play.

Pick Up Time

Parents will be notified about the pick-up location for the day. Depending on the weather, parents may pick-up their children from the preschool classroom or from the outdoor play area. Parents must sign their child out on the sign-in/sign-out sheet held by the program staff whether indoors or out.

*This schedule is subject to change depending on the weather and/or in response to staff or child needs.

Napping Policy

Naps will not be part of HNP's daily schedule since sessions are limited to three hours in length. Please ensure that your child arrives well-rested for preschool so he/she is able to make the most of each preschool session. If a child does fall asleep while at HNP, staff will wake up the child by gently rubbing his/her back or arm while saying his/her name. This way the child can participate in the remainder of the session's activities. You will be notified that your child fell asleep so you are able to determine if your child needs additional rest.

Technology in the Classroom

At HNP we do not include technology such as computers in our classroom or offer children computers, tablets, or other technological devices to play with during free play time. As they grow up, children will have ample opportunities to become masters of technology. HNP offers children a space when they can be unplugged and be immersed in the rhythms of the natural world. HNP staff only use mobile devices when with the children to briefly snap photos, contact a child's parents/guardians, or make emergency calls. Staff do not use social media sites, make personal calls, or use mobile devices for anything unrelated to official HNP business when with HNP children.

Curriculum

HNP teaches pre-literacy, pre-numeracy, science, social skills, and environmental literacy through a seasonal, place-based, experiential, and developmentally appropriate curriculum supplemented with the Creative Curriculum for Preschool. The HNP curriculum includes a mixture of inquiry-based and hands-on activities, group and individual activities,

indoor and outdoor activities, and active and quiet activities. Independent and self-help skills are also emphasized as children learn to dress themselves for all seasons and play outside in the natural environment of Hartley Park.

The Creative Curriculum is aligned with the *Early Childhood Indicators of Progress: Minnesota's Early Learning Standards for Children Ages 3 to 5* (ECIPS). The learning domains addressed in ECIPS, and in HNP's curriculum, are: physical and motor development, creativity and the arts, approaches to learning, cognitive development, language and literacy development, and social and emotional development.

Sample Developmental Goals for Preschoolers

Physical development	Social development	Emotional development	Intellectual development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops balancing skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balances needs and rights of self and others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responds to emotional cues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows flexibility and inventiveness in thinking
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops independence in dressing in outdoor clothes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forms relationships with adults 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulates own emotions and behaviors by managing feelings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses symbols and images to represent something not present
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses writing and drawing tools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works with other children and adults to resolve social problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes care of own needs appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connects numerals with their quantities

Sample Activities

HNP preschoolers will participate in activities that promote their physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development. These activities will be provided in a manner consistent with each child's cultural background. There will be a mixture of quiet and active activities as well as a mixture of child-directed and adult-directed activities. Sample activities to promote a child's development may include the following:

Physical development	Social development	Emotional development	Intellectual development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Running in the forest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cooperative group games such as using a parachute 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quietly watching and listening to birds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Playing math and critical thinking games
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Balancing on logs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Playing house or other imaginative games with other children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seeing adults model appreciation of the natural world 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening to stories read and told aloud
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jumping in puddles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practicing sharing tools and toys in pretend play, while digging or while building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussions of empathy with animals, such as when stepping on an insect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practicing creating letters with sticks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dancing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Playing games such as follow the leader or Simon Says 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practicing putting on boots and coats independently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflecting on the events of the day
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manipulating crayons, markers, and paintbrushes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watching out for each other as we walk in the woods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural cooking events with families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Counting during calendar time

Activities will also require the use of varied equipment and materials both indoors and out. Teachers will change the teaching materials in the classroom every three to five weeks to provide children with a variety of age-appropriate toys, books, dramatic play elements, and other equipment to engage with during indoor play time. For example, activities may include the following:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using a magnifying glass 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using snowshoes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Playing instruments or dancing to recorded music 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stirring mud with a spoon or stick
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Catching insects with a net 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Counting natural objects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pretend cooking with utensils and measuring cups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using sticks to create letters on the ground
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating art projects with a variety of natural materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using building blocks made of a variety of materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using dramatic play materials such as dress up clothes or a tent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using water and other ingredients to make “soup” or potions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using crayons, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading books 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Playing in the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using

markers, pens, and pencils to draw and write	and listening to stories read or told aloud	sand/water table	manipulatives such as puzzles or matching games
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Assessment

Children enrolled in HNP will be assessed using the Teaching Strategies GOLD research-based assessment tool that is aligned with HNP's curriculum and MN's *Early Learning Indicators of Progress*. The results of the assessment(s) will be used to individualize instruction. HNP's lead teachers have completed training on authentic observation practices and on how to accurately use the Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment. Children are observed and information recorded at least monthly. The results of the assessment(s) and observations are shared with families during parent teacher conferences and as requested.

Outdoor Play

HNP is dedicated to spending a majority of each preschool session learning and playing outdoors. It is HNP's policy that all children who are well enough to attend preschool are well enough to participate in outdoor activities and play. In fact, the MN Department of Human Service Licensing requires a daily dose of fresh outdoor air for young growing children. If children are dressed appropriately and are well enough to attend preschool, weather conditions should not pose an illness risk. Staff makes sure that children are dressed in clothing that is appropriate for the weather conditions. Parents must cooperate when it comes to preparing children to spend time outdoors in all weather. If a child is not prepared with the appropriate clothing, parents will be called to drop off appropriate clothing or to pick up the child. It is not fair to expect that all children will remain indoors because one child is not prepared for the weather. Children will not be taken outdoors in severe or threatening weather, based on the weather forecast from the National Weather Service and the judgment of the Preschool Director and staff.

Required Clothing

Children need comfortable, non-restrictive clothing that is appropriate for both outdoor and indoor play every day of preschool. In addition, the clothing needs to be easy to put on and take off for independence in toileting. Please do not send children in clothing that would be missed if misplaced or soiled. All clothing must be labeled, including boots and shoes. Unlabeled clothing can be confusing and time consuming for adults and children and can easily be mixed-up or lost.

Indoor Clothing

Each child needs a pair of indoor shoes. Children will change into these indoor shoes when they arrive at the beginning of each session and if they return back indoors at any point during the session. Indoor shoes keep children's feet warm and dry in the classroom and restroom and help keep the classroom clean. Flip-flops and open-toed sandals will not be allowed as indoor shoes and closed heels are recommended. Each child must have at least one extra complete change of clothing including underwear, socks, pants, and at least one long-sleeve and one short-sleeve top with them every day. Send two complete changes if you think your child will need the extras. These clothes can be kept in the preschool classroom or brought back and forth to in the child's backpack. Please remember to replenish these extra clothes as necessary!

Outdoor Clothing

Children and staff will be outside every day in all seasons and all safe weather. Children and staff alike should be adequately dressed for outdoor play for all seasons and weather conditions. It can be surprisingly chilly in the woods of Hartley Park. Always bring/send more clothing than you think is necessary. It is easier to take off a layer than to put on a layer you didn't bring. Children need comfortable, protective shoes with gripping soles for running, jumping, climbing, and playing. Sneakers or well-fitting hiking boots are recommended. Closed-toed sandals with heel straps will be allowed during the warmest weather, but are not recommended. Flip flops and open-toed sandals will not be allowed as outdoor shoes. In addition to appropriate shoes, clothing needs for each season include:

Fall	Winter	Spring	Late Spring/ Late Summer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rubber boots • Wool/fleece socks • Warm sweatshirt or sweater • Rain jacket with hood/rain hat • Rain pants • Gloves/mittens • Stocking cap 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Snow pants • Winter coat • Waterproof mittens • Scarf/neck cover • Warm hat • Winter boots • Wool/fleece socks • Long underwear top and bottom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rubber boots • Wool socks • Warm sweatshirt or sweater • Rain jacket with hood/rain hat • Rain pants • Gloves/mittens • Hat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rubber boots • One piece rain suit OR rain jacket with hood/rain hat <i>and</i> rain pants • Sun hat • Long-sleeve shirt

You will probably be able to find most of the above items at second-hand stores or garage sales. Other good places to find these types of clothes include Oakiwear, REI, L.L. Bean, Lands' End, Columbia, Patagonia, etc. If you are having trouble locating or affording any of these items, please don't hesitate to ask for advice from HNP staff or other HNP families. Please do not send umbrellas with children as they tend to get in the way and get broken or torn.

Meghan Morrow and Laura Whittaker of the Secret Forest Playschool, a nature-based family child care in Duluth, were kind enough to share some recommendations for clothing based on their experience. They recommend buying a winter jacket and snow pants that are 1-2 sizes too big in order to keep children's limbs covered when they bend, stretch, and slide in the snow. They recommend a winter coat with a hood and snow pants that are the overall style with grippy/rubber cuffs to help them stick to the boots. For boots, Meghan and Laura recommend ones that come up to a child's calf and that have a bungee-like tightening system rather than Velcro or zippers. They have found that Velcro and zippers tend to come undone and are frustrating for the children.

Rain gear should be made to be waterproof. Wind pants are not the same as rain pants. Kaitlin has found that rain pants work very well if they are either one-piece or overall style (such as the brand Oakiwear). Laura and Meghan have loved the one-piece suits from Tuffo's Muddy Buddy or Oakiwar.com. These one-piece suits or overalls plus a rain coat help keep the child and his/her clothing clean and dry and to avoid to gap between a coat and

pants that lets water and snow in. Thanks to Meghan and Laura for sharing what has worked for their program with HNP's families!

HNP is pleased to announce a partnership with Oakiwear's Outdoor School Program. HNP families can purchase Oakiwear gear at a 15% discount at oakiwear.com by using the coupon code "hartley" at checkout.

Additional Program Information

Holidays and Celebrations

At HNP we do not celebrate religious or commercial holidays, do not attempt to provide religious education to children, and do not use religious symbols in the classroom. Children will have ample experiences for class parties and holiday related crafts when they attend elementary school. However, children are welcome to share their special holiday experiences with teachers and other children without censure. When children take the initiative to share their special memories and traditions they learn to respect and appreciate cultural differences. Families are also welcome to come into the classroom to share special songs, stories, and cooking experiences with the children. Families may schedule such an event with their child's teachers.

Instead of celebrating commercial and religious holidays, HNP staff and students will celebrate seasonal experiences such as harvest time in the fall, solstices and equinoxes throughout the year, and new growth in spring. We also have special parties for our preschool families throughout the year. HNP is closed on all Federal holidays.

Birthdays

Birthdays are very important for most preschoolers and HNP wants to recognize this special day* in a non-competitive, non-commercialized, and pressure-free manner. On a birthday the class will gather around the birthday sun (a large felt sun) for a Birthday Picnic with our snacks. The birthday child gets to hold a blow-up "earth" and walk around the "sun" one time for each year while all children and staff count with the child. If parents would like, they can send a picture of their child for each year which staff will share with the children. As always, families are welcome to join us for the birthday picnic. Summer

birthdays can be celebrated at the half-birthday or at the end of the preschool year. Parents are asked not to bring treats or goody bags for the children due to differences in family customs, concerns about allergies, and differences in economic status. Parents are asked not to pass out birthday invitations at HNP in order to prevent hurt feelings among children and avoid program disruption.

*HNP will respect the parent's wishes in the event that customs or religious beliefs prohibit birthday celebrations.

Toys from Home

The preschool classroom is prepared to meet the needs of HNP children and to complement the HNP curriculum. Though we provide some extra play items when outdoors, generally the natural world doesn't need extra toys to make it engaging and educational for preschoolers! Children are asked not to bring toys from home to preschool. Toys brought from home present potential problems for children and staff in that they are difficult to share and may get broken. There may occasionally be a Special Book Day, Toy Day, or Stuffed Animal Day, when children can bring something special from home to share with the other children. The following toys are not allowed at HNP at any time: toys that resemble weapons and computer/video games. Please speak with HNP staff if you feel your child needs to have a security item, such as a blanket or stuffed toy, with them at preschool.

Babysitting

HNP does not endorse or recommend staff to parents or parents to staff for child care outside of HNP hours (babysitting) and neither encourages or prohibits staff from entering into these arrangements with families. HNP assumes no liability whatsoever for any injury, damages, liability, or loss of any kind resulting from or occurring during the private child care or babysitting provided by any HNP staff member who is not on duty at HNP during regular hours of operation.

Plants

Plants may be included in the preschool classroom in order to provide visually stimulating decorations, to clean the air, and to provide children with the experience of

helping to care for a living thing. Children will be taught not to place the plants in their mouths or eat the plants. Only non-toxic plants will be used in the classroom.

Animals

Hartley Nature Center is the home to a variety of animals including turtles, snakes, fish, and frogs. HNP children may have daily interactions with animals. These interactions can take the form of enjoying a classroom pet, visiting resident animals in the Nature Center, animals visiting the preschool classroom with a HNC naturalist, special programs such as the Zoomobile or bird banding, or observing animals in their natural habitats in Hartley Park. These animals may include wild birds, pet dogs, and a wide variety of other animals. Children may also have encounters with animal feces in Hartley Park as HNP cannot control where Hartley Park visitors' dogs go to the bathroom or whether or not these visitors pick up after their dogs. After any encounter with animals or animal feces all staff and children will wash their hands with soap and warm water. If a child's clothing is soiled with animal feces, the child will change into his/her spare clothing and the soiled clothing will be bagged and sent home to be laundered.

HNP may also choose to have a small, easy to care for domestic classroom pet such as a mouse, rat, gerbil, hamster, frog, or fish. Any classroom pet will be kept away from the food preparation and sink area in a covered, easy to clean cage that is appropriate for the animal. Cages will be cleaned daily or as necessary. Both staff and children will wash hands after handling classroom pets, cleaning the cage, or coming into contact with the animal's feces. Staff will supervise all interactions between the children and animals and will teach the children safe and respectful ways to interact with the pet both in the cage and out. All pet food and pet supplies will be kept separate from any food service supplies in a high cupboard out of reach of the children. Pets will be purchased from licensed pet shops and cared for by a local veterinarian to ensure that they are in healthy condition. Parents are required to inform HNP of any allergies to animals.

Walking Field Trips

HNP children will take daily walking field trips into the Hartley Park and Hartley Nature Center grounds. HNP will not take field trips off the grounds of Hartley Park. Because

we have the forests and trails of Hartley Park to explore, we don't need to leave Hartley Park to find adventures and to learn about our world. Parents give their permission for these walking field trips via a signed permission on the Enrollment Information Form at the time of enrollment.

Lost and Found

All items that are found on the trails of Hartley Park or in the Nature Center are located at the lost and found at the main Nature Center desk. If HNP knows who owns an item that is discovered, we will put it in your child's cubby or behind the Nature Center desk with a name on it so that you may pick up the item at your convenience.

Parent Communication

Daily Communication

Our teachers work hard to meet the needs of all children. As part of this goal, HNP strives for on-going communication and collaboration with all families through a variety of methods. Please feel free to bring any questions or concerns to the preschool teachers and/or the preschool director. Arrivals and departures can be useful times for you to briefly exchanging information or concerns with the preschool teachers. You are strongly encouraged to communicate to staff, verbally or in writing, any information that may help HNP teach and interact with your child. Please try to share any private information out of the hearing of other adults and other children. It is helpful to share information when:

- ❖ A family member is ill.
- ❖ A parent is out of town.
- ❖ The child did not sleep well the night before.
- ❖ A pet is missing or has passed away.
- ❖ Other life changes occur, such as a move, a divorce, or the arrival of a new sibling.

However, any topic that will take more than a moment to communicate should be communicated via a written note, an email, or a phone message. An appointment can also be arranged so that you have time to adequately discuss an issue with your child's teacher(s) and/or the preschool director.

A family bulletin board is located next to the door to the preschool room. This board will be used to communicate with families about the day's activities, upcoming events, and announcements and reminders. These announcements may also be communicated through a weekly email or the bi-monthly newsletter.

You are also welcome to call or email your child's teacher to talk about your child, the program, or any concerns or questions you may have. The contact number for HNP is 218-724-6735. Teachers' email addresses are provided in the Meet the Staff section and again at the end of this handbook.

You will receive an email after each session describing the day's activities. These daily emails may also provide information about the schedule for the week to come as well as updates on appropriate seasonal clothing and other reminders.

HNP Newsletter

HNP will put out a bi-monthly newsletter for preschool families and the public. The newsletter will contain information about HNP seasonal teaching themes, activities, and events as well as joys and concerns associated with the program. The newsletter may also include photos of the children and/or their work and discoveries. Families are encouraged to contribute content to the newsletter. The newsletter will be distributed via email and posted on the HNC website. If you do not have access to the Internet or would prefer a paper copy, please let a staff person know.

Hartley Nature Center Newsletter

As Hartley Nature Center members, preschool families also receive the quarterly newsletter from HNC. This newsletter will keep you up to date on what is happening in Hartley Park and at the Nature Center. It will also remind you of opportunities to make the most out of your Hartley membership with special events, camps for children of all ages, and adult and family programs.

Parent Teacher Conferences

Parent teacher conferences are offered twice a year and are a formally scheduled time for you to discuss your child's growth and development and to set future goals with your child's teacher(s). Staff will use a variety of tools to document and report on your

child's intellectual, physical, social, and emotional development including work samples, photos, checklists, and anecdotal notes kept in your child's assessment portfolio. Staff will share information about your child's strengths, interests, and successes and collaborate with you to plan for areas in which your child needs to strengthen his/her skills. At the conference, you will receive a written report of your child's intellectual, physical, social, and emotional progress; a copy of the report will be kept in the child's records. Please feel welcome to schedule additional meetings with teachers throughout the year as needed.

Parent Education and Resources

HNP may periodically offer discussions, presentations, or resources on topics of interest to families with young children. These events are entirely optional. Additionally, resources are available from the preschool director related to healthy parenting practices and support services for parents and families.

Parent Involvement

Parent involvement is a vital aspect of our program and critical for the healthy development of young children. Throughout the year we offer parent meetings in various formats. A parent advisory group will also be established to support the HNP program. There are many ways in which you can help and support HNP, such as volunteering, organizing a fundraiser, or joining the parent advisory group. Please contact the preschool director or your child's teacher to see how you can become involved. Parents are encouraged to be involved in HNP in *at least* the following ways:

- ❖ Attend Parent Orientation held before the preschool year begins where you'll have a chance to meet the staff and learn what to expect for the coming year.
- ❖ Attend parent/teacher conferences, which are offered twice a year.
- ❖ Read emails, newsletters, and other communication from HNP.
- ❖ Attend parent and family events offered by HNP when possible.

Parents are always welcome to visit HNP at any time during the hours of operation. See below for more information.

Visitors

Parents/Guardians of Enrolled Children

Parents/guardians of enrolled HNP children are welcome to visit the preschool anytime during the hours of operation. For safety and security, all parents must check in at the front desk, show an ID if asked to do so, and wear a visitor nametag.

University Students

An important function of HNP is to serve the Duluth community as an example of a high quality nature preschool program. As such, HNP serves as a resource for projects and questions concerning nature preschools, the importance of nature in education, and early childhood environmental education. UMD, CSS, and other local university and college students in the HNP classroom may be: making observations, completing a practicum or student teaching assignment, teaching a practice lesson, or completing a service learning project. This list is not meant to be all inclusive, merely indicative of the ways in which we may collaborate. You give consent for your child to participate in these general learning activities by initialing the Observation Permission in the Enrollment Form. University students who are completing academic experiences at HNP are considered to be volunteers and do not take the place of a regular staff member or count in child to teacher ratios. Student teachers do take teacher responsibilities in the classroom, but remain under the supervision of HNP staff as well as their university supervisor. Like any other visitor, university students must sign in at the front desk and wear a visitor nametag.

Community Volunteers

Many visitors want to observe or participate in HNP's programs in a variety of ways. All visitors must sign in at the main Hartley Nature Center desk and wear a visitor nametag. A volunteer may not be left alone with HNP children at any time unless they have had a MN DHS background check. HNP reserves the right to deny access to the preschool classroom or children to any person at any time for the purpose of protecting the rights of children, parents, and staff and for programmatic integrity.

School-Age Children

A child under the age of 13 who has attended a kindergarten program is considered a school-age child by the State of MN and, according to State Statutes, “cannot be present in the child care center unless the program is licensed for school-aged children.” The only exceptions are when the child accompanies a parent, caregiver, or staff person into the classroom to pick-up or drop-off an enrolled child. School-age children must be accompanied by an adult at all times when they visit the HNP preschool classroom.

Teenage Youth

Teenage volunteers are welcome at HNP. Teenage volunteers must check in at the front desk and wear a name tag. As a volunteer he/she will not be counted in the teacher to student ratio and must be supervised at all times. A teenage volunteer may not be left alone with enrolled children at any time.

Preschool Aged Children

According to State statutes, preschool aged children may visit HNP for no more than ½ hour and only when given permission by the director and the session’s lead teacher. The parent/guardian must supervise the child at all times since that child is not legally enrolled at HNP and is thus not under the care of HNP staff.

Unauthorized Persons

People who are not authorized to visit HNP include parents without visitation rights, any person who has been denied permission to access the HNP classroom or children, and any suspicious adults or persons. If necessary, staff will call 911 to escort an unauthorized person from the building and/or grounds.

Photography and Social Media

Photography is a common means for students to document learning activities and is used by HNP staff and university students doing observations. For example, HNP staff may take photos of a child’s art project to include in the child’s portfolio or take photos for the newsletter or a local news channel may come to HNP to do a story on nature preschools. If

you want restrictions placed on when your child may be photographed or videoed, please indicate this in the Photo/Video Permission on the Enrollment Form.

HNP uses social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, and Instagram to promote the HNP program and to spread the word about the importance of nature play. No last names will be used and no “tagging” will be done by HNP staff in photos posted on HNP’s social media sites, including Hartley Nature Center’s website and Facebook page.

Research

Sometimes university students and/or faculty conduct research studies involving children. Students and faculty alike are required to provide a written explanation to families about the research procedures and parental permission is required in writing before any child may participate in a research study. A child’s consent will also be requested to the extent he/she is able to consent. Families are not required to have a child participate in any research study. The child’s well-being and comfort is the top priority, thus teachers and/or parents may decide to defer a child’s participation on a particular day because of fatigue, interest in simultaneously occurring activities, or other factors.

Withdrawal of Child Care Services

Parental Notice of Termination

If you wish to discontinue preschool services at HNP a written notice must be submitted to the preschool director at least four weeks prior to your child’s last enrollment day. Tuition is charged for four weeks following receipt of that written notification regardless of your child’s attendance during that time. All fees for preschool services must be paid on or before your child’s last official enrollment day at HNP.

Program Notice of Termination of Care

In the event that any of the following situations occur, preschool services may be terminated by HNP:

- ❖ Non-payment of fees by parent/guardian, i.e. 30 days in arrears or breach of established payment plan contract.

- ❖ Failure to provide the required health, immunization, and/or emergency contact information.
- ❖ A parent's inappropriate behavior, such as menacing and/or verbal threats towards staff, children, other parents, or property of the program.
- ❖ Lack of cooperation from parents/guardians with the program's efforts to resolve differences and/or to meet the child's needs through parent teacher meetings, conferences, and/or additional interventions.
- ❖ Chronic lateness in picking up child at the end of the session.
- ❖ Failure to pick up an injured or ill child within an hour of being notified, for the third time in a calendar year.

A written notice from HNP will be sent to the parent/guardian as soon as possible after the occurrence of any of these events. HNP will also communicate this decision to the parent verbally. A parent may grieve the notice of termination within two working days of its receipt—see Grievance Procedures.

Regardless of the duration of the grievance process, the child or children of the parent/guardian who has received the notice of termination shall remain in HNP for a period of not more than two weeks after the parent/guardian has received the notice of termination.

Behavior Guidance Policies and Procedures

General Policies and Procedures

At Hartley Nature Preschool our behavior policies and procedures encourage positive, healthy, and safe interactions between children and between children and adults. As required by the State of MN, HNP behavior guidance policies and procedures:

- ❖ Ensure that our staff provide all children with positive role models of acceptable behaviors;
- ❖ Are tailored to be developmentally appropriate for 3-5 year old children;
- ❖ Redirect children and groups of children away from problems toward constructive activity in order to reduce conflict;

- ❖ Teach children how to use acceptable alternatives to problem behaviors in order to reduce conflict;
- ❖ Protect the safety of children and staff persons; and
- ❖ Provide immediate and directly related consequences for a child's unacceptable behavior.

It is imperative to intervene in the rare occasion that a behavior becomes dangerous, destructive, and/or disruptive in order to protect people and property without loss of self-esteem and to help a child understand the problem with certain behaviors. Different children and different situations will call for different responses. The staff will enforce ground rules, employ logical consequences, and deal with specific problems in a caring, consistent, and positive manner. In general, the staff will emphasize positive behaviors, offer reasonable choices, recognize feelings, and make clear when a child's behavior is unacceptable. The staff will not bribe, use threats, moralize, shout, or humiliate children. Physical force would only be used to contain a child if necessary to protect the child or others from harm. You will be notified if your child acts in a harmful manner, for example if he/she bites another child. You may be asked to remove your child for the remainder of the session if your child's behavior continues to be harmful or threatening.

Any behavior which requires an increased amount of staff guidance and time, such as on-going biting, kicking, hitting, pinching, scratching, or hair pulling will be observed and recorded by staff. If deemed necessary, staff will work with the child's parent/guardian and other staff members to develop a plan to address the behavior. Observation records created by staff members will be used as the basis for this discussion. Other professionals may be consulted when appropriate. See Referral Process for more information.

Referral Process

Occasionally staff members have questions regarding assessment or additional services for children already enrolled in our program or will need to make a plan regarding on-going unacceptable behaviors. When issues such as these arise, parents will be notified in person, by telephone, and, if necessary, by mail of the staff concerns and invited to participate in the development of an individual plan to address the concerns. Continued

participation in HNP's program is contingent upon a cooperative relationship between HNP staff, parents, and appropriate professionals, as needed.

1. Program teaching staff will communicate with parents regarding the concern or developmental behavior.
2. Program teaching staff will observe and document the child's behavior(s) at the onset of a concern regarding personal or developmental behavior.
3. Program teaching staff may request the preschool director or an Early Childhood Education Consultant to conduct an observation of the behavior(s) of concern.
4. Staff will receive communication from the director regarding the observations within one week, if applicable.
5. Staff and/or the preschool director will meet with the parents to discuss the behavior(s) and observations and to create an Individual Child Care Plan, which parents must sign within 30 days.
6. If it is indicated that additional professional observation is necessary, staff will provide parents with a list of potential resources outside of HNP that may provide the needed observations:
 - ❖ Duluth School District—Child Find at 218-336-8744
7. Staff will work with outside professionals to arrange for observation and intervention times that best meet the needs of the child within the context of the child's participation at HNP.
8. Staff, parents, and outside professional staff will meet periodically to evaluate the outcome of the intervention and the child's progress.
9. In the event that the staff, parents, and outside professional staff cannot come to agreement about outside professional observation and assessment and/or the total program being offered to the child and family, enrollment may be terminated.
10. When a child's behavior results in either of the following situations, the preschool director will meet with the child's family and HNP staff to set a date for termination of child care services:

- ❖ The child's behavior poses a threat to the physical and emotional safety of other children and/or him/herself and staff can no longer assure the safety of all children in their care, and/or
- ❖ Through extensive attempts at intervening with any specific behavior, such as developmental delay, HNP has exhausted the available program, staff, community, and professional resources and/or staff is only able to meet the needs of that individual child through frequent or persistent one-on-one care. While this compromises their ability to adequately meet the needs of all the children in their care, it also indicates that HNP is no longer the most appropriate environment for that child.

Financial Policies

Family Payment Policy

HNP is a program of Hartley Nature Center, a 501(c) 3 non-profit. We rely on revenue from tuition fees for the preschool's operating expenses. It is essential that families pay tuition promptly and regularly. By enrolling your child in HNP and signing the HNP Contract for Preschool Services, you agree to pay the fees as set out in HNP's policies and procedures.

Tuition is due on the 1st of the month every month. A billing schedule will be provided via email to preschool families, will be posted on HNP's website, and will be posted on the information board by the preschool classroom.

- ❖ The deposit of one month's tuition to secure a child's place in HNP will be applied to the September tuition. This deposit is non-refundable. See Securing a Child's Place at HNP for more information on enrollment procedures.
- ❖ Tuition is based on the enrollment schedule, not on children's actual attendance. Sick days, vacation days, holidays, staff development days, and emergency closings are considered to be part of the enrollment schedule.
- ❖ If payment is not received by five business days after the due date, HNP will apply a \$25 late fee.

- ❖ If payment is 30 days past due it becomes delinquent. See Collection of Delinquent Accounts for more information.
- ❖ If a child is withdrawn from the program, the family must provide written notification to the Preschool Director. Tuition is charged for four weeks following receipt of written notification. See Withdrawal Policies for more information.

Accepted Methods of Payment

Tuition for the nine-month school year can be paid annually or monthly. A one-time \$35 discount (for 2 days/week) or \$50 (for 3 days/week) is made to non-scholarship accounts paid in full for the entire preschool year by **check or cash** on or by August 15th, 2014. If you wish to pay monthly, Hartley Nature Center prefers that you pay monthly tuition payments via an automatic withdrawal from a bank account in order to make payments smooth and efficient. You must give authorization for these automatic monthly withdrawals.

Automatic payments will start with the October 1st tuition payment and end with the May 1st tuition payment. The September payment, which is also the non-refundable deposit for enrollment, must be paid via check, cash, money order, or credit/debit card at the time the Contract for Preschool Services is submitted in order to secure a child's place at HNP. Monthly invoices will be provided for families choosing to pay on a monthly basis and you can pay by cash, check, or credit/debit card. HNC will charge a \$35 handling fee for the processing of any check returned to Hartley Nature Center due to insufficient funds (NSF). Upon receipt of the second NSF check, all future HNP tuition payments must be made by cashier's check, money order, or automatic electronic withdrawal.

Parents/guardians may contact HNC's bookkeeper to discuss additional alternative methods of payment and questions/concerns.

Childcare Assistance

As of June 2014, HNP is working with St. Louis County to be able to accept Child Care Assistance payments. If authorized to do so, HNP will work with the family and St. Louis County to arrange for payments to be made to HNP. Families that are on county, state, or federal child care assistance programs will receive a reduced rate of \$25 on the application fee and are also eligible for a reduced rate on a HNC family membership.

Scholarship Procedures

HNP has a limited scholarship fund. You can apply for the scholarship fund if your family is eligible for a county, state, or federal needs-based assistance program. Scholarships will generally cover 50% of the application fee and tuition. However, scholarship applications will be considered on an individual basis and may cover 25-75% of the application fee and tuition.

1. Submit a completed scholarship application form along with the Application for Enrollment.
2. The application must include documentation showing your family's qualification for a county, school, state, or federal needs-based assistance program. Examples include WIC, free and reduced lunch, medical assistance, etc. Families may contact Hartley for help in determining appropriate types of documentation.
3. The Registration Fee will be \$25 versus the \$75 full price registration fee.
4. Once the child has been placed in a class and a scholarship award determined, a confirmation letter will be sent via email and/or mail.
5. Depending on the timing, an enrollment packet will be sent immediately or when the other packets are sent. A signed Contract for Preschool Services and a deposit will be due to hold the child's place at HNP. This is a non-refundable, non-transferable deposit that will be applied to September's tuition. The deposit will be equal to a month's tuition payment after the correct scholarship award has been applied to the amount.
6. As with any other family, the preferred method of monthly payment will be by automatic deduction from a bank account. The monthly deduction will reflect the scholarship award. Contact the HNC bookkeeper at bookkeeper@hartleynature.org to arrange alternative methods of monthly payment.
7. All information related to the scholarship application will be kept confidential and used only for the purposes of determining scholarship assistance. Information about scholarship awards will not be shared with other scholarship families.

Collection of Delinquent Accounts

An account is considered past-due when the balance is delinquent more than 30 days from the posted due date. The following steps will be taken when an account becomes 30 days past-due, in addition to the \$25 late fee charged when a payment is not received by five business days after the due date:

1. A notification letter will be send to the family's home address identifying the delinquent charges owned to Hartley Nature Center and the date when the fees must be submitted.
2. A meeting will be scheduled with all parties responsible for payment to determine a payment schedule, such as a promissory note or payment contract.

If a delinquent account is not paid as agreed upon in the payment plan, the account will be turned over to a collection agency and enrollment will be terminated. See Withdrawal Policies for more information on Program Notice of Termination of Care. The parent/guardian will be responsible for all costs of collection, including fees charged by the collection agency and legal fees.

Confidentiality Policy

HNP has an obligation according to the MN Data Practices Act, MN Medical Records Act, and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act to safeguard protected family and staff member information. All written information regarding a child, family, or staff member will be securely kept in the director's records. A child's information is available to parents/guardians as needed and upon request. Staff members may never share with others the following information without written permission from parents/guardians:

- ❖ Names, addresses, phone numbers, or emails of children, parents, or staff (other than those shared in the HNP Family Directory and staff HNC email addresses). If you would like contact information for another parent please leave a note for the parent in their child's cubby or ask a staff member to introduce you to the parent. When HNP creates the HNP Family Directory, you must give permission in the Enrollment Form in order for your information to be included.

- ❖ Medication Administration forms. These forms will always be kept out of sight and will not be discussed with anyone except other staff members providing direct care for the child and administrative staff members.
- ❖ Health Care Summaries, Immunization Records, Special Diet Forms, Accident Reports, and other forms with health and insurance information. These forms will be kept in locked file drawers and/or password protected computer data systems on our secure server. Emergency Information Sheets will be securely carried in staff member backpacks when outdoors.
- ❖ Credit card, debit card, and other payment information will be kept in secure physical and electronic locations.
- ❖ Participation of families in county assistant programs, Head Start, or other human service programs.
- ❖ Results of informal or formal assessment screenings, special needs information including Individual Education Plan (IEP), and Individual Child Care Plan (ICP) information.
- ❖ As reasonable, information about your child's day at HNP will be shared personally with you without other parents or children listening in.

Health Policies and Procedures

Parents can expect an accident/injury report any time their child needs first aid beyond a Band-Aid and appropriate comforting while attending HNP. Parents will be contacted immediately if an injury requires emergency attention. An accident/injury report is also given to parents when a child sustains an injury to the head. Injuries that require a child to receive treatment by a physician are reported within 24 hours to the State Department of Human Services Licensing Division at (651) 431-6500.

First Aid Policies

Great care is taken to provide a safe environment and children are taught safe practices for being in the preschool classroom, Nature Center, and outdoors. However, sometimes accidents and injuries occur. All teachers and assistant teachers will be certified

in first aid and CPR as required by the State of MN. There is a first aid kit in the classroom and a first aid kit travels with staff when the class is outdoors. In the event of injury, such as minor bumps, bruises, cuts, or insect bites, or illness, trained staff will administer appropriate first aid which is always accompanied by verbal explanation and appropriate comfort.

Sources of Emergency Medical Care

In an emergency situation a staff member will immediately call 911. If emergency transportation is required it will be provided by the paramedics that respond to the 911 call to the hospital that you indicated on the Emergency Information Sheet. You will be contacted immediately; if you cannot be reached, HNP staff will contact the emergency contacts listed on your child's Emergency Information Sheet. Injuries that require a child to be seen by a physician are reported within 24 hours to the State Department of Human Services, Division of Licensing at (651) 431-6500.

Children's Health Records

The State of Minnesota requires that we have on file a Health Care Summary for each child within 30 days of enrollment. It is also required that normal immunizations be up to date. The Immunization Form and a signed Emergency Information Sheet **MUST** be on file when the child begins enrollment at HNP. There are no exceptions to this policy. If a family arrives on the first day of preschool and does not have this paperwork on file, then the child is not allowed to stay for the session. Parents must keep their child's health forms and the Emergency Information Form current. A list of required forms and explanations of each form can be found under Enrollment Procedures.

Sunscreen and Bug Spray

It is your responsibility to apply sunscreen to your child *prior* to arrival at HNP. Physical barriers to the sun such as long sleeve shirts and wide brimmed hats are also welcomed and encouraged. You may also apply bug spray to your child's skin and/or clothing. Please remember that bug spray can eat away at the water proofing abilities of rain gear and that it should never be applied to children inside the Nature Center due to concerns about air quality and allergies. Children should always wash their hands before entering the

preschool classroom in part to wash off any sunscreen or bug spray which may get on toys or books in the classroom and be ingested by a child.

If you forget to apply sunscreen or bug spray, HNP staff may only apply sunscreen or bug spray with a signed Medication Administration form and from the original bottle that you have provided. Staff will not be realistically able to apply sunscreen and bug spray to each child before going outdoors, so please apply these products before the preschool day. See Administration of Medications policy for more information on over-the-counter medications including sunscreen and bug spray.

Ticks

HNP recommends that parents check their child for ticks at the end of each day. This can be a routine that parents do with their child while he/she is taking a bath or getting ready for bed. HNP will provide a tick ID chart to families upon request. HNP will not do tick checks after outdoor play time under normal circumstances, but staff will remove a tick that happens to be spotted crawling across a child's clothing or skin.

Administration of Medications

If your child is on medications which must be administered during the time he/she is at HNP, the medicine must be in the original prescription bottle with the child's name, the physician/ licensed provider's or dentist's name, and the date on the label. Medications may only be given to the child for whom they are prescribed. Outdated/expired medications will not be administered. Any unused portion of medication will be returned to you or destroyed after seven days if not picked up by a parent. For prescription medications, you must fill out a Prescription Medication Administration Form and the form must be signed by the child's health care provider or dentist. Prescription Medication Administration Forms can only be in effect for three months. This includes medications for allergic reactions such as EpiPens.

Over the counter (OTC) medications such as Tylenol, cough syrups, or cough drops require an Over-the-Counter Medication Administration Form signed by a parent. Externally administered OTC medications such as moisturizing hand lotion, insect repellents, and sunscreens also require an Over-the-Counter Medication Administration Form signed by the parent. OTC medications can only be administered when provided in the original container.

OTC medications must be administered according to manufacturer's dosage and instructions printed on the container unless you provide signed instructions from the child's health care provider using the Prescription Medication Administration Form. OTC medications will be stored out of reach of children and according to directions on the original container. Over-the-Counter Medication Administration forms can only be in effect for three months.

Staff are trained annually in the proper administration of medications using the 5 Rights system and the below procedure. Staff are not allowed to administer medications unless they have taken this training.

When administering any medication staff will:

1. Wash hands or use hand sanitizer if outdoors.
2. Check to see that the Medication Administration Form has been completed and signed.
3. Check the 5 Rights:
 - ❖ Right Child
 - ❖ Right Medication
 - ❖ Right Dose (using a correct medication dispenser)
 - ❖ Right Time
 - ❖ Right Method (e.g. by mouth)
4. Administer medication.
5. Return medication to proper storage out of children's reach.
6. Wash hands.
7. Document the date and time of administration and initial the form. Information should be recorded for every scheduled dose even if medication is not given (e.g. child absent or medication left at home). For example, HNP staff would record that the child was absent or that the parent left the medication at home.

Sick Children

HNP is unable to care for sick children. Your child should not come to preschool if he/she cannot participate in HNP program activities with reasonable comfort or if he/she requires more care than HNP staff can provide without compromising the health and safety

of the other children. If your child is well enough to come to preschool, he/she is well enough to play outside and participate in normal preschool activities.

If your child becomes ill while at HNP, you will be called immediately and your child will be separated from the other children until you or another authorized arrives. Sick children must be picked up **within one hour** of notification of an illness. If you are not able to pick up your child, he/she must be picked up by another authorized person listed on the Emergency Information Sheet. A staff member will attend to the needs of the sick child and the child will be supervised at all times. The child may rest behind the partially pulled curtain in the corner of the preschool room if the preschool class is having inside time. If the preschool group is outside or is going outside at the onset of illness, the child will rest near the Preschool Director's or other Hartley Nature Center staff member's desk until the parent arrives to pick up the child.

A child with any of the following conditions or behaviors that the Commissioner of Health determines to be contagious and a physician/provider determines has not had sufficient treatment to reduce the health risk to others, **must be excluded** from our program according to MN Department of Human Services Licensing requirements. If a staff member notices any of these symptoms when your child arrives, you will be instructed that your child cannot remain at HNP.

Chicken Pox	<i>Until all the blisters have dried into scabs (approximately 6 days after rash onset).</i>
Conjunctivitis (Pinkeye)	<i>Until at least a full 24 hours after treatment begins.</i>
Diarrhea	<i>Until uncontrolled diarrhea stops, there are no other excludable symptoms (e.g. fever), and child is back to normal eating, drinking, and toileting patterns. Or until a medical exam indicates that it is not a communicable disease. Uncontrolled diarrhea is an increased number of stools, compared with a person's normal pattern, along with watery stools, and/or increased stool that cannot be contained by use of a toilet. Preschoolers may not get to the toilet in time. It has a distinctive smell that is noticeably different from a child's normal BMs.</i>
Fever	<i>Children may return when symptoms are gone for 24 hours and no fever reducing medication has been given. Fevers controlled by medications are still fevers; children must stay home until free of fever without the use of medication.</i>
Impetigo	<i>Until child has been treated with antibiotics for a full 24 hours.</i>

Lice (head)	<i>Until after the first treatment and no live lice are seen.</i>
Rash with or without Behavior Change	<i>Until a medical exam indicates these symptoms are not that of a communicable disease.</i>
Respiratory Infection	<i>Until child is without fever for 24 hours and is well enough to participate in normal activities. No exclusion for other mild respiratory infections without fever as long as the child can participate comfortably in all routine activities.</i>
Ringworm	<i>Until 24 hours after the first treatment has been started.</i>
Scabies	<i>Until 24 hours after the first treatment has been started.</i>
Streptococcal Sore Throat	<i>Until at least a full 24 hours after treatment begins and the child is without fever for 24 hours.</i>
Vomiting	<i>Until vomiting stops for 24 hours. Vomiting is defined as two or more episodes in the previous 24 hours.</i>

If your child is absent because of a communicable illness, including but not limited to those listed above in the chart, HNP will notify the appropriate health authorities within 24 hours of receiving the report. HNP will notify other families of possible infection through electronic media, written notices, and/or postings on the same day a parent/guardian notifies HNP of a child's communicable illness or condition. Staff members will also watch for symptoms in the other children. Staff members are NOT allowed to discuss a child's health or care with other children or HNP families due to privacy laws.

You are required by State laws to inform HNP within 24 hours (exclusive of weekends/holidays) when your child has been diagnosed by the child's medical provider or dentist as having a contagious disease, including, but not limited to those listed above, or lice, scabies, impetigo, ringworm, or chicken pox.

The Sixth Edition of the *Infectious Diseases in Childcare Settings and Schools Manual* from the Hennepin County Human Services and Public Health Department was used as a resource in the creation of these health policies and procedures.

Allergies

If your child has special dietary needs related to a food allergy, please work with your child's medical provider to complete an Individualized Child Care Plan (ICCP) so that HNP is aware of your child's allergy and how to respond. You can request a copy of this plan from the preschool director or your child's teacher or download it from the preschool's website. A

list of children with food allergies, including a photo of the children for identification purposes, will be posted on the inside of a cupboard near the sinks in the preschool classroom for staff to reference. Package labels will be carefully consulted before any food is shared with children on occasions, such as cultural cooking lessons, when food is prepared at HNP for children.

Snacks

Each child will bring a snack from home to eat at snack time. Snacks sent from home must be able to be stored and eaten at room temperature due to limited refrigerator space. When necessary, please break or cut snacks that could pose a choking hazard into appropriately sized pieces. Staff members will not have time to wash, dry, or peel snacks (e.g. oranges or pears) at snack time because of the many tasks they need to attend to. Please send a utensil with your child if they need one to eat their snack; it will be returned home for washing. Children are not allowed to trade or share snacks due to concerns about sharing germs and allergens. Please remember that HNP is a peanut-free classroom!

Food that comes from home for a special occasion or event, such as a cultural cooking demonstration, must be either whole fruits/vegetables, or commercially prepared, packaged foods or ingredients in factory sealed containers.

When dropping your child off for preschool, please do not allow him/her to finish eating a snack or meal inside the classroom. Food allergies can sometimes be life threatening and the preschool classroom is a safe place for children with allergies. If your child is eating on the way to preschool, please stay with your child in the hallway until they finish eating and help them wash their hands before signing him/her in.

Peanut-Free Classroom

HNP is committed to having a peanut-free classroom. Please **do not** send peanut products for your child's snack and please carefully check labels in order to respect the food allergies of other children. Tables are cleaned with soap and water before and after each snack to reduce the risk of cross-contamination from the presence of unknown peanut or other allergens. Due to the possibility of other allergies, such as gluten allergies, that limit snack options, tree nuts such as almonds and walnuts are allowed in the preschool

classroom unless a child's severe allergy limits these foods. You will be notified in the case of additional restrictions due to severe allergies.

Water and Water Bottles

Drinking water is always available to the children via the drinking fountain near the restrooms or cups and in children's water bottles, which are provided by families. A child's water bottle must be easy for the child to use without assistance. For example, a water bottle with a nozzle that can be flipped up or down for drinking is less likely to spill and can be used independently. Staff will help children fill their water bottles before going for a walking field trip. Children will have access to the water when going outdoors to play. Staff will frequently encourage children to take water breaks for proper hydration.

Toileting Policies

Children are required to be toilet-trained before enrolling in HNP. Children should also be comfortable using the toilet facilities at Hartley Nature Center, which are likely very different from the facilities they are used to. You are encouraged to visit the Nature Center prior to the start of the preschool year to introduce your child to the bathroom and practice using it. Toilet-training includes children being able to wipe themselves after defecating.

Accidents do sometimes occur. If a child has an accident while at HNP, the child will be brought to the restroom to complete his/her toileting. Staff will put on gloves while the child completes his/her toileting. The child will be handed his/her change of clothing and will dress in the clean clothes. The child will place the soiled clothing into the bag and hand the bag to the staff member. The staff member will double bag the bag and later place it in the child's cubby or outdoors if there is an offensive odor. The staff member will provide the child with baby wipes to clean up with. If necessary, the staff member will help to clean the child with baby wipes before the child changes into his/her clean clothing. Both the staff member and the child will wash their hands. The staff member will fill out a Bathroom Incident Report for HNP's records and will provide a copy to the parent/guardian. Permission to use baby wipes in the case of a toileting accident is given on the Enrollment Information Form.

Touch and Nurturing

Physical touching is an important part of the care and nurturing of young children. Children feel loved, accepted, and supported through the sensations of touch by nurturing adults and peers. Nurturing touch is necessary for every child's emotional growth. Affectionate nurturing includes: hugging, holding on lap, rocking, carrying, patting or rubbing backs, and hand holding. While tickling may be an appropriate form of playful touch, it is kept to a minimum at HNP because of its potential for getting out of hand. Physical touch should be respectful of children's body cues and only occur with their permission. Children always have the right to refuse these touches except for safety purposes. Staff members are trained to be sensitive to children's requests for physical interaction and responses. Staff model appropriate nurturing touches. Children are also taught to respect adults' and other children's touch preferences.

Except for safety or cleansing children will always have the right to refuse touch. Safety or cleansing touch includes assisting with face and hand washing, nose wiping, assisting with toileting in the case of illness or accident, assisting with clothing changes when necessary, and first aid treatment. Physical intervention occurs when necessary for the safety of children and staff, or to provide the least restrictive guidance necessary in a given situation. Children are taught through assisted interactions, modeling, and verbal guidance to use words and problem solving skills rather than physical reactions to settle their differences with others.

Weather Emergency Closings

HNP will follow the Duluth Public Schools District #709 for blizzard and severe weather related closings. If the Duluth Public School district is closed, HNP will also be closed. If the Duluth Public Schools are delayed two hours, HNP will be delayed two hours. The director will update the preschool voicemail message/Hartley Nature Center's voicemail message with information about the closing and post the closing or delay information on the preschool's website, Facebook, and Twitter. The closing or two hour delay will be

broadcast on local radio stations and on the following TV stations and their websites: WDIO, KBJR, and KDLH-Fox 21 News.

In the event that ISD #709 decides to close early due to severe weather, HNP will also close early. Staff will notify preschool families via telephone and email that the preschool is closing early. The children must be picked up **within one hour** of an official school district closing by a parent/guardian or other authorized person.

When the weather conditions are poor, but the preschool is not closed, HNP encourages families to use their best judgment in determining whether or not their child will attend. Please be aware that Hartley Nature Center's driveway tends to get plowed in during snow events as the City plows Woodland Avenue frequently and the snowbanks close off the driveway. If you are unable to get into the Hartley driveway, HNP recommends parking at Concordia Lutheran Church and walking up Fairmont Street and taking forest paths to the Nature Center.

See Emergency Preparedness for more information about HNP's Emergency Response Plan.

Emergency Procedures Related to Child Pick-Up

Attempted Unauthorized Pick-up

If an unauthorized person attempts to pick-up a child, the child will not be released to that person. Staff will immediately contact another authorized person to come to pick up the child. Staff will call 911 if necessary.

Emergency Pick-up Situation

If a child is not picked up within 10 minutes of the scheduled dismissal time, without communication from the parents, HNP will attempt to reach the parent/guardian by phone. If HNP is unable to reach a parent/guardian 15 minutes after the end of the session, we will telephone the emergency contacts listed on the child's Emergency Information Sheet.

In the event of sudden illness, hospitalization, etc., and the parent is unable to contact HNP, is unable to pick up a child, HNP has been unable to contact parents/guardians, or other authorized adults listed on the child's Emergency Information Sheet, and if no one

has contacted HNP by one hour after the session closing time HNP will assume an emergency situation exists. If a child has not been picked up within one hour of the session closing time and no one can be contacted, HNP staff will call the Duluth Police Department. At this point the police will attempt to contact parents and/or authorized alternative adults to pick up the child. If no one can be contacted, the police may decide to accept custody and to transport the child to Bethany Crisis Shelter at 110 West Redwing St. Duluth (218-728-7492). This Crisis Shelter is equipped to deal with children in emergency situations.

***HNP does not allow staff to take children home with them.

Emergency Preparedness

Families trust HNP to keep their children safe during the day and expect staff to be properly equipped to handle emergencies of all kinds. HNP has an emergency response plan for all potential crises that has been reviewed by an officer of the Duluth Police Department. This Emergency Response Plan is available for families to view upon request.

Emergency Drills

HNP will conduct monthly fire drills, as required by the State of MN. HNP is also required to conduct monthly tornado drills in the months of April, May, and September. These drills will be conducted in a calm manner and gently explained to children. You will be notified when your child has participated in a drill in case you want to talk about the drill at home.

Emergency Relocation

In the case of an emergency that requires children and staff to evacuate the Nature Center, HNP has an emergency relocation site. If an evacuation is necessary staff and children will walk through Hartley Park and down Fairmont Street to Concordia Lutheran. However, in certain situations it may be necessary for children to be transported to this site in a vehicle such as a bus. You will provide permission for transport on the Enrollment Form. HNP will notify you via email, phone, and social media that you or another authorized adult must pick up children at the emergency relocation site. The answering machine will also

have a message stating the same. In order to pick up a child, the authorized adult will be required to show an ID and to sign a Reunification Form.

The emergency relocation site is:

❖ Concordia Lutheran Church

2501 Woodland Avenue

Duluth, MN 55803

(218) 728-4229

Concordia Lutheran is located just down the road from the entrance to the Nature Center's parking lot on the corner of Woodland Avenue and Fairmont Street. It is a large, white, sway-backed church with a parking lot on three sides.

Maltreatment of Minors Mandated Reporting Policy

Children need a safe, nurturing environment that assists them to grow, learn, and feel loved by their caretakers. In order to grow and learn, children's minimum needs for good nutrition, shelter, medical care, bathing, clean clothes, intellectual stimulation, appropriate discipline, love, a feeling of importance, and a safe, non-violent home setting must be met. When these needs are not met, a child cannot grow and learn as easily. HNP is committed to providing an environment that encourages the child's safe growth and learning. As mandated reporters, HNP staff are required to make a report if there is reason to believe or suspect that a child is being neglected or abused or subjected to witnessing domestic abuse, or has been within the past three years. It is the staff member who is mandated to report versus simply a member of the administrative staff. All staff at HNP will comply with the letter and spirit of this law.

This section provides HNP's policies and procedures for reporting suspected child maltreatment as well as for reporting complaints about the operation of HNP as required by the State of MN. Mandated reporting policies and procedures are also available upon request to families.

Who Should Report Child Abuse and Neglect?

- ❖ Any person may voluntarily report abuse or neglect.

- ❖ If you work with children in a licensed facility, you are legally required or mandated to report and cannot shift the responsibility of reporting to your supervisor or to anyone else at your licensed facility. If you know or have reason to believe a child is being or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused within the preceding three years you must immediately (within 24 hours) make a report to an outside agency.

Where to Report

- ❖ If you know a child is in immediate danger, call 911.
- ❖ To report suspected maltreatment of a child occurring at HNP contact the Department of Human Services, Division of Licensing Maltreatment Intake Line at (651) 431-6600.
- ❖ To report suspected maltreatment of a child occurring within a family or in the community contact the Initial Intervention Unit of the St. Louis County Child Protection Agency at (218) 726-2012 or 800-450-9777 Monday-Friday 8:00am-8:00pm.
- ❖ To report possible licensing violations at HNP not involving abuse or neglect contact the Department of Human Services, Division of Licensing at (651) 431-6500.

What to Report

- ❖ Definitions of maltreatment are contained in the Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors Act (Minnesota Statutes, section 626.556) and are available from the HNP Director.
- ❖ A report to any of the above agencies should contain enough information to identify the child involved, any persons responsible for the abuse or neglect (if known), and the nature and extent of the maltreatment and/or possible licensing violations. For reports concerning suspected abuse or neglect occurring within a licensed facility, the report should include any actions taken by the facility in response to the incident.
- ❖ An oral report of suspected abuse or neglect made to one of the above agencies by a mandated reporter must be followed by a written report to the same agency within 72 hours, exclusive of weekends and holidays.

Failure to Report

A mandated reporter who knows or has reason to believe a child is or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused and fails to report is guilty of a misdemeanor. In addition, a mandated reporter who fails to report maltreatment that is found to be serious or recurring maltreatment may be disqualified from employment in positions allowing direct contact with persons receiving services from programs licensed by the Department of Human Services, by the Minnesota Department of Health, and unlicensed Personal Care Provider Organizations.

Retaliation Prohibited

An employer of any mandated reporter shall not retaliate against the mandated reporter for reports made in good faith or against a child with respect to whom the report is made. The Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors Act contains specific provisions regarding civil actions that can be initiated by mandated reporters who believe that retaliation has occurred.

Internal Investigations

An internal review will be completed and corrective actions taken if necessary to protect the health and safety of children in the care of HNP when HNP has reason to know that an internal or external report of alleged or suspected maltreatment has been made. The review will include an evaluation of whether:

- ❖ related policies and procedures were followed;
 - ❖ the policies and procedures were adequate;
 - ❖ there is a need for additional staff training;
 - ❖ the reported event is similar to past events with the children or the services involved;
- and
- ❖ there is a need for corrective action by the license holder to protect the health and safety of children in care.

Primary and Secondary Person or Position to Ensure Internal Reviews are Completed

The primary person or position who will ensure that an internal review is carried out is the Preschool Director. Hartley Nature Center's Executive Director will be the secondary

person to carry out an internal review when there is reason to believe that the primary person was involved in the alleged or suspected maltreatment.

Documentation of the Internal Review

The primary or secondary person to carry out the review will document that the internal review has been completed and provide documentation showing the review was completed to the commissioner upon the commissioner's request.

Corrective Action Plan

Based on the results of the internal review, HNP will develop, document, and implement a corrective action plan designed to correct any current lapses and prevent future lapses in performance by individuals or by HNP, if any.

Staff Training

HNP provides training to all staff related to the mandated reporting responsibilities as specified in the Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors Act (Minnesota Statutes, section 626.556). HNP will document that this training has been provided in individual personnel records, monitor implementation by staff, and ensure that this policy is readily accessible to staff, as specified under Minnesota Statutes, section 245A.04, subdivision 14.

Car Seats

As mandated reporters, HNP staff are required to make a report if there is "reason to suspect" that a child is being neglected or abused. This includes failure to place and secure a child in a car seat.

Effective June 9, 2009, MN's seat belt law is a primary offense, meaning drivers and passengers in all seating positions must be buckled up or in a the correct child restraint. Law enforcement can stop motorists directly for seat belt violations, including unbelted passengers. Effective July 1, 2009, a child who is both under age eight and shorter than 4 feet 9 inches tall is required to be fastened in a child safety seat or booster seat that meets federal safety standards. Under this law, a child cannot use a seat belt alone until they are age eight or 4 feet 9 inches tall—whichever comes first. It is recommended to keep a child in a booster seat based on their height, rather than their age.

Grievance Procedures

In the pursuit of our mission, HNP is committed to the protection of individual rights for all members of the HNP community including staff, families, and children.

Family Grievance Procedures

Families who believe they or their children have been treated unfairly with regard to classroom procedures or program policies have recourse through the following grievance procedure.

1. The parent or authorized representative (the “complainant”) should inform the teacher or other staff member (the “respondent”) against whom the parent/guardian has the complaint of the nature of the complaint and discuss it with him/her. Most concerns are resolved this way.
2. If it is not possible for the complainant to discuss the complaint with the respondent or if discussion with the respondent does not resolve the complaint, the complainant should inform the Preschool Director of the complaint.
3. The Preschool Director will meet with the complainant to discuss their concern as quickly as possible. A meeting with the complainant will be scheduled within one week of the complaint.
4. The Preschool Director will meet with the staff member(s) concerned within 2 days after meeting with the complainant.
5. The Preschool Director’s decision will be communicated to the complainant and the respondent as promptly as possible and no longer than one week after meeting with the respondent.
6. In the event that the Preschool Director is the “respondent”, the Hartley Education Director and/or the Hartley Executive Director will hear the grievance and proceed through the grievance policy from step 3.

Concerns that apply to the performance of HNP and/or that apply to all staff members will be discussed with the whole staff as appropriate and may be shared with Hartley Nature Center’s Executive Director, Education Coordinator, and/or Board of

Directors. It is important to HNP that we maintain open lines of communication to ensure the quality of our program and in order to adequately evaluate our program.

Resources for Families

Family Education Options

Duluth's Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) programs provide information and support for parents and their young children from birth through age three. ECFE classes are offered through the Duluth Public Schools. Families can find more information about ECFE opportunities and a registration form at any of the following:

- ❖ Call 218-336-8890 for more information and/or to register
- ❖ <http://ecfe.info/ecfe-home/>
- ❖ www.isd709.org/for-new-families/birth-to-pre-k/early-childhood-family-education

Early Childhood and Developmental Screening

Early childhood and developmental screening is required by the State of MN for all children before entering kindergarten. MN state law recommends that screening be completed during the year the child is three. It includes a review of the child's immunizations, height, weight, hearing, vision, and a standardized developmental screening of speech, language, concepts, motor skills, and social-emotional development. This screening helps identify possible health or learning concerns early on so that children can get the help they need before starting school. Screenings are offered throughout the year by appointment. For more information about the screenings:

- ❖ Call 218-336-8816 to schedule an appointment
- ❖ www.isd709.org/for-new-families/birth-to-pre-k/early-childhood-screening
- ❖ www.unitedwayduluth.org/OurWorkImpact/Successby6/EarlyChildhoodScreening.aspx

Vision, Hearing, and Social-emotional Screening

These screening help identify children who are in need of further evaluation, diagnosis, and treatment. A child's health care provider will conduct these screenings at a child's yearly check-up. These screenings are also provided at a child's Early Childhood and Developmental Screening. See above for more information about how to schedule that

screening. Local health care providers also provide these screenings and include, among many others:

- ❖ Essential Health Pediatrics Clinic: 218-786-3400
- ❖ St. Luke's Pediatric Associates: 218-249-7870
- ❖ For more information: www.health.state.mn.us/divs/fh/mch/hlth-vis/

Dental Screenings

Resources include:

- ❖ Lake Superior Community Health Center in Duluth, which offers sliding scale dental services. 218-628-7035

Mental Health and Special Education Resources

The Northland Foundation and the Thrive Initiative has produced a list of local infant and early childhood mental health and special education resources. It is available upon request from any HNP staff member or can be found at the following website:

- ❖ <http://www.northlandfdn.org/kids-plus/WebDirectory.pdf>

You can also request information about children's mental health resources by calling St. Louis County's Initial Intervention Unit (IIU) and mentioning your concerns and interest to the screener.

- ❖ St. Louis County's Initial Intervention Unit (IIU): 218-726-2012

Resources for Parents and Families in Crisis

If you are having difficulty providing for your child's emotional or physical needs, or safety you are encouraged to ask for help. HNP staff can help you find a community resource that can offer assistance. Some 24-hour community resources include:

- ❖ Parent Warmline

Get support from a parent educator

- 1-866-916-4316
- <http://www.parentsknow.state.mn.us/parentsknow/NonNavPages/Helpline/index.html>

- ❖ Lutheran Social Services Crisis Nursery

Emergency care day and/or night for up to 3 days

- 218-302-6879
- http://www.lssmn.org/lss/crisis_nurseries.htm
- ❖ **United Way Telephone Referral Service**

FREE service that connects you with community services in Minnesota including childcare, counseling, food, health, housing, legal help, mental health, transportation and youth services.

 - 651-291-0211 (cellphone) or 211
 - <http://www.parentsknow.state.mn.us/parentsknow/NonNavPages/Helpline/index.html>
- ❖ **Parents Anonymous National Parent Helpline**

Get emotional support from a trained parent advocate.

 - 1-855-4A PARENT or 1-855-427-2736
 - <http://www.nationalparenthelpline.org/>

Family Support Resources

Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)

The CCAP program can help families pay for child care so that families can work, look for work, or attend school. Families pay a copayment based on gross income and family size.

- ❖ Contact Information for CCAP: childcare@stlouiscountymn.gov
- ❖ For more information, go to <http://mn.gov/dhs/people-we-serve/children-and-families/economic-supports/> and click on Child Care Assistance

The Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP)

The MFIP helps low-income families move from welfare to work. It includes both cash and food assistance. Contact St. Louis County for information or an application to determine eligibility:

- ❖ Call 218-726-2101
- ❖ Contact email for St. Louis County MFIP: financialassistance@stlouiscountymn.gov
- ❖ For more information, go to <http://mn.gov/dhs/people-we-serve/children-and-families/economic-supports/> and click on MN Family Investment Program

Medical Assistance

Medical Assistance (MA) is the largest of MN's publicly funded health care programs. MA provides coverage for children and families including pregnant women and adults without children. Apply for MA through St. Louis County's Department of Health and Human Services:

- ❖ Call 218-726-2101
- ❖ Contact email for St. Louis County MA: financialassistance@stlouiscountymn.gov
- ❖ For more information: www.stlouiscountymn.gov/ADULTFAMILIES/FinancialAssistance/MNHealthCarePrograms.aspx

Public Health Services

St. Louis County Public Health and Human Services offers many services to families and children:

- ❖ Call 218-726-2222 or 800-450-9777
- ❖ Contact email: phhs@stlouiscountymn.gov
- ❖ For more information, go to www.stlouiscountymn.gov/GOVERNMENT/Departments/agencies/HealthHumanServices.aspx

Contact Information

Hartley Nature Center

- ❖ 218-724-6735
- ❖ Fax: 218-724-4891
- ❖ 3001 Woodland Avenue
Duluth, MN 55803

Tom O'Rourke, Executive Director

- ❖ director@hartleynature.org

Kaitlin Erpestad, Preschool Director

- ❖ psdirector@hartleynature.org

Hartley Nature Center Bookkeeper

- ❖ bookkeeper@hartleynature.org

Acknowledgements

Thanks to the following child care centers for sharing their parent handbooks and forms with HNP as we created our own materials: UMD Children's Place, Chippewa Nature Center's Nature Preschool, Secret Forest Playschool, Schlitz Audubon Nature Preschool, Tualatin Hills Nature Preschool, Wildflowers Nature School, Tamarack Nature Preschool, Nature's Way Preschool, Community Child Care Center, and the U of M's Child Development Center.

Parent Acknowledgement of Parent Handbook

Please review and sign this page. Return it before your child's first day of preschool.

I have received, read, and understand the Hartley Nature Preschool Parent Handbook. I agree to abide by the policies and procedures as stated in this handbook. I also understand that HNP may change policies or implement new policies as needed. I understand that I will be notified prior to such changes.

I know that the policies included in this handbook include:

- ❖ Enrollment Policies (pg. 15-21)
- ❖ Drop-off and Pick-up Policies including Late Pick-up Fee (pg.21-24)
- ❖ What to Bring Each Day (pg. 25)
- ❖ Required Clothing (pg. 31-33)
- ❖ Walking Field Trips into Hartley Park (pg. 35-36)
- ❖ Withdrawal Policies (pg. 41-42)
- ❖ Financial policies (pg. 45-48)
- ❖ Administration of Medications Policy (pg. 51-52)
- ❖ Sick Child Policies (pg. 52-54)
- ❖ Weather Emergency Closings (pg. 57-58)
- ❖ Mandated Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect (pg. 60-63)
- ❖ Grievance Policy (pg. 64-65)

I agree to share the information in this handbook with any additional caregivers that will interact with Hartley Nature Preschool so that they are informed about HNP's policies.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Print Name: _____ Date: _____