

## **Philosophy**

At the Rivendell Early Childhood Program (RECP), we believe that early education is an essential building block for children's later success in school. We value each child and their family as unique and important community members. We welcome and celebrate diversity.

We consider each child within the context of their family and work closely together with family members to enable children to reach their full potential. We believe that all educational experiences, including those of the children, teachers, and family members, should be filled with laughter, warmth, and mutual respect.

## **What Makes RECP Unique?**

The Rivendell preschool program holds a unique place within the school district. Although our four classrooms are physically located in the elementary schools, and we stay connected to the elementary communities, we also maintain a separate identity due to the developmental level of our children. Our program is distinctive because:

- Our practice is child centered and child directed.
- The activities provided are experiential, open-ended, creative, and interactive.
- Throughout the day we strive to provide an educational environment that is intimate, warm, and home-like.
- The program is regulated by the Vermont Department of Health and Human Services in addition to the Department of Education.
- Our classrooms hold the highest level of Vermont (STARS) accreditation.

## **Curriculum**

The RECP curriculum is research based and supports children in the acquisition of skills that will promote success in kindergarten and beyond. While we plan activities that impact every developmental area of learning, our program reflects the wider Rivendell School District in its emphasis on literacy, numeracy, and personal/social development. While high quality preschool promotes long-term academic achievement, we recognize that young children learn best in experiential environments and most of our curriculum is embedded in open-ended play. Our materials and teaching style reflect our emphasis on exploration, creativity and problem solving, using the children's natural curiosity to motivate them to stretch their imagination and sharpen their reasoning skills.

### **Items to bring:**

*Please bring the following items to be left at school:*

- |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| -1 pair of shorts     | -2 pairs long pants   |
| -1 short sleeve shirt | -2 long sleeve shirts |
| -1 sweatshirt         | -3 pairs of socks     |
| -2 pairs of underwear |                       |
| -Rain boot            | -Rain jacket & pants  |

## **Bedding (For afternoon care):**

*All Bedding must be brought in a bag. Reusable grocery bags or canvas bags work best.*

*All bedding must go home on Fridays to be washed.*

## **Bedding includes:**

Sheet- large crib sheet or twin sheet fit best.

Sleeping bag or warm blanket

Pillow (optional)

Stuffed animal (optional)

## **Toys from Home**

We discourage students from bringing toys into school. It is easy for them to get lost or broken and many students have trouble sharing their toys from home with their classmates. Stuffed animals and dolls are allowed during rest time. They need to be left in backpacks until rest time and will be returned to backpacks after rest time is over.

## **Birthdays**

Special treats are allowed to be sent in when it is your child's birthday. Please check with staff about allergies before bringing anything in.

## **Meals**

The school provides breakfast and lunch at no charge for those who order it. Breakfast and lunch will be delivered to classrooms. Please sign your child up at the beginning of the week. Staff will be expected

to adhere to and monitor sanitization guidelines including hand washing before and after meals, sanitizing eating spaces.

Children are welcome to bring their own breakfast. Children staying for afternoon will need their own healthy lunch if the school is not providing it.

**Morning snack: Please bring your own healthy snack.**

**Afternoon snack: If your child is attending full days, please bring your own healthy snack.**

### **Hydration/Water Fountains**

Please bring a filled water bottle each day.

Hydration is important, students and staff are encouraged to bring a filled water bottle daily. Please wash your child's water bottle with soap and water **ATLEAST** weekly.

### **Arrival and Departure:**

#### **WESTSHIRE:**

**Arrival:** Preschool parents can drive up to the small loop in front of the school, walk their child around to the back of the school to the preschool classrooms, and help their child wash hands and hang up coats and backpacks. Please park in the parking lot if there is no room in the loop.

**Departure:** Park in the loop or parking lot and walk around the school to the classrooms or playground to collect your child.

## **SAMUEL MOREY:**

Arrival: Preschool parents are asked to park in the parking lot (not the bus loop). Please walk your child to the back door headed towards the playground. Doors will open at 8:00 am. Drop off person is responsible for helping hang up back packs, coats, and washing hands. To avoid crowding in hallways and the classrooms we ask that you limit drop off to 5 minutes for your child.

Departure:

11:30 pick up- Parents can pull into the bus loop to pick up their child. Weather permitting children will be on the playground.

3:00 & 5:30 Pick up- Please pull into the parking lot and walk to the playground or into the front of the building to pick up your child.

## **Hygiene Throughout the Day**

Staff will educate, instruct, and reinforce hygiene procedures and expectations. Staff will ensure that posters describing handwashing steps will be placed near all sinks. Students and staff will be provided with hand lotion to support healthy skin.

Staff will engage in hand hygiene, the washing of hands or the use of hand sanitizer, at the following times:

- Arrival at school
- After breaks
- Before and after preparing food or drinks
- Before and after eating, handling food, or feeding students

- Before and after administering medication or medical ointment
- After using the toilet or helping a child use the bathroom
- After encountering bodily fluid
- Before and after handling facial coverings/face shields
- After handling animals or cleaning up animal waste
- After playing outdoors
- Before and after playing with sand and sensory play

### **Cleaning Throughout the Day**

Common spaces and frequently touched surfaces and doors will be disinfected by custodians each day. Custodial staff and teachers will continue to follow VT/NH DOH regulations regarding cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting. Frequently touched objects and surfaces include but are not limited to:

- Classroom surfaces, where students eat, and frequently touched surfaces
- Bathrooms/restrooms
- Frequently used equipment including electronic devices
- Door handles and handrails
- Items students place in their mouths, including toys and other classroom items.
- Metal and plastic playground equipment

## **Immunization Policy**

Before attending the program, a copy of your child's immunization records and documentation of Well Child Checkup must be on file at the program site. It must conform to the schedule of immunizations determined by the Vermont Department of Health. Exceptions will be made only if families have legally written documentation, and these must also be kept in children's files.

## **Illness**

- Please do not send an ill child to school!
- When children become ill during school our first concern is for their well-being. If a child develops any serious symptoms that would lead to exclusion, she/he will be separated from the group and made as comfortable as possible, and you will be notified.
- School nurses or head teachers will make the final determination as to whether an ill child is able to attend the program.
- Please come as soon as possible to pick up your sick child from school!
- If we cannot reach you within a half hour, we will be forced to reach out to Emergency Contacts.
- As COVID guidelines change we will update families and keep you informed.

- In your child's admission form you are asked to designate at least two people that may be contacted to pick up your child when you are unable to be reached. Make sure you have notified these emergency transporters that they have been listed! It is also a good idea to alert emergency contacts if you know that you will not be available to arrive promptly at the school in case you are called to do so.

### **Student Health**

- We will coordinate decision-making around a student's health with the family, school nurse and the family's healthcare provider.
- Healthy students with asthma and/or allergies (with no fever) that cause coughing and/or clear runny nose may attend school in person if they provide documentation to the school nurse and follow medical treatment plans.

#### **Students may not come to school if they:**

- Shows one or more symptom of COVID-19, such as a cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, sore throat, or new loss of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea.
- Have or had a fever (temperature higher than 100.4°F) within 24 hours. Children must be fever free with no fever reducing medication for 12 hours.
- Have a significant new rash, particularly when other symptoms are present.
- Have large amounts of nasal discharge in the absence of allergy diagnosis.
- Have viral conjunctivitis (rapidly spreading type)
- Have chickenpox, scabies, impetigo
- Have ringworm
- Have a rash that is oozing or open



- A complete list of signs and symptoms of conditions (and rules pertaining to exclusion) is posted in each preschool classroom.

### **Student and Staff Sickness Identified While at School**

- If a student or staff shows any signs of sickness while at school the student or staff will be sent home. Materials, toys, and furniture touched by the student or staff who is sent home will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected. Information on when a student or staff member can return to school after a sickness will be forthcoming.

### **Medical Emergencies**

- In the event of serious illness or accident, parents/guardians will be notified as quickly as possible. If parents/guardians are unable to be reached, an emergency contact person will be called. School personnel will seek emergency medical care as needed, which may include transportation to the emergency room and the emergency medical personnel administering whatever emergency treatment is necessary.

### **Emergency Preparedness**

We practice fire drills and shelter drills on a regular basis during the school year. In case of a fire or other emergency, we will follow the Rivendell emergency response plans and procedures.

### **Snow/School Closure Procedures**

The Rivendell Early Childhood program will be closed when the Rivendell schools are closed. Parents will be notified through the emergency phone system. School closings are also posted on the internet and broadcasted on local radio.

### **Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Policy**

All preschool and elementary school staff members are required by law to report cases of suspected child abuse or neglect to the Vermont Agency of Human Services - Department for Children and Families (DCF) within 24 hours. The purpose of this legal requirement is to protect the health and welfare of children in our care.

### **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality will always be maintained by staff in our program. We will not discuss your child, or share written information regarding your child, with anyone other than preschool staff members or administrators. We also request that you not inquire about, or discuss information pertaining to, any student other than your own child. Your child's preschool file, or special education file, is available for your review at any time with prior notification. Special education files are always kept with a child's current special educator.

### **Complaints Procedure**

If you have any concerns regarding your child's experiences in the preschool, you should contact your child's classroom teacher. If, after doing so, you still feel that the issue has not been appropriately addressed, you should contact the school principal. If the issue is still not resolved, the next person to contact would be the superintendent of schools. If you continue to have concerns, you may call the Vermont Child Care Consumer Concern Line at 1-800-649-2642.

### **Childcare Licensing Information**

The RECP is licensed by the Vermont Agency of Human Services - Department for Children and Families (DCF). A copy of the childcare licensing regulations is posted in the preschool classroom. The licensing regulations, along with additional information pertaining to early childhood development, is also available on-line at [www.dcf.vermont.gov](http://www.dcf.vermont.gov)

### **Drug, Alcohol and Smoking Policy**

There shall be no smoking on school property or in vehicles on school grounds. If the staff believes that anyone picking up a child is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, they will not release the child to that individual. Staff will offer to call emergency contacts to transport the child and adult.

## **Phone Numbers**

Westshire Classroom Teachers:

Heidi Nichols

(802) 333-4668 Ext. 4126

Samuel Morey Classroom Teachers:

Ashley Bean and Lisa Ellis

(802) 333-9755 ext 3103 & 3102

Early Childhood Special Education Teacher:

Jill Buffum

(802)333-4668 or (802) 333-9755 Ext 3107