Mission Statement

Beaver Brook Association is a mission-driven, privately held, non-profit organization dedicated to promoting interrelationships in the natural world and encouraging the conservation of natural resources through education and land stewardship. It is the mission of the Forest Friends program to help children grow in emotional, physical, and social ways and to foster connections with the natural world to develop strong environmental stewards of the land.

Forest Friends is Beaver Brook’s drop-off program for 3–5 year-olds. This program provides the opportunity to learn in a rich natural environment.

The program is designed to spend 70–100% of the class time in the great outdoors!

Program Hours

Forest Friends is an occasional care program and is not a full-time licensed child care facility.

3–4yr old Class is held on Monday and Wednesday from 9:30 am to 11:30 am.

4–5yr old Class is held on Tuesday and Thursday from 9am to 12pm

*Extended Enrichment LEAF program available 12pm–2pm, open to enrolled 4–5yr olds only.

The program will run for 32 weeks throughout the school year and will have 2 weeks in June for makeup.
**Payment**

The fee for this two day a week program is:
- $3,000 annually - 10% off BBA Members

The first payment of $300 will be due at the time of registration beginning April 1, 2023, along with $100 Non refundable deposit.

The nine remaining payments are due beginning September 1, 2023, and ending May 1, 2024, paid out in 10 installments and due based on the following schedule:
- Payment 1: April 1, 2023 (or at the time of registration)
- Payment 2: September 1, 2023
- Payment 3: October 1, 2023
- Payment 4: November 1, 2023
- Payment 5: December 1, 2023
- Payment 6: January 1, 2024
- Payment 7: February 1, 2024
- Payment 8: March 1, 2024
- Payment 9: April 1, 2024
- Payment 10: May 1, 2024

Payment in full can be made at any time.

**Full or partial scholarships are available** – please email Becky Kellner: bkellner@bbanature.org.

All healthcare forms will be due before August 1st 2023. We reserve the right to cancel the class due to enrollment requirements. Enrollment is on a first come first serve due to a limited number of spots.
LEAF Extended Day Program

LEAF stands for lunch, education, adventure, and fun!

This optional enrichment add-on is for the enrolled Forest Friends 4–5yr old students. This is perfect for families looking for more exposure to Preschool skills as well as those looking to prepare their child for the longer Kindergarten school day. Continue the Forest Friends morning program with lunch and extended learning adventures. Children will explore and engage in early math and literacy skills through environmentally-themed games and activities.

• Program will run from 12pm–2pm
• Bring a packed lunch from home.
• Fall Session (16 Weeks) = $480
• Spring Session (16 Weeks) = $480

Refunds

A non-refundable registration fee of $100 is due upon the registration of your child. This must be paid at the time of registration to secure a spot for the 2023/24 school year along with the first payment of $300. The registration fee and first payment are both NON-REFUNDABLE.

The exceptions to this policy are if your family is relocating out of the area and will no longer be able to send your child to our Forest Friends Program, or if your child is unable to adapt to the program in a reasonable amount of time.

Non-Discrimination

Non-Discrimination: Beaver Brook Association strives to create a diverse, equitable and inclusive community. Beaver Brook Association does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, citizenship, religion, creed, age, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or expression, family style, political beliefs, disability, military or veteran status with respect to access to employment, its educational programs, activities and election of trustees, and complies with all applicable federal and state laws. Beaver Brook Association welcomes and appreciates everyone.
### CALENDARS

#### 2023-2024

Forest Friends 3-4yr old Program (Mon&Wed) 32 weeks

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Red = No School, Blue = Make Up Days
2023-2024
Forest Friends 4-5yr Program (Tues & Thurs) 32 Weeks

Red = No School, Blue = Make Up Days
Toileting

Participants must be fully toilet-trained and independent in selfcare. We do realize that accidents happen and will be asking that all parents send in a full set of dry clothes.

First Aid

Teachers will have a first aid kit with them at all times. All teachers have up-to-date First Aid and CPR certifications. Minor injuries such as scrapes and abrasions will be handled by teachers. Teachers will inform parents of injuries and care at the time of pick up or, if deemed to be appropriate, via text message/phone call. If emergency care beyond minor injuries is required, 911 will be called and parents will be contacted as soon as can safely be done.
Health and Wellness

Our youth programs fall under our year-round camp license. The state of NH requires us to have this information on file for each student/camper:

- A current health history and statement of health status.
- A current physical that includes any activities from which the child is exempt for health reasons.
- A current documentation of immunizations, if exempt have Religious Exemption Certificate Form filled out.
- A list of all known or suspected allergies, dietary restrictions, and food allergies.
- A list of all prescribed or over-the-counter medications being taken by the child at the time of the registered program.
- Any other information that requires special restrictions or consideration.

Children that have or are exhibiting any of the following symptoms in the past 48 hours they must be kept home:

- Fever over 100.5
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Coughing
- Lethargy, fatigue
- Rash

If symptoms occur while your child is at Forest Friends the parents will be called. Students are welcome to return when they are symptom free for 24 hours without medication and feel up to being outdoors.

Weather & Cancelation

Forest Friends will go outside for the majority of the school day regardless of snow, rain or wind. We will only stay inside if the weather is dangerous. Dangerous is defined as weather where the wind chill is below 10 degrees, lightning is present or the winds are above 15 mph.

If the Hollis/Brookline Public Schools close or are delayed due to weather or road conditions, we will also close. Missed class periods will be made up at the end of the spring semester, there are two weeks of make up built in.
**Snack**

Forest Friends program will provide your child with a snack each day. Some examples of snacks include oatmeal with dried fruit, fresh fruit, apple sauce, vegetables with dips, crackers with spreads, and pretzels. Food allergies will be taken into consideration.

- The 4–5yr olds will have a family-style snack, this is a great opportunity for children to help with the preparation of food and learn to try new foods.
- The 3–4yr olds will enjoy a light snack that fosters independence and the trying of new foods.

**Discipline**

Beaver Brook’s programs are meant to be educational and fun for all children involved. However, we recognize that different environments, circumstances, and settings can impact a child’s behavior and interactions with peers. Teachers will work pro-actively to create a positive group environment, set clear expectations at the beginning of each program, and use positive reinforcement so that behavior does not become an issue.

Inappropriate behavior by any individual may influence the enjoyment and safety of the entire group and is not acceptable. Teachers will use the following steps when managing behavior:

- Diffuse
- Redirect
- Then remove the individual from the situation

If the inappropriate behavior continues, teachers will notify Program Management Staff for additional support. Sometimes a break or walk is all that is needed. If a student commits a serious offense – especially one that endangers others or is a safety violation, the Program Management Staff will notify the parent or guardian for pick up.
Basic Schedule

3-4 yrs Old (Monday & Wednesday)
- 9:30 Arrival (kids should arrive dressed for the weather)
- 9:45 Welcome Circle
- 10:00 Hike and Trail Activities
- 10:30 Snack Time
- 11:00 Free Play
- 11:30 Pick Up

4-5 yrs Old (Tuesday & Thursday)
- 9:00 Arrival (kids should arrive dressed for the weather)
- 9:15 Welcome Circle
- 9:30 Hike and Trail Activities
- 10:30 Snack Time
- 11:00 Free Play
- 11:40 Closing Circle
- 12:00 Pick up
The Busy Beaver Forest Program will follow an “Emergent Curriculum” pedagogy. The curriculum will follow the changes of the season as well as the interests of the children in the program.

Whether it's learning the names and calls of birds, understanding the seasonal changes around them, witnessing eggs hatching, or seeing plants sprouting, short naturalist lessons help children to connect with the world around them and begin to learn science concepts and skills.

Hikes help the kids learn resilience, learn to appreciate their own skills, and develop strength, agility, balance, and gross motor skills. They also learn social skills as they help their fellow hikers, learn to watch for each other, and practice important trail etiquette and rules.

Community snack provides a chance for everyone to eat healthy food together. It also is a chance to discuss where food comes from. We often talk about what parts of the plants we are eating, and what animals helped make our food. We talked about which people were involved in growing and getting the food. Sometimes the kids even get to make the food themselves. Community snack is also a time to discuss conservation. It allows us to reduce the packaging involved in our food and compost our food scraps in the composting bins.

During our playtime children also have the opportunity to learn to use building tools such as hand drills, hammers and nails, screws, and screwdrivers as well as art materials such as clay, paint, paint brushes, glue, and natural materials to build and create. A focus on “loose parts” play includes having objects which do not have a specified purpose. Children are able to use them in a great variety of ways to invent their own play.

Stories are another important aspect of the curriculum. Oral storytelling and folktales are a unique aspect of Forest Friends. Stories are how people learn best! Research shows stories are the most effective way for people to learn facts, empathy and beginning literacy!
The Seven Principles of Leave No Trace provide an easily understood framework of minimum impact practices for anyone visiting the outdoors. Although Leave No Trace has its roots in backcountry settings, the principles have been adapted so that they can be applied anywhere — from remote wilderness areas to local parks and even in your backyard. They also apply to every recreational activity. Beaver Brook teachers use these guiding principles when developing curriculum, allowing Free Play, or assessing Risk Play.

1. Plan and Prepare
2. Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces
3. Dispose of Waste Properly
4. Leave What You Find
5. Minimize Campfire Impact
6. Respect Wildlife
7. Be Considerate of Others

For more detailed information on these principles please visit https://lnt.org/why/7-principles/.
Taking risks and learning to assess one’s abilities is a vitally important skill for children. In a world of smooth sidewalks and flat-level floors, a world of comfortable couches and heat that is pumped into rooms at the perfect temperature, it’s all too common for kids to miss out on risky play. By its very nature, the outdoors provides such opportunities. Using the Leave No Trace principles as a supporting framework for making decisions, Beaver Brook Association will allow children to engage in reasonable risk play, which includes but is not limited to:

- **Climbing and playing with heights**: Children may practice walking on logs, jumping from stumps, and climbing on rocks.
- **Speed**: Children will have the chance to run and roll downhills.
- **Tools**: We will start with nature’s tools (sticks, rocks, branches, etc.) and possibly progress to hammers, small drills, screwdrivers as well as art tools such as paint and clay and tools used for survival.
- **Nature Elements**: Children will have the opportunity to engage with Water and Fire and will be instructed to follow all safety protocols for both elements.
- **Getting “Lost”**: Games such as “Baby Deer” and “Eagle Eye” will be played.
- **Rough and Tumble play**: We recognize that it is an important normal child behavior however we will ask that children do not participate in this type of play during our programs.

Children will be encouraged to think through the risks involved in this form of activity, and teachers will guide them through the process of risk assessment. Children will remain within eyesight of educators and clear boundaries will be set.

The following questions are examples of those that will be used to help children learn this process:

- Why might you want to do this activity? (Benefits?)
- How might we (or nature) get hurt doing this activity? (Risks?)
- How can we keep ourselves, others, and nature safe doing this activity? (Mitigation)

Some risks are, of course, too great for the children to decide on their own. Teachers will conduct risk and hazard assessments before the children’s arrival each day. Known hazards, those risks which are too great to be assessed by the children will be addressed by the teacher. If you have questions regarding risky play please reach out to staff. We are happy to provide more information and research as well as discuss specific questions.
As the saying goes, “there is no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing”. Because your child will be going out in all kinds of weather, it will be very important that they have the proper gear. We find that with the proper gear kids can be comfortable, engaged learners in all kinds of weather! You can purchase these items at various locations. We recommend www.outdoorschoolshop.com as a resource.

**Here is what you need:**

**Snow pants**: Pull-on separate snow pants are preferred

**Winter coat**: Well insulated jacket with a hood, separate from snow pants is preferred.

**Rain Suit**: Oakiwear, Tuffo or Polarn O. Pyret that can fit over your child’s winter coat and snow pants. Rain gear is critical! Here in the Northeast cold wet weather can be expected at any time during the year. Wet clothes do not insulate well. Polarn O. Pyret offers Outdoor School participants a 20% discount. Ask your teacher for additional information.

**Boots**: Tall Bogs, Oakiwear, Mucks or Kamik neoprene waterproof thermal boots -- your child will need to wear these boots to every class (Fall, Winter, Mud season, and Spring).

**Base Layer**: Fleece, or wool or silk-wool blend thermal underwear

**Mittens**: At least 2 pairs of high wrist or elbow length insulated, waterproof mittens (L-Day, N'Ice Caps, Snowstoppers, Polarn O. Pyret and Puddlegear are recommended brands). We suggest one pair of rain mittens and at least one pair of snow mittens.

**Socks**: at least 2 pairs of calf length thermal socks made of fleece, polyester or wool (one to be worn and one in the gear bag).

**Hats**: Balaclavas (hood hats) are best as they stay on well and protect the neck and face. Be sure to pack an extra hat in your gear bag.

**Storage bag**: you will want some kind of storage for your gear. You’ll be taking your gear to and from school each week-- because we know your kids will want to use it in between classes! Make sure to go through the checklist to make sure you have everything each week.

**Clothes**: A complete change of warm clothes should be provided every day. As a reminder cotton is very absorbent and is a poor insulator when wet, therefore it is not a good choice for preschool outdoor gear.
Lindsey Shaklee

Lindsey Shaklee completed a Master’s of Art in Teaching in Biology from Miami University in May of 2021 (Go Red Hawks)! She started Beaver Brook’s Forest Preschool program as part of her Master’s Leadership Challenge and has co-taught the homeschool classes, field trips and summer camps at Beaver Brook for several years. She is a long time homeschooling mama of three (mostly) grown kids who are now at University and College.

Lindsey enjoys outdoor education, art, and storytelling. She also trains Service Dogs and raises ducks—both of which occasionally visit the preschool! Lindsey is passionate about helping kids connect with the living things of the our world: be they wild, domestic, plant, animal or fellow human!

Virginia Commissio

Virginia recently retired from teaching Kindergarten in Brookline, NH after a 19-year tenure. She previously taught in New York and Massachusetts.

Virginia holds a BA in Early Childhood Education, has completed graduate-level courses in Reading Instruction and Curriculum as well as coursework and training for certification in Mindfulness and Yoga for children and teens.

Virginia strives to provide experiences that allow children to feel respected, be actively engaged, and have fun. It is her goal to foster a lasting love of learning, awareness, and self-love in children.
Tracy Jones

Tracy Jones grew up on a woodsy hillside in northern Connecticut where she built forts, hiked in the forest, and snuck berries from her mother’s raspberry patch. She enjoys adventures large and small, from bicycling across the country (twice!) to taking micro-hikes in her backyard. Some of her favorite things at Beaver Brook are lichen, wildflowers, and maple syrup! She graduated from Amherst College with a major in Fine Arts and is currently pursuing her MEd in Nature-Based Early Childhood Ed.