Elachee Nature Academy
Preschool
2020-2021 APPLICATION PACKET

www.ElacheeNatureAcademy.org
Dear Families,

Thank you for your interest in Elachee Nature Academy’s 2020-2021 Nature Preschool program.

Our unique approach to learning is one that engages early learners in hands-on exploration and discovery. The Nature Preschool curriculum is a seasonally-based educational approach that offers children a variety of literature, art, music, social, cognitive and physical development opportunities designed to prepare each student for successful future educational experiences and to nurture a love of nature.

Elachee Nature Science Center has been providing quality environmental education programs for children, adults and families since 1979. We hope you will join us in August 2020 as we continue our wonderful journey in the southeast’s first Nature Preschool.

We invite you to call and schedule a tour of our facility where we can meet with you individually and discuss any questions you may have about Elachee Nature Academy and our outstanding program.

Sincerely,
Director of Schools
Elachee Nature Academy
Our Mission

Elachee Nature Academy’s mission is to provide educational experiences in the classroom and in outdoor settings that will encourage a child’s natural curiosity, inquisitiveness, affection and respect for the natural world.

Growing Up Naturally

Educational Philosophy

The Elachee Nature Academy’s Preschool curriculum is designed to ignite each child’s sense of wonder. By focusing on children’s interests, information becomes internalized and more meaningful. Many teaching strategies we integrate include:

- Providing a supportive, safe learning environment to encourage discovery and experimentation
- Offering sensory opportunities with live animals, natural objects, artifacts, trail games, outdoor exploration and creative arts activities
- Stimulating cognitive growth and problem-solving skills through hands-on activities, games and discovery learning in nature
- Developing physical motor skills through active learning and play
- Cultivating social skills and positive self-image through group play and cooperative learning
- Nurturing self-expression, creativity and reflection
- Instilling respect and appreciation for the natural world

Curriculum

Our unique Nature Academy curriculum focuses on the whole child, promoting growth in physical, social, emotional and intellectual areas. Elachee’s Nature Preschool uses the Creative Curriculum® model which emphasizes purposeful and productive play experiences that help children grow in all areas. By the end of the year, your child will become a confident, curious learner who can be part of a group, follow directions, and take turns with materials and games. Daily activities include:

- Natural Science Experiences
- Cooking and Food Experiences
- Music and Movement
- Large and Small Motor Activities
- Outdoor Play
- Dramatic Play
- Block Play
- Sensory Activities
- Art Activities
- Language Activities

Elachee Nature Academy is managed and operated by Elachee Nature Science Center.
2125 Elachee Drive I Gainesville, GA 30504 I 770-535-1976 I FAX 770-535-2302 I elachee@elachee.org
www.elacheenatureacademy.org
Our Classroom
The Elachee Nature Academy Preschool classroom is housed in a beautiful, recently renovated space which is designed to provide the best possible indoor preschool environment for young children. Open-ended equipment and supplies encourage creative and cooperative learning. The natural playscape areas provide children a supervised opportunity to dig, climb, and roam as they build their connection to the natural world. In addition, the 1,400 acres of the Elachee property offers great opportunities for learning during the daily group explorations.

Class Size
Three teachers oversee a maximum of 20 children in the mixed-age Elachee Nature Academy Preschool class.

Snacks
A daily healthy snack – such as fruit, cheese, crackers, juice and milk – is provided by Elachee Nature Academy’s Preschool program. We are a peanut-free preschool.

Discipline Policy
In Elachee Nature Academy’s Preschool program, we use a positive discipline approach to behavior management which teaches children self-regulation and integrates social-emotional learning and discipline. Positive discipline allows children to solve their own problems with the guidance and modeling of preschool staff – transforming conflict into a learning opportunity.
Typical Day at Elachee Nature Preschool

We value spontaneity in activities and take advantage of the “teachable moment.” We also know that young children benefit from knowing what will happen next. We will maintain a loose schedule, with predictable events throughout the day such as snack and group experiences, to give children the security of structure. The following is an example of a typical classroom schedule.

Arrival
Class begins inside Elachee’s Nature Preschool classroom. The adult dropping off the student will sign in and take his/her child to the classroom, where the student will put away his/her backpack and extra clothes before taking part in one of the morning activity areas.

Group Meeting
Children join in calendar time, engage in music and movement activities, listen to stories, sing songs, and participate in other whole-group activities.

Morning Snack
Teachers and children gather together to eat “family style,” prepare and serve food.

Outdoor Group Exploration
Children begin their day of exploration by trekking through Chicopee Woods Nature Preserve. Activities include hiking the trails, playing in the forest, and exploring small creeks.

Small Group
Teacher-directed activities occur in small groups. This fosters more individualized learning while also enabling teachers to focus on particular skill-sets. Such activities give students the chance to ask more questions and allow the teacher to evaluate each child’s needs and progress.

Free Choice Time
Children have at least 60 minutes of uninterrupted time to choose an activity among the different interest areas of the classroom. This allows children to lengthen attention spans and to develop competency with specific tasks. Children may choose activities that occur in any of the interest areas within the classroom including:

- Blocks
- Art
- Library
- Toys and Games
- Dramatic Play
- Discovery
- Sand and Water
- Cooking
**Lunch time**
Children gather together to enjoy lunches that are brought from home. We ask that parents send a nutritionally balanced lunch for their child. Due to food allergies, we ask that lunches not include any peanut products.

**Resting Time**
Students are provided with an opportunity to rest each day after lunch. We provide a resting cot and sheet for each student. Children are welcome to bring in a blanket from home and a small sleep animal or pillow. Please be mindful that all rest items must fit into the child’s cubby. There are no extra storage spaces available for nap items.

**Afternoon Snack**
Generally, this is a ‘grab and go snack’ that can easily be taken outdoors to enjoy on the Nature Playscape or at the Children’s Garden picnic area.

**Outdoor Play**
Time spent in our specially designed Nature Playscape. This is the Nature Preschool’s playground that was created to blend with the beautiful natural setting of the Chicopee Woods. Outdoor play activities include water play, sand play, fort building, digging, gardening, and dramatic play.

**Ending the Day**
We gather at the Nature Playscape to say goodbye and reflect on the activities of the day before we go home to our families.
The Elachee Nature Academy school year begins in early August and ends in late May. We follow the Hall County Schools’ academic calendar. Ours is a 10-month program and we require a commitment for the entire school year. School hours are Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**Eligibility**
Children must be age 3 by March 1, 2020, or age 4 as of September 1, 2020, to be eligible for Elachee Nature Academy’s Preschool program. Each student must also be competent with independent bathroom skills.

**Elachee Nature Academy: Preschool Enrollment Process**

**TOUR**
- Schedule a tour of the Elachee Nature Academy (ENA) facilities and participate in an informational interview with the Elachee Nature Academy Director of Schools.

**APPLY**
- Complete the ENA Preschool Admission Application and submit along with the *non-refundable $75 Enrollment Application fee* (per student).

**UPON ACCEPTANCE to ELACHEE’S PRESCHOOL**
- Once you receive a letter of acceptance, for ENA to hold your child’s place in the Preschool program you must pay the *non-refundable $250 enrollment deposit* when submitting your *completed/signed enrollment contract*. The enrollment deposit will be applied to your child’s May tuition payment.
- Submit the following documents by the Parent Orientation meeting:
  - Birth Certificate
  - Proof of immunization (or a signed waiver)
  - Signed Emergency Medical Release form
  - Family Information form
- Attend Parent Orientation Night held the last week of July (Parents Only).
- Attend Open House for parents and students that takes place right before school starts.

*Elachee Nature Academy (ENA) admits qualified students of any race, color, national or ethnic origins to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded and made available to students at ENA. ENA does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of its education policies, admissions policies, financial aid program and other administered programs. Disabled students (or disabled family of member of applicants) requiring any type of accommodation during the application process or otherwise are encouraged to identify themselves and indicate what type of accommodation is needed.*
Tuition Payment Schedule

Tuition may be paid monthly or in one lump sum by August 3, 2020. Monthly tuition payments start the first day of the school year, with subsequent payments due on the 1st day of each month.

See the tuition fee schedule below. Pay by check (payable to Elachee Nature Science Center referencing your student’s invoice number), cash or online using the secure ENA tuition and extended care payment portals (https://www.elachee.org/nature-academy/for-parents/).

Optional Extended Care
Elachee Nature Academy is pleased to offer extended care hours in the mornings before class and after the instructional day has concluded per the fee schedule below. Due to limited space in this optional program, families must make extended care arrangements month-to-month with the Director of Schools. Fees must be paid in full by the 1st day of the month for contracted extended care services. Late Fees: A $5 late charge will be applied after the 5:15 p.m. pick up time for the first minute, then $1 per subsequent minute until the student is signed out. The late fee will be applied to the extended care invoice.

Elachee Nature Academy:
2020-2021 Preschool Tuition (per student)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5-Day Enrollment</th>
<th>3-Day Enrollment</th>
<th>2-Day Enrollment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$6,750 Annual Tuition*</td>
<td>$4,900 Annual Tuition*</td>
<td>$3,600 Annual Tuition*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Payable as $675 per month, due the 1st of each month, August – May.</td>
<td>Payable as $490 per month, due the 1st of each month, August – May.</td>
<td>Payable as $360 per month, due the 1st of each month, August – May.</td>
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*NOTE: If paid as a lump sum payment due August 3, 2020.

Optional Extended Care Program: Per Student Monthly Fees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5-Day Extended Care Program</th>
<th>3-Day Extended Care Program</th>
<th>2-Day Extended Care Program</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• $140 per Month for Mornings (7:15-8:30 a.m.)</td>
<td>• $84 per Month for Mornings (7:15-8:30 a.m.)</td>
<td>• $56 per Month for Mornings (7:15-8:30 a.m.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• $200 per Month for Afternoons (3:15-5:15 p.m.)</td>
<td>• $120 per Month for Afternoons (3:15-5:15 p.m.)</td>
<td>• $80 per Month for Afternoons (3:15-5:15 p.m.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• $340 per Month for Both Mornings and Afternoons</td>
<td>• $204 per Month for Both Mornings and Afternoons</td>
<td>• $136 per Month for Both Mornings and Afternoons</td>
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<tr>
<td>$20 Emergency Daily Extended Care (paid day of approved drop-in)</td>
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<td>$20 Emergency Daily Extended Care (paid day of approved drop-in)</td>
</tr>
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Parent Involvement

Parent involvement is critical to the development of young children in the Elachee Nature Academy program. The Nature Academy parent responsibilities include:

- Attending Parent Orientation, held in late July without students or siblings present, to meet the staff and learn what to expect for the coming year.
- Being available for two (2) parent/teacher conferences (scheduled in October and April).
- Staying up-to-date with class events and schedules by reading e-newsletters and bulletins sent home with your child.
- Participating as volunteers on Elachee Nature Science Center’s annual Flights of Fancy Benefit & Auction host committee and/or as volunteers for Elachee’s seasonal public programs such as Raptor Fest, Trillium Trek Trail Run & Walk and Snake Day.

Elachee Membership

As a bonus, your child’s Elachee Nature Academy tuition includes one (1) Elachee Nature Science Center Annual Membership (per family) effective August 1st of the academic enrollment year. Visit elachee.org/join to see benefits of membership.

Elachee Nature Academy’s Preschool is fully licensed through:

Elachee Nature Academy is accredited by:
Elachee Nature Academy Preschool: Enrollment Application
Academic Year 2020-2021
Complete one (1) application per student.

Complete application in its entirety to expedite consideration for admission to the ENA Preschool. **PLEASE NOTE:** Elachee Nature Academy requires a non-refundable $75 Enrollment Application fee to process this enrollment application. Incomplete applications will not be processed.

STUDENT INFORMATION *Please print legibly and complete in full.*

Student Name: __________________________________________________________

Gender: □ Male □ Female Date of Birth: ____-____-______

My child is applying for: □ 5-Day Program  □ 3-Day Program □ 2-Day Program

My child will also need Extended Care: □ AM (7:15-8:15) □ PM (3:15-5:15) □ Both

FAMILY INFORMATION *Please print legibly and complete in full.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mother’s Name:</th>
<th>Primary Phone:</th>
<th>Secondary Phone:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mother’s Email:</td>
<td>Address:</td>
<td>City</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Father’s Name:</th>
<th>Primary Phone:</th>
<th>Secondary Phone:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Father’s Email:</td>
<td>Address: (If different from above)</td>
<td>City</td>
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SIGNATURE AND PAYMENT

_______________________________________________  ________________
Parent Signature  Date

Make check payable to Elachee Nature Science Center. Or, you may pay in person by credit card (Discover, MasterCard, VISA, American Express) at the offices of Elachee Nature Science Center. Submit completed Enrollment Application and non-refundable $75 application fee payment to the Elachee Nature Academy Director of Schools by mail or in person at the address below.