



Catoctin Sun Nature Preschool

Programming Updates

2021-2022

Welcome! We are so happy to have you join our wonderful, nature-based educational community!

Education and administration of early learning & Kindergarten education during the time of Covid paints a colorful learning curve for us all, as we return for a brand-new school year (our 9th!) at Catoctin Sun. Thank you for your patience, grace, and communication. Our returning families as well as newly-enrolled ones have been amazing to work with as we navigate another year of children attending school – post-pandemic.

Thank you for joining Catoctin Sun along this important educational journey, one based on Harvard brain-based research teachings, and activities “scaffolded” in the style of Lev Vygotsky and other developmental theorists. The building block of our curriculum lies in a well-known guidebook called *The Hundred Languages of Children*, by Reggio Emilia founders and teachers. The Project Approach model, Math Their Way, and classroom centers at Catoctin Sun are lovingly-designed with this Reggio-inspired, rich language approach to learning, and cultivate both receptive and expressive communication in young children.

Our programs aim to offset social-emotional isolation among children and families, while minding the evolving CDC and MSDE regulations; Catoctin Sun Nature Preschool & Kindergarten will adjust school & group protocol under their guidance, as the pandemic recedes. Thank you for assisting us in healthy distancing choices both in and out of school.

This fall, as you make choices to best suit your family, please keep our new updates at hand. Check our private parent Facebook page, and reach out to Ms. Natalie via text message or phone chat at 240-457-3143; you may also send an email via catoctinsunpreschool@gmail.com.

Catoctin Sun is proud of our reputation as an amiable, warm, nurturing place. Join us as we take a literal breath of fresh air as we offer programs to help restore balance in life – both in family, work, and education. Thank you for turning to us both in education, and in fulfilling your child’s social-emotional needs – during this time of healing in our respective communities!

LEARNING PODS at CATOCTIN SUN: IN-PERSON EDUCATION DURING THE TIMES OF COVID

POD LEARNING in the Reggio Emilia-style classroom during the time of Covid will align with Reggio’s mixed-age classroom philosophy. Though we share one classroom, we will rotate indoor play, outdoor explorations, and lunch groupings based on numbers of children enrolled in each pod.

A limited number of spots are available (per age grouping, or “pod”). This will bring balance in Catoctin Sun’s learning activities, through the formation of Reggio Emilia-style age-groupings; your child’s pod (number of children within same age range). For part of the day, we will use this pod model to build friendships, attend to differentiated learning styles, and aid in group distancing as we are guided by CDC & MSDE.

Additionally, prior to entering school each morning, CDC regulations may still require us to take & record temperatures with a no-touch thermometer. Adults (in vehicles & on-campus) may also be requested wear a properly fitted, nose-covering, cloth mask. We ask that you wear your mask anytime you are on Catoctin Sun Property; this includes standing in the grass, lot, or sidewalk, unless otherwise requested by Head of School. *Siblings are not yet allowed to visit inside classroom this year.* If they step outside your vehicle (age 2 +), a mask must be worn. If you need to enter classroom past the door, please wait for an “okay” from the teacher and any PPE needs. Thank you!



ENROLLMENT GUIDELINES for POD GROUPINGS

Please review these enrollment guidelines while choosing the class that best fits the needs of your child:

- ***Little Acorns Pod*** turn 3 years of age by September 1st
- ***Sunflowers Pod*** turn 3.5 years of age by September 1st.
- ***Nature Pre-Kindergarten Pod*** turn 4 years of age by September 1st
- ***Kindergarten Pod*** turn 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ - 5 years of age by September 1st
- ***Maple Tree Pod for Elementary-Aged learners*** turn 5 years of age by September 1st.

**Cat Sun will post a limited number of enrollment slots for each pod, as an effort to keep numbers, activities, and classroom/outdoor rotations in balance.*

Catoctin Sun Program Offerings for 2021-2022

Catoctin Sun is growing! We will host a wider variety of in-person programming this year, including an extended-day option (til 3 pm) AND a new T/TH Maple Tree Pod for Elementary School Learners.

PRESCHOOL PROGRAMMING for YOUNG 3's – LITTLE ACORNS POD

For children in our Little Acorns pod, preschool is largely a social-personal call! We will practice following a routine, self-help skills, and stretch our expressive & receptive language. Little Acorns are introduced to a play-based Project Approach and emergent learning. We explore pre-literacy skills through nature, nursery rhyme cadence and beginning recognition of letters of their first name. Try hands-on math art, and math play, plus science exploration. Teachers will engage children by modeling interactions and turn-taking in a warm, nurturing way.

- **LITTLE ACORNS POD – T TH:** 9:15 – 1:30 pm (\$85/wk; \$340/mo) **FULL**
- **NEW! LITTLE ACORNS EXTENDED DAY – T TH:** 9:15 – 3:00 (\$98/wk; \$392/mo)

PRESCHOOL & Pre-K PROGRAMMING for THREE & FOUR YEAR OLDS

SUNFLOWERS POD

Children in this pod will participate in a project approach/emergent style of hands-on curriculum; It is largely based on *The Hundred Languages of Children*, a primer written by Reggio founders. An optional JOURNAL w/family-based activity can be completed both inside & outside of preschool. This pod will focus on building wonder; multiple developmental domains while exploring the natural world, including pre-literacy, mathematical/cognitive & scientific reasoning. A “KWL chart” will be used to facilitate cumulative learning in child-led/teacher-guided themes. Kindness and compassion toward nature, others, is focal during this classroom year.

- **SUNFLOWERS POD – M W F:** 9:15 -- 1:30 (\$101/wk; \$405/mo) **FULL**
- **3 FULL DAYS POD -- M W F:** 9:15 – 3:00 (\$146/wk; \$580/mo)
- **5 FULL DAYS *PRE-K* – M W F:** 9:15 – 3:00 (\$225/wk; \$880/mo)

NATURE PRE-KINDY POD for 4 year-olds

This new program is full of rich-language, differentiated, hands-on learning. It will utilize JOURNALS while focusing on open-ended exploratories in nature, coupled with weekly pre-writing, literacy, mathematical & scientific reasoning activities. An introduction to social studies will be included, and the use of a KWL chart, Venn Diagram, and other charts of measurement. Nature Pre-Kindy pod will receive 1:1 guidance & milestone assessment by a degreed teacher. *Math Their Way* is our chosen curriculum. Check out our materials on the classroom shelf! Our Nature Pre-Kindy pod is for children whose families choose to delay Kindergarten for 2020-2021 school year.

- **M T W Th F** 9:15 – 3:00 (\$229/week; \$916/mo)
- **T TH** 9:15—3:00 (\$98/wk; \$392/mo)

MAPLE TREE POD (LOWER ELEMENTARY LEARNERS 1st-3rdgrades)

Catoctin Sun's Maple Tree pod of elementary learners will attend two days per week, to offset the isolation of full-time virtual learning at home. Maple Tree pod will provide a social-emotional booster, breaks, snack, fresh-air, and 1:1 teacher time. This program will monitor & check-in with your child as they work on virtual classroom meetings, projects, and schoolwork. Social-distancing measures and indoor mask-wearing will be placed, depending upon MSDE protocol for 2022. Additional reading material and enrichments are available for kids who finish classwork.

NEED UNINTERRUPTED WORK-TIME?

This program was designed for parents needing blocks of uninterrupted time to work. It will be overseen by classroom teachers with administrative and educational experience. The Maple Tree Pod is for independent, virtual learners who have a good sense of how to navigate online courses.

- **T TH or M W:** 9:00 – 3:00 (\$125/wk - \$500/mo); add +1 or more sibling for \$110/wk - \$440/mo)

~This class has extremely limited enrollment availability. Siblings are encouraged to attend together.

Maple Tree Pod Learners will bring their electronics, including Chromebook/charger, headphones, and wireless hot spot. Siblings may share a hotspot.

The characteristics of a student attending our Maple Tree pod include:

- Demonstrate effort and ability to accomplish daily assignments*
- Participation in on-line class meetings*
- Practicing the* Six Pillars of Character*, according to the Character Counts program - "TRRFCC": Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring and Citizenship.*

Catoctin Sun Nature Preschool & Kindergarten

2 CHAPEL PLACE, WALKERSVILLE
240-457-3143

APPLICATION FORM • 2021-2022 ENROLLMENT AGREEMENT

CHILD'S NAME

CHILD'S AGE

____/____/____
DATE OF BIRTH

GENDER

- Currently Enrolled Student*
- Sibling of Current or Alumni Student*
- New Applicant*

FAMILY INFORMATION

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP

ADDITIONAL PARENT/GUARDIAN ADDRESS *(if different than above)*

(____)_____
HOME PHONE

(____)_____
PRIMARY CONTACT PHONE

1) Parent/Guardian Name

2) Parent/Guardian Name

OCCUPATION & EMPLOYER ADDRESS

OCCUPATION & EMPLOYER ADDRESS

(____)_____
CELL

(____)_____
CELL

PRIMARY EMAIL

PRIMARY EMAIL

Enrollment Procedures

**Welcome! To hold your spot, please return Application Form & Enrollment Contract along with the non-refundable \$145 Registration/Enrollment fee, and \$45 Materials Fee* and 1st & last month's tuition (5/22) deposit checks. Catoctin Sun Nature Preschool applications are reviewed in the order they are received; in compliance w/ MSDE regulations, incomplete applications cannot be considered. This form is considered a contract, and in good faith, fills one spot and provides our school with consistent financial support for the entire school year.*

Please carefully read the Enrollment Contract and initial each section, below:

- Upon registration, a \$145 enrollment fee plus a materials fee of \$45.00 is required. This check will be separate from the preschool deposit, detailed below.
- I understand Catoctin Sun will accept & hold my child's spot with a preschool deposit for the 2021-2022 preschool year, in the form of FIRST and LAST month's tuition via two separate checks, dated September 2021 & May 2022. This spot is held in good faith from the date of signing of this agreement, through May 2022. I understand my responsibility to pay tuition for the entire school year, Sept 2021-May 2022 (Kindergarten, through June 2022).
- I understand the FIRST month's check will be deposited as September tuition on Wed, June 2, 2021. LAST month's check (May or June) will continue to be held for the duration of the school year, and deposited as May tuition on Friday, April 22nd, 2022.
- If I need to leave the program for any reason, I understand the LAST month's tuition (5/22 -PRESCH or 6/22 -K) will be deposited unless I, parent/guardian, provide **90 days verbal AND written intention (from 6/02/21 AND/OR anticipated last month's tuition due-date)** to vacate my spot in Catoctin Sun's preschool program. BOTH must be submitted. This 90-day notice does not refund any previously-paid tuition check or fee, or partially-attended months or weeks of school. Tuition is not refunded. Additionally, a **30-day notice** is required of Maple Tree pod families.
- I understand preschool fees and tuition will not be returned under any circumstance or time frame. This includes and is not limited: to absence/not attending school, reduced attendance at Catoctin Sun, being accepted by lottery into a charter school, or waitlist acceptance from another educational institution or homeschool decision.
- If Catoctin Sun closes greater than 5 days per class/per preschool year, I understand that extended school day hours or additional days may be posted to compensate for closure beyond 5 days. (NOTE: if registering for Maple Leaf Learners pod, FCPS will guide child's calendar year by default).
- I understand my 2021-2022 spot may be forfeited if Catoctin Sun Nature Preschool & Kindergarten does not receive this registration contract, tuition, or other enrollment fee(s) or agreement.
- In the event of a stay-at-home order or school decision due to pandemic, Catoctin Sun may temporarily switch into a virtual model. Requests to be released from this school contract due to job-loss or trauma may be considered, if submitted verbally AND in writing to the Head of School. Proof of hardship will be reviewed by Head of School on a limited, case-by-case basis, during pandemic. I will try to abide by the 90 day intention form to allow Catoctin Sun to fill my child's vacancy.
- I agree to pay tuition on the due date: ****5 days prior to the last business day of the month**** (utilize PayPal, Venmo, check, cash, or bank/money order). Late tuition past this date is \$10/day.
- A tuition payment schedule may be provided upon request at the time of registration, with any modified dates updated via Parent Page (Facebook), in writing. **Late tuition fees of \$10/day may be assessed and charged per discretion of the Head of School.**

- I agree to abide by the rules detailed in the Parent Handbook, and review updated versions of the Parent Handbook online, prior to attending.
- I will attend Catoctin Sun’s Preschool Orientation in August 2021, unless I have already attended Orientation in a past school year. I agree to comply with & submit all MSDE and Catoctin Sun required paperwork *prior to* my child’s attendance at Catoctin Sun.
- During pandemic, I will make efforts to social-distance myself 6-10 feet away from other adults and children while on school grounds, parking lot, or neighboring church lot; I will support mask-wearing protocol inside my vehicle (during any arrival/temperature checks) and while on school grounds. I understand that my child may be excused from the program if I do not adhere to the safety protocol. I understand that my child may be asked to wear a mask at preschool.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read, agree, and fully understand this registration & enrollment contract:

Signature

Date

Signature

Date

PLEASE TELL US HOW YOU LEARNED ABOUT CATOCTIN SUN NATURE PRESCHOOL:

Friend: _____ Facebook: _____ Craigslist: _____ Sign: _____ Instagram: _____

Other: _____

We are excited to have you join us - welcome to Catoctin Sun!

Kindly Note:

OUR *BUSINESS* MAILING ADDRESS HAS CHANGED: 4701 Sangamore Road, Suite 100N #2096, Bethesda, MD 20816

School Location:

2 Chapel Place • Walkersville, MD 21793 • School Cellular: 240-457-3143

Any mail sent to the school location will be returned. Thank you for noting!

