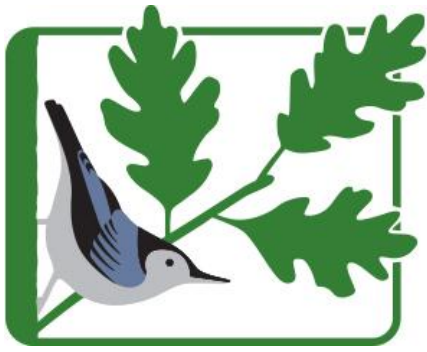




**Briar Bush**  
NATURE CENTER

## Nature Pioneers

## Policies and Procedures

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# Program, Registration, and General Policies

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## **Program**

Nature Pioneers is a drop-off program for participants ages 4-6. Children are invited to join us on their own for age-appropriate activities, walks, animal encounters, crafts, games, and more!

Each week features a new nature-themed lesson. Children cannot participate in both Magic Mornings and Nature Pioneers in the same week as the activities are similar.

Nature Pioneers is led by one educator with a maximum of six participants per program session.

## **Registration**

Registration for Nature Pioneers is required in order to participate. Registration is completed on a per-session basis; each session date must be selected individually.

Registration for each session closes at 12:00pm on the Monday prior to the session date.

Although program sessions may be visible on the Session Events page in the registration system, those sessions may be at full capacity. When adding sessions to the participant's schedule, take notice of whether you have been registered or waitlisted.

- If a session is full, we encourage joining the waitlist as advance cancellations may occur.
- There is no cost to be added to the waitlist and you are under no obligation to register for waitlisted sessions if they become available.

## **Cancellation Policy**

Registration fees for Nature Pioneers are non-refundable. If you are unable to attend the program, you may transfer to another date if you contact us at least two business days prior to the program date. To transfer, email Melissa Eldridge at [melissa@briarbush.org](mailto:melissa@briarbush.org).

## **Abington Township Photo Policy**

Briar Bush Nature Center is part of Abington Township Parks and Recreation Department. On occasion, we may take photos or video of individuals enrolled in programs or using parks facilities. Please be aware that these images are for Township use and may be used in future promotional materials.

# Health and Safety Policies

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## **Participant Autonomy / Assistance Requirements**

In order to participate in drop-off programs:

- All participants must be able to communicate their needs to staff.
- All participants must be potty-trained and capable of using the restroom on their own.
  - If a participant has a minor bathroom-related accident and needs assistance with changing, two staff members may assist the participant.
  - If the participant has a major bathroom-related accident, parents/guardians will be contacted to assist the participant with clean-up and changing.
- All participants must be able to change themselves with minimal assistance.
  - If a participant needs assistance with changing, two staff members may assist the participant.

## **Health / Safety Concerns and Considerations**

The health and safety of our participants is our top priority.

- Medical and Pick-Up Consent Form
  - A [Medical and Pick-Up Consent Form](#) must be completed for each participant before the program date.
    - This form is valid from June through to the following May.
    - You will need to log in to the registration system, complete the form, click 'Continue,' click 'Checkout,' then click 'Complete Order' in order for the form to be submitted. You will receive a confirmation email of the submission.
    - Participants without a completed form are not permitted to attend the program.
    - If there are changes to the medical form, please contact Melissa Eldridge, Program and Summer Camp Director, at [melissa@briarbush.org](mailto:melissa@briarbush.org).
  - Medical Conditions
    - If you list a medical condition on the medical form, we ask that you provide as much detail as possible.
    - If your child is being treated for a condition that is currently managed by a medical professional, you must submit an action plan provided by the medical staff.
    - If your child has food/environmental allergies, please note that Briar Bush Nature Center is a public facility and, as a result, not allergen-free.

- Medications
  - Dispense any required medications to your child before the session begins.
  - If your child is required to take medication during the session, indicate your child's medications on the medical form. Your child must be able to self-administer medication.
- Accommodations
  - At Briar Bush Nature Center, we believe nature is for everyone. If your child requires accommodations while participating in the program, describe those accommodations on the medical form.
  - Please note that while our staff participates in trainings relating to various cognitive and behavioral conditions/disabilities, staff members are not behavioral intervention professionals and may not have the capacity for all special medical, behavioral, or social support.
  - Please reach out with any questions regarding support for your child.
- Emergencies
  - Parents/guardians must be reachable by phone during the session.
  - Please add Briar Bush Nature Center (215-887-6603) to your contacts.
- Poison Ivy/Ticks
  - While exploring in nature, participants may encounter poison ivy and/or ticks. Our staff is knowledgeable in locating both hazards and treating them.
  - Parents/guardians are encouraged to check participants for ticks at home.
- Severe Weather
  - The sessions take place indoors and outdoors, rain or shine, for varying durations of time. Dress appropriately for the weather. You will be contacted in the case of cancellation due to extreme weather.

### **Program Packing List**

Participants must be appropriately dressed for the program.

- Participants must dress for outdoor play in all types of weather.
- Participants must wear comfortable clothing and closed-toed shoes/sandals. Flip-flops and other open-toed shoes are not permitted due to safety concerns.

Participants must arrive with a backpack complete with:

- a filled, reusable water bottle
- full change of clothes (shirt, pants, underwear, socks, shoes) as participants may get extremely wet/dirty during activities

Personal items such as games, toys, electronics, etc. must be left at home.

# Behavior/Disciplinary Policies and Procedures

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## **Behavior Expectations / Rules**

Staff and participants deserve a safe and enjoyable program experience. Participants are expected to exhibit appropriate behavior and follow the program rules, such as respect yourself, others, nature, and property; listen to your leader and follow directions; and stay with your group.

## **Accommodations / Support**

Briar Bush Nature Center offers inclusive programming in which staff strives to accommodate participants and set them up for success. However, we may not have the capacity for all special medical, behavioral, or social support. If your child has one-on-one support in the classroom, we encourage that the support continues during programming. Please reach out with questions regarding support for your child.

## **Disciplinary Procedures**

Staff will provide positive reinforcement for appropriate behaviors such as granting verbal praise/recognition, offering small rewards such as high-fives or stickers, awarding special privileges, etc.

Examples of inappropriate behaviors are listed below, but this is not an extensive list.

- **Level 1:** Disruptive behaviors
  - Offenses: Interrupting the educator, disrupting activities, ignoring directions, etc.
- **Level 2:** Inappropriate behaviors
  - Offenses: Disrespect toward staff/volunteers/participants/animals, defiance/non-compliance toward staff/rules/regulations, refusal to follow directions/group, inappropriate gestures/language, misuse of property, etc.
- **Level 3:** Aggressive/threatening behaviors that endanger the wellbeing of self, staff/volunteers, participants, and/or animals
  - Offenses: Hitting, kicking, shoving, pushing, bullying, threatening language, damaging property, etc.

Depending on the repetition or severity of a behavior, a particular step or steps may be skipped. Removal from the program is a possibility depending on the severity or continuation of inappropriate behavior. Program fees are non-refundable if a child is removed.

|                | <b>1<sup>st</sup> Offense</b>                                                                 | <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Offense</b>                                                                                                          | <b>3<sup>rd</sup> Offense</b>                                                                                                 | <b>4<sup>th</sup> Offense +</b>                                                 |
|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Level 1</b> | Redirection<br><br>Verbal Warning                                                             | Verbal Warning                                                                                                                         | Loss of Privilege /<br>Removal from<br>Activity<br><br>Notice to<br>Parents/Guardians                                         | Discussion with<br>Program Director<br><br>Discussion with<br>Parents/Guardians |
| <b>Level 2</b> | Verbal Warning                                                                                | Loss of Privilege /<br>Removal from<br>Activity<br><br>Discussion with<br>Program Director<br><br>Discussion with<br>Parents/Guardians | Discussion with<br>Parents/Guardians<br><br>Removal from<br>Program Session /<br>Removal Whole<br>Program<br>(non-refundable) |                                                                                 |
| <b>Level 3</b> | Discussion with<br>Parents/Guardians<br><br>Removal from Whole<br>Program<br>(non-refundable) |                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                               |                                                                                 |

The disciplinary procedures are described below.

- **Redirection**

- The educator will attempt to redirect the participant and inappropriate behavior by conducting verbal or non-verbal phrases/gestures, standing near off-task participant, asking self-correcting questions, involving/engaging off-task participant in an activity, etc.

- **Verbal Warning**

- The educator will acknowledge the inappropriate behavior and demand that it stops immediately. The educator will describe the appropriate behavior that is expected

and inform the participant that loss of privilege or removal from activity will occur if the inappropriate behavior continues.

- **Loss of Privilege / Removal from Activity / Notice to Parents/Guardians**

- If the inappropriate behavior continues, the educator will remove a privilege or remove the participant from an activity.
  - Loss of Privilege may include the inability to use toys, games, or props; sitting next to a friend; etc.
  - Removal from Activity may include the inability to participate in an upcoming lesson, game, or activity.
- The educator will record the incident and action taken. The educator and Program/Summer Camp Director will inform parents/guardians of the incident.

- **Loss of Privilege / Removal from Activity / Discussion with Parents/Guardians**

- If the inappropriate behavior continues, the educator and Program/Summer Camp Director will discuss the behavior with parents/guardians as well as the next steps moving forward.
- The educator and Program/Summer Camp Director will record the incident and action taken.

- **Removal from Program Session / Removal from Program**

- A Level 3 Offense or continued inappropriate behavior may result in Removal from the Program Session or Removal from Program as a whole.
- The Program and Summer Camp Director will discuss the behavior with parents/guardians as well as the next steps moving forward.
- Refunds are not issued after Removal from Program Session or Removal from Program.