

2017 Camp Parent Handbook



Schoolhouse of Wonder creates kind, curious, and confident kids through nature-based, outdoor adventures.

Durham Location

West Point on the Eno Park
5101-B N. Roxboro St.
Durham, NC 27704

Wake Location

Umstead State Park
I-40 Reedy Creek Entrance
1800 N. Harrison Ave.
Cary, NC 27513

Wake Location

Harris Lake County Park
2112 County Park Dr.
New Hill, NC 27562

Orange Location

Brumley Forest Nature Preserve
3223 New Hope Church Rd
Chapel Hill, NC 27514



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A Letter to Our Parents

We hope you're looking forward to the 2017 camp season as much as we are.

Over the past 28 years, one key to Schoolhouse of Wonder's success is the significant investment we make in earning and maintaining the trust of parents and campers alike. Facilitating fun, outdoor adventures in a physically and emotionally safe environment is just the beginning.

The Schoolhouse staff is committed to partnering with you to maintain open lines of communication and to engage your child as an individual with unique needs and goals.

This Parent Handbook includes information that will help us build that partnership and ensure weeks full of fun and wonderful memories.

Please read it carefully and let us know if you have questions or need any additional information.

Thank you for allowing us to be a part of your child's outdoor adventures.



Wendy Tonker, MPA
Executive Director





Schoolhouse of Wonder

Mission and Values

Overview

Schoolhouse of Wonder is a place where everyone can play, learn, and grow toward being their best selves. Our team of driven and talented mentors love learning together with children ages 3-17 through our outdoor camps, field trips, and leadership training.

Mission

Schoolhouse of Wonder creates kind, curious, and confident kids through nature-based, outdoor adventures.

Values

- We model and teach self awareness and empathy
- We celebrate individuality; Different is just different
- Everyone deserves to be witnessed, heard, and respected
- In nature, we're all students
- Life should be filled with adventures and a sense of wonder
- We send every kid home dirty, tired, and happy



Camp Information

Camp Hours

9:00a - 5:00p

Drop Off

8:15a - 9:00a

Pick Up

5-7 year olds:

3:00p - 3:30p

8-12 year olds:

5:00p - 5:30p

Aftercare Pick Up

5-7 year olds

5:00p - 5:30p

Early Pick Up

8-12 year olds:

3:00p - 3:30p

**advanced notice required*



Family Circle

- Please join us on the last day of camp for Family Circle.
 - For 5-7 year olds: Friday at 2:45p
 - For 5-7 year olds in aftercare: Friday at 4:45p
 - For 8-12 year olds: Friday at 4:45p
- You are invited to bring a healthy snack to share.
- Please avoid common allergens (e.g. nuts)



Camp Store

- Immediately following the Family Circle, parents and campers are encouraged to visit our [Camp Store](#).
- All proceeds directly support Schoolhouse programs.
- Items for sale include Schoolhouse t-shirts, hats, steel striker kits, pocket knives, water bottles, buttons, necklaces and more.



Keeping You In The Loop

A successful camp experience requires an active partnership between our staff, your child, and you, the parent.

To help you know how much fun we're having in each camp:

- We routinely post pictures and highlights on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).
- You must grant Photo Permission for pictures of your child to be included. Images of your child will not include their name. Please update information in your account according to your wishes.
- We update the Schoolhouse [Blog](#) with Conversation Starters that can help you learn more about your child's experiences and a photo gallery of the full adventure (after each week of camp).



What to Bring to Camp

Gear

- Water bottle (16 oz. or larger)
- Change of clothes
(Comfortable shoes that can get dirty)
- Water gear
(swimsuit, water shoes, small towel)
- Sunscreen
(spray-on is NOT recommended)
- Insect repellent
- Pocket knife with **locking blade** 3" or shorter.
Pocket knives are optional for 8-12 year olds and prohibited for 5-7 year olds.



Tips from the Pros

- **Weight:** Remember your child will be carrying his or her backpack for some or most of the day! Extra weight in a backpack can create an additional challenge.
- **Backpacks:** Many school backpacks are fine for our programs. Please don't send backpacks with string or rope straps. A comfortable backpack (size and style) will make for a better day.
- **Trash:** Pack an extra plastic zip top bag for lunch trash. This can keep messy or unfinished food from becoming an unwelcome surprise for you later (lookin' at you, Go-Gurt).
- **Valuables:** Backpacks and the things inside them can get wet, muddy, sat on, or dropped. Please don't send anything that is valuable, sentimental, or otherwise not appropriate to get covered in mud.
- **Footwear:** Many kids like wearing their water shoes (with or without socks) all day if they're comfortable for walking. If they don't wear water shoes, please send some shoes that can get wet.
- **Water Gear:** Some kids arrive in water gear and change into dry clothes after water time.

Lunches

Please send a packed lunch with your camper each day that *does not* require refrigeration or heating. Campers often eat more at camp than at school. Please pack a little extra food.



Snacks

Please send two snacks each day.



What to Leave at Home

- Electronics
- Sports or Gaming Equipment
- Toys
- Money
- Trading Cards
- Valuables

Cell Phones:

Cell phones, like other electronics, are not allowed at camp. This includes watches or any other device capable of making a call.

If you need to reach your camper please call the number below:

- In **Durham**, please call the Schoolhouse office at (919) 477-2116.
- In **Wake**, please call the Site Manager at (919) 717-0913.
- In **Orange**, please call the Site Manager at (919) 695-2178.

Camp Policies



Camper Safety

Physical and emotional safety is always our first priority.

We ensure quality programs through:

- Competitive hiring practices that result in a dedicated, responsible, and caring team of mentors.
- Year-round training including First Aid/CPR and emergency response.
- Low camper-to-staff ratios.
- Educating campers about common hazards in the camp environment (e.g. *poison ivy, bees, snakes, ticks*).
- An organizational emphasis on engagement that places our experienced staff right next to your child while they explore, learn, and grow.
- All staff must pass a background check.

Water Safety

Schoolhouse of Wonder does not allow swimming; however, campers frequently have an opportunity to wade in the river and creeks (weather permitting). Firm, clear boundaries and water safety rules will be explained to campers at the outset of water time each day.

While wading, campers will always:

- Be in full sight of counselors.
- Be in water that is not deeper than their navel.
- Wear shoes.

Durham Location: *Campers in the 8-12 year old camps occasionally have the opportunity to float in deeper water. A securely fastened Personal Flotation Device (life jacket) must be worn any time a camper is in water above their navel.*

“It is evident how much thought and preparation goes into everything at camp. I am struck by how quickly the counselors knew our daughter’s name, and how engaged and responsive they are to her.”

-Camp Parent

Behavior Management and Discipline

Our primary goal is to maintain a physically, emotionally, and intellectually safe environment for all participants. Our role in any behavior management situation is to promote the camper's safety, comfort, and growth. We strive to prevent problematic behaviors, and we avoid punishment as it removes a growth opportunity. Being proactive and preventative, using proximity and positive messages, and giving specific feedback are constant themes throughout staff training and are easily seen in our daily interactions with children. We also try to identify what may be driving the behaviors. Is the camper hungry? Angry? Lonely? Tired?

Disrespectful behavior is often a precursor to unsafe behavior. To keep children safe, we strive to identify and redirect disrespectful behavior as it occurs.

When redirection is unsuccessful or when instances of unsafe conduct occur, we follow these general steps:

1. Reconnect with the camper - stop talking and listen, communicate calm, validate their feelings, reflect what we hear. We will reiterate or clarify expectations, making sure they understand, and let them know next steps.

2. The camper will be given a clear verbal warning.
3. Staff will remove the camper from the group to have a longer conversation and engage the camper with leading questions that get them to think about what's going on. Tell me what happened? What do you think should happen now? Throughout, we will maintain connection with the camper - kneeling down rather than standing over them, making physical contact if it's calming to the camper.
4. If the unacceptable behavior continues, or if the camper threatens the emotional or physical safety of anyone else, our staff will contact you (the parent/guardian) to build an agreed upon action plan.

Any instance of direct physical, emotional, or sexual harm will result in the immediate removal of the camper from the group and a call home. Such instances could result in a camp suspension of one to five days (depending on severity) or expulsion from camp. No refund will be given in such cases.

Drop Off and Pick Up

All campers must be signed in and out of camp.

Drop off is between 8:15a and 9:00a. All camp groups leave the drop off area promptly at 9:00a. Sending staff to meet late campers creates a real challenge and often delays the entire group.

Regular pick up for 5-7 year olds is between 3:00p and 3:30p. Pick up for 5-7 year olds in Aftercare and 8-12 year olds is between 5:00p and 5:30p. With advanced notice, any child can be picked up at the 3:00p to 3:30p time. Alternate pick ups outside of that time require site manager approval.

Durham Location: Drop off and pick up are at the main parking lot on the left after you turn into the park. If you arrive after 9:00a, please bring your child to the office, located in the basement of the Mangum House, and we will connect them to the group: (919) 477-2116.

Wake Location: Umstead: Drop off and pick up are

at the bulletin board near the bathrooms at the main parking lot of the I-40 Reedy Creek entrance. If you arrive after 9:00a, please call the Wake County Site Manager to make arrangements: (919) 717-0913.

Wake Location: Harris Lake: Drop off and pick up are at the Disc Golf/Fishing Pond gravel parking lot, which is located at the third road on your right when entering Harris Lake County Park. If you arrive after 9:00a, please call the Wake County Site Manager to make arrangements: (919) 717-0913.

Orange Location: Drop off and pick up are at the end of the private drive. Please obey parking signs. If you arrive after 9:00a, please call the Orange County Site Manager to make arrangements: (919) 695-2178.

Note: Schoolhouse of Wonder requires anyone picking up a child to be listed in advance, preferably through your online account.



Rainy Days

Rainy days happen, and that's not a bad thing! If the rain isn't too hard, and it isn't too cold, we'll do our best to keep hiking, playing, exploring, and creating. Please help your camper come to camp prepared to be outside, even on a rainy day. If needed, all of our sites have access to shelter to get out of the rain, storms, or wind. It is very unusual for us to cancel camp for the weather, but does happen.

When it is raining at Drop Off or Pick Up, there may be alternative procedures or locations.

Durham Location

If weather is bad (rain or thunderstorms) during drop off/pick up times, we will hold drop off/pick up at one or both of the covered picnic shelters at West Point on the Eno City Park. We will do our best to alert parents ahead of time to any drop off/pick up changes.

Wake Location: Harris Lake

In the event of rain, drop off and pick up will be located in the park's day use area at the Loblolly shelter.

Wake Location: Umstead

In the event of rain, drop off and pick up will be located at Shelter #2 directly across the parking lot from the bulletin board and bathrooms.

Orange Location

The Drop Off and Pick Up location doesn't change on rainy days.

Food Sharing

Food sharing during camp (e.g. snack and lunch) is prohibited, except by siblings. Parents/guardians determine if their camper(s) are allowed to share food during Family Circle.



Prescription and Nonprescription Medicines

Schoolhouse employees may only administer medication to a camper with written authorization from a parent or guardian in the Medication Log.

- Schoolhouse employees may only administer medication to a camper with written authorization from you (a parent or guardian).
- Campers are not allowed to deliver medications. Please register all medications, prescription and non-prescription, directly with a counselor during check in.
- We will only check in the exact number of doses the camper will receive during the week.
- At least one dose of medication must be administered at home before any medication can be administered at camp.

• Prescription medications must be in the original container bearing a pharmacy prescription label that displays:

- *Patient name*
 - *Prescribing physician name*
 - *Appropriate prescription numbers*
 - *Directions for use (dosage, frequency, route of administration)*
 - *Date filled*
 - *Expiration date*
- Non-prescription medication must also be provided in the original container that includes directions for use. Medication will only be administered in accordance with the written directions.

Sunscreen and Insect Repellent

Please apply sunscreen and insect repellent to your camper at the beginning of the day. Although not strictly required, it is very strongly suggested. Schoolhouse staff will supervise and assist campers in re-applying their sunscreen and insect repellent before water time and/or

as needed throughout the day. The sharing of sunscreen and insect repellent is prohibited, except by siblings. Campers may not apply sunscreen or insect repellent to each other.

Ticks

We check campers' arms and legs for ticks throughout the day, but these critters are sneaky. We encourage you to:

- Change your camper's clothes at the end of the day.

- Perform a thorough, full-body tick check.
- Shower or bathe your camper each evening.

For further information about ticks and tick-borne diseases, please check the link below:

<http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/ent/notes/Urban/ticks.htm>



Fall Camps

Fall in North Carolina is many people's favorite season, and it's easy to see why. Cooler, comfortable temperatures and changing leaves create a fantastic backdrop for our camps. This is another season that can have a wide variety of weather with temperatures varying as much as 30 degrees. We encourage campers to come to camp well prepared for a variety of conditions.

Fall Tips:

- A change of clothes is a great idea for fall camp. If your camper gets damp, it can be a huge boost to change into dry clothes.
- Please send sunscreen and insect repellent. Sunburns are still possible on cool or cloudy days.
- We hope that water time is part of every fall camp day (though the weather doesn't always cooperate). Please come prepared for water time every day, including shoes that can be worn in the creeks and water clothes.
- Fall camps usually have just one group of 5-12 year olds.
- The regular pick up window for fall camps is 5:00p-5:30p. Early pick-ups between 3:00p-3:30p are an option with advance notice.
- We'll hold a single family circle on the last afternoon of camp at 4:45p, weather permitting.
- *Note: If attending a Wake camp, please double check the location as both Umstead and Harris Lake are locations for our fall camps.*

Fall Camp Checklist

- Lunch
- Two snacks (morning/afternoon)
- Water bottle (16 oz. or larger)
- Water shoes
- Water clothes
- Small towel
- Raincoat or warm jacket if appropriate
- Change of (warm) clothes
- Appropriate footwear for running, hiking, getting dirty (comfortable shoes, boots, extra shoes, etc.)
- Sunscreen (spray-on NOT recommended)
- Insect Repellent

Optional Items:

- Pocket knife (locking blade 3" or shorter. 8-12 year olds only)
- Extra socks
- Any needed medications (see medication policy)

Please leave toys, games, electronics, money, and other valuables at home.



Financial Assistance

Every child deserves the chance to explore and play in nature, no matter what their circumstances may be. Schoolhouse camps provide opportunities to break down all sorts of barriers and build bridges of understanding.

Generous donors to Schoolhouse's scholarship fund allow kids, who might not otherwise have the opportunity, to participate in our award-winning, nature-based programs.

With your support, we can help campers from all walks of life:

- Make new friends and get to know kids different from them.
- Have fun outdoor adventures.
- Learn about nature and make connections with the world around them.
- Do things they were afraid to do.
- Feel more kind, curious, and confident.

Apply for a Scholarship: Need-based partial and full scholarships are available as funding allows and are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. To apply, please download, complete and return an application.

The application can be found on our website:

<https://schoolhouseofwonder.org/scholarships/>

Make a Tax Deductible Donation to the Scholarship Fund.

Let's work together to make camp at Schoolhouse an equal opportunity life-changer for any child who wants to participate!

Please make a one-time or recurring monthly donation today on our secure website: <https://info.schoolhouseofwonder.org/Donations/>

Schoolhouse of Wonder is an IRS designated 501(c)3 non-profit corporation.

Our Federal Tax ID number is 56-1670472. Our North Carolina Solicitation License Number is SL005996.

"My daughter was grieving and going through a tough time, and this camp was therapy for her. It gave her comfort and joy and helped her so much; it was an experience we would never be able to afford."

**-Camp Parent,
scholarship recipient**



OUR CAMP GUARANTEE:

Dirty, Tired, Happy or Your Money Back

We will return your child dirty, tired, and happy - or we will refund your child's remaining camp tuition.

If for ANY reason your child decides that camp is not for them and chooses to leave camp before the end of the week, we'll refund camp tuition for the remaining days.

Our [Dirty, Tired, Happy Guarantee](#) provides a prorated tuition refund to any child departing before to the conclusion of his or her registered camp, with the exception of those who have been asked not to return for inappropriate behavior. We will take your tuition payment, divide by five for a daily rate, multiply by the number of days your child will not be attending, and process a refund to the credit card with which you paid for camp. And that's a promise.

To obtain a refund under our Dirty, Tired and Happy Guarantee, all you have to do is send us a written request within a week stating that your child did not enjoy camp and that you would like a refund. It's that simple. Guaranteed.

Earning Your Trust

Our camps present a unique opportunity for children to grow and learn. While we're confident and proud of our camps, we realize that no one community is a perfect fit for every child. So we offer you our Dirty, Tired, Happy Guarantee to build trust. We don't know a better way to demonstrate the confidence we have in our programs than by putting our money where our mouth is. We look forward seeing you and your kids soon.