



The Children's Farm

Parent Handbook

2026-27

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Website:

www.childrensfarm.org

School Mailing Address:

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Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF)

Licensing: 651-539-8300

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School Calendar 2026-2027

Sept. 8 & 9	Parent/ Child School Day - Shorter Classes
Sept. 10 & 11	<i>First Day of Regular Classes</i>
Sept. 15	Parent only Orientation Night 6-7;30
Oct. 15 & 16	Fall Break, No Classes
Oct. TBD	Parents only - Parent night 7-8:30
Nov. 23 & 24	Soup Day – 1 adult visit
Nov. 25, 26, 27	Holiday, No Classes
Dec. 8 & 10 (t/th)	Parent Conferences, <u>class in session</u>
Dec. 14 & 16 (mwf)	Parent Conferences, <u>class in session</u>
Dec.23-Jan. 1	Winter Break, No Classes
Jan. 4 & 5	Classes resume
Jan. 18	Holiday, No Classes
Feb. 15	Holiday, No Classes
March 8-12	Spring Break, No Classes
March 26	Holiday, No classes
May 25 & 26	Last Day of classes
May 27 & 28	Family Picnics: 10:30-1:00-AM & PM

Operating Procedures

School at The Children's Farm is licensed by the state of Minnesota to serve preschool-aged children in half-day classes.

Hours of Operation:

9-11:30 AM

12:15-2:45 PM

Classes:

Tuesday-Thursday Mornings

Tuesday-Thursday Afternoons

Monday-Wednesday-Friday Mornings

Monday-Wednesday-Friday Afternoons

Ages:

- Children aged three and four on September 1st. Threes, fours, and fives are in each group (multi-age).

There is one classroom, with two certified teachers or a teacher and an assistant teacher for each group. There are no more than 20 children in each group.

The Children's Farm is a non-profit tax-exempt corporation. It admits students of any race, color and national or ethnic origin. Children with disabilities are welcome.

Daily Schedule

Due to the outdoor nature of the program at the Children's Farm School, days vary with respect to indoor and outdoor time. Teachers are encouraged to be flexible in planning to meet both the needs of the individuals and of the group.

Each day will include the following components:

Group Time(s):

- Snack
- Singing or Music Activity
- Story or All-Group Language Experience

Free Play Time

- At least one period of one hour in length, indoors or outdoors
- May involve the entire class or a smaller group of ½ the class size.

Small Group Interaction/ Teacher Guided

One to One Teacher-Child Activities

- As needed.
- At least one per child per day

Weekly calendars are planned for each class and are posted in the office. Past years' calendars are used in planning, but each teacher is encouraged to observe and to plan based on the ongoing needs of each group and the individuals in that group. The director reviews and discusses the plans with the teachers on a weekly, and often daily, basis. Evaluation is an ongoing part of planning.

Teachers plan for the following each day:

- Outdoor time (weather dictated)
- Activities providing large muscle and small muscle development.
- Activities for work with paper, crayon, markers, pencils, as a choice
- Individual choices for structured and fluid activities
- Individual choices of quiet and active places

Each day also includes:

- Teacher-directed activities
- Child-initiated activities
- Music activities: group or individual
- Something to take home (as a choice)
- Something to do with a friend or group of friends.
- Something to do with or for an animal.
- Something to be responsible for (task, helping job)
- Something to do for yourself.
- Something to do for someone else.

Philosophy and Methods

The overall goal of the Children's Farm School is to foster the child's intellectual, social, physical, and emotional growth, using farm animals, the gardens and nature as the learning environment.

- ❖ A belief that optimal learning takes place when a child has a sense of self-worth and self-confidence.

“‘A Congruent’ teacher must have unconditional positive regard and empathy for the child and the child must be aware of the congruency, positive regard, and empathy.” Carl Rogers

Methods involve activities designed to foster positive self-concept, sense of the child's uniqueness as an individual, and a respect for the rights of others.

- ❖ A belief in the importance of early learning, and in the value of active learning with real life experiences.

“When I hear, I forget; when I see, I remember;
when I do, I learn.” Chinese Proverb

“All knowledge of reality starts from experience and ends in it.”
Albert Einstein

Methods involve using the farm, animals, garden, and nature as the learning environment. Real life experiences of cooking, building, or gardening are preferred over toys, puzzles or paste, although these are also present. Natural materials of clay, sand, water, and wood are used frequently. Active involvement of touching and manipulating is encouraged.

- ❖ An underlying belief in the interrelation of all living things encourages respect for plants, animals, and other people.

“If nature appreciation can be developed in a student early enough...perhaps the love of the land will stay with them as adults and so influence their behavior.” Mary Alice White

Methods involve activities which are naturally interesting to young children and which demand cooperation and pro-social behavior. Care of animals, nature projects, nature hikes, exploring, singing and dancing, pony rides, natural art activities offer untold opportunities to work and play together naturally.

- ❖ A belief that learning attitudes of curiosity, wonder, initiative, and problem solving are the most important foundation for later learning.

“Her gift to each child in the world (should be) a sense of wonder so indestructible that it would last throughout life, as an unfailing antidote against boredom and disenchantments in later years, the sterile preoccupation with things that are artificial, the alienation from the sources of our strength.” Rachel Carson

“The will to learn is an intrinsic motive, one that finds both its motivation and its reward in its own exercise.” John Bruner

Methods involve choosing, talking, questioning, listening, sharing, solving problems both as individual and group projects.

Goals, Objectives, and Activities

Goal: To promote the physical development of children.

❖ Objectives

- Learning how to control their bodies.
- Gaining strength, confidence and skills that carry over into all areas of development.
- Enjoyment of physical exercise and activities

❖ Activities

- Large outdoor play area
- Hikes
- Climbing gates, logs, trees
- Digging, raking, pushing, pulling
- Building (wood, blocks, sand)
- Group movement explorations
- Pony rides

Goal: To promote fine motor development of children.

❖ Objectives

- Improved eye-hand coordination
- Increased strength and agility
- Increased ability to work with smaller objects.

❖ Activities

- Sand, water, clay
- Pounding (hammering) bench
- Puzzles
- Work with seeds
- Stringing, sewing, weaving.
- Drawing
- Cutting with scissors
- Painting
- Opening latches on gates, hutches
- Building with construction toys
- Dressing selves
- Measuring

Goal: To foster intellectual development

❖ Objectives

- Increased language development and skills

❖ Activities

- Many activities that are stimulating to talk about (hikes, animals, etc.)
- Discussing, questioning, sharing ideas
- Planning new projects
- Carrying out directions
- Books: individual and group
- Stories
- Songs

❖ Objectives

- Increased understanding of symbols and written words

❖ Activities

- Group and individual stories
- Signs and charts
- Writing names

❖ Objectives

- Increased understanding of concepts of shape, space, size, classification and quantity

❖ Activities

- Manipulation of real materials
- Manipulative toys
- Counting real objects (eggs, kittens, children)
- Counting games and toys
- Sorting real things, sorting games
- Cooking activities
- Blocks

❖ Objectives

- Increased curiosity and problem-solving skills.

❖ Activities

- Nature hikes
- Chores and animal care
- Building projects
- Puzzles
- Blocks

❖ Objectives

- Increased understanding of the interrelationship of all living things and concepts of how things work and what they're made of.

❖ Activities

- Gardening
- Care of animals
- Weather observation
- Observations of different seasons: fall hikes, winter play, exploring ice, frost, etc.
- Trees: climbing, planting, watering
- Food: snack preparation
- Wool washing, dying, spinning, and weaving.

Goal: To enhance emotional development

❖ Objectives

- Self-confidence
- Age-appropriate self-reliance

❖ Activities

- Dressing selves
- Preparing food (grate, peel, wash, cut, mix)
- Making choices of activities in all areas
- Learning to ride the pony.
- Run, climb, swing, jump (physical confidence)
- Care for animals (feelings of competence)

- Singing and music appreciation, dancing, movement expression

❖ Objectives

- Increased self-awareness and abilities to express and accept one's own feelings.

❖ Activities

- Play with groups of children, interact.
- Dramatic play
- Stories and group discussion
- Play with animals.
- Art and music experiences

Goal: To encourage social development

❖ Objectives

- Enjoyment and respect for animals as a first step toward other-awareness

❖ Activities

- Daily animal chores, responsibilities
- Baby animals, birth and death of animals
- Brushing ponies, goats, cuddling kittens

❖ Objectives

- Respect for and enjoyment of other people, both adults and peers

❖ Activities

- Teacher/ child activities (one to one)
- Free play with one or more children
- Dramatic play (store, camping, spaceship, post office, etc.)
- Blocks, cars, construction, water play...all are highly interactive.
- Group puzzles, group games and listening games.
- Musical instruments to play together, singing together.

Evaluation of the goals:

The individual progress of each child in meeting the above goals and objectives will be documented by teachers and shared with the parent at December parent-teacher conferences and offered at spring phone calls. Planning will combine evaluation of individual and group progress towards these goals and will be ongoing and flexible to meet the needs of the group and the individuals in each group.

School Policies

Allergies

If a child has any known allergy, we must have an allergy action plan in place. This includes a description of the allergy, specific triggers, avoidance techniques, symptoms of an allergic reaction and procedures for responding to that allergic reaction, including medication, dosages, and the doctor's contact information. If medication is required, we have a release form for that also.

Animals

Animals at the school include outdoor cats, horses, pigs, calf, sheep, a steer, chickens, ducks, rabbits, goats, and geese. Indoor animals may be a fish or a bird. If your child is allergic to any of these animals, please inform the staff.

Our animals are separated from the children in pens. (Exceptions are newly hatched chicks/ducks from our incubator, kitten litters born on our farm twice a year, and lambs we bottle feed for several weeks.) The children do not enter these pens without adult knowledge and supervision. Play areas are separated from animal pens by fences or buildings.

Staff and all children wash hands after prolonged animal interaction. Soap and water and hand sanitizer are always available, indoors and out.

Attendance Calendar

Our calendar may differ from your area elementary school calendar, please refer to page 4. For emergency weather conditions, we follow Stillwater Area Schools (District 834) for full day closings. If the District announces a *weather related* “late start,” the morning classes at the Children’s Farm will be cancelled. Please refer to local media or stillwater.k12.mn.us for school closing announcements.

Authorization for Child Pick Up

Parents are asked on the enrollment form to indicate who is authorized to pick up their child at school. If you wish someone else to pick up your child, you must call, email, or send a note to give the school permission to release your child to that individual.

Behavior Guidance

The behavior guidance (discipline) techniques used at the Children’s Farm School follow the Developmentally Appropriate Practices guidelines set up by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (Bredekamp, 1987) which are specific to the age level of preschool children.

Principle 1: “Teachers facilitate the development of self-control in children by using positive guidance techniques such as modeling and encouraging expected behavior, redirecting children to more acceptable activity, and setting clear limits. Teachers’ expectations match and respect children’s developing capabilities.” (Bredekamp, p. 55).

Specific examples of these techniques used at the Children’s Farm School may include (but are not limited to):

- Ignoring negative actions (within limits of safety)
- Modeling positive actions, modeling intrinsic evaluations: “I feel good about getting the lawn raked.”
- Cautious use of praise for positive actions, helping child to find their own evaluations. Instead of “Good job,” use: *Descriptions*, “You finished the whole job.” And *Validations*, “You must feel big now that you can do it yourself.”

- Defining limits in a non-personal way: “At the Farm, we like to be friendly to all the animals so they will want to be near us.” (Giving a reason for the limit.)
- Using group discussion time to discuss behavior and limits in a general way.
- Helping children find alternative uses for energy: “It looks like you want to do something strong today. Can you pull the wagon over to the barn to get some hay?”
- Structuring situations or groups so that children can learn from each other or have experiences with positive role models.
- Use natural consequences to help teach child limits (when safe).
- Continued positive expectations communicated to the child with warmth and encouragement: “You usually help us clean up, I know you can be a big help to us.”

Principle 2: “Children are provided many opportunities to develop social skills such as cooperating, helping, negotiating, and talking with the person involved to solve interpersonal problems. Teachers work to always facilitate the development of these positive social skills.” (Bredekamp, p.55). Specific examples of these techniques used at the Children’s Farm School may include:

- Teachers treat child as a person, holds expectations that child will treat animals and other people with respect.
- Teachers model consideration: “Thank you” and cooperative behavior: “I’ll be glad to help.”
- Situations are structured by teachers to demand teamwork and cooperation: “If we all pull together, we can get the hay bale down to the pony.”
- Openness and honesty are used, avoiding manipulation of children.
- Acceptance and recognition of a child’s feelings: “You aren’t happy because he took that toy. I see you wish you didn’t have to share it.”
- Helping child to understand her own feelings: “I see you’re not feeling friendly today. You could do a puzzle by yourself until you feel more like being with people.”

- Using group discussion time and stories to discuss feelings and different points of view.
- Stating clear limits of what is OK or not OK: “Everyone needs to be safe here. I cannot let you hurt anyone.”
- Encouraging victims of aggression to verbalize their feelings to the aggressor: “Did you tell Joey how you felt about his pushing you?”
- Encouraging listening to the needs of others: “Did you hear Jill say that she wanted that truck? Could you tell her what your idea was, so she’d know?”
- Arranging small groups on tasks with a teacher so that each child can have a positive group/ cooperative experience.

Birthdays

If your child wishes to bring a healthy snack around their birthday, please let a teacher know at least one class day ahead of time. You may help your child choose something appropriate to our policy (see **Food pg. 20**). Homemade goods are preferred. Party bags **will not** be distributed to classmates by our teachers.

Class Directories

Class directories will be available for your child’s class. Please use these to contact your child’s classmate’s. We request that you do not send birthday invitations, valentines, etc. to school for distribution.

Clothing

Each class will go outside every day. Clothing that encourages active play and independence is appreciated. Please arrive at school with your child dressed in appropriate clothing for being outdoors right away, every day. **Flip-flops, Crocs, and ballet flats are not appropriate footwear for the Farm.** Children must wear socks every day with their closed toe shoes. Licensing requires socks to be worn indoors. Your child may get muddy and dirty while here. Your child will need to wear rain gear when it is rainy or has been raining, and a hat, coat, boots, snow pants and mittens when the months grow cold. We are always available to help with gear questions. **Please label all outdoor gear that you send, as many will look the same!**

No backpacks please. A separate handout on outdoor clothing tips is provided to each family.

Cultural Diversity

Our cultural diversity policy is posted in the parent lending library and copies are available upon request.

Cups

Cups labeled with your child's name are provided by the school for each child to drink out of. Cups are separated from each other while in use and washed at the end of the day.

Emergency Care

In case of injury, the care procedures listed in the health section are also observed. A complete first aid kit is kept on the school premises. Teachers are certified in First Aid and CPR.

Emergency Plan notification for Parents

*Shelter-in-Place Procedure (taking refuge due to a weather event in an interior room with no windows when an emergency occurs, and it is safer to be inside than to evacuate) – We have two locations for this. If a notification for a tornado warning is given and children can be safely moved from the classroom, out the deck to the basement under the school we will do this. If severe weather is too imminent for safety in walking outside, we will relocate to the adjoining basement room of the house.

*Lock-Down (keeping teachers and your kids in a secure place within the building in response to an outside threat) Procedure – We have two steps to this plan; if outside we will come into the classroom and lock the doors. If a more secure space is needed, we will move the class into the adjoining basement room.

*Evacuation/Relocation Procedures – In event of fire, chemical leak, etc. children will be escorted to the shed in the parking lot and can be picked up from there. If this is not a safe area, children and staff will

walk to Jeanne's house – 13393 26th St. N, Stillwater which is located behind the Farm.

Parent/Guardian Reunification Procedure – Parents will be called first, then emergency contacts if necessary. Class location will be communicated.

Continuing Operation Procedures – If a severe occurrence happens, parents will be notified via email and phone call of more information.

The state requests you keep this information handy in case of emergency – The Children's Farm, street address is 13241 30th St. N., Stillwater, MN 55082. Mailing address is PO Box 278, Lake Elmo, MN 55042. Phone number is 651-439-7745. Emergency cell number is Jeanne Leppicello cell – 612-210-0861. Please add these numbers to your contacts so you know to answer if we call in an emergency.

Exceptional Behavior

Persistent unacceptable behavior that requires an increased amount of staff guidance and time requires additional and exceptional policies. State law specifies that parents are made aware of a school's policies in this respect. At the Children's Farm School, the parent will be involved through conferences, observations and discussions, well before the adoption of an extraordinary plan for a child's specific behavior problem.

Specific procedures are:

- Staff and parent will observe and record the child's behavior and the effectiveness of the teacher's response to that behavior.
- A plan will be developed with the child's parent and any other appropriate professionals agreed upon by the parent.
- The plan will be evaluated by staff weekly and the parent will be informed by phone or in writing of the child's progress.
- Consideration of removal of the child from the school will be last resort with consultation with parents and/ or other professionals in search of a more appropriate setting for the child.

Insurance

The Children's Farm School holds liability insurance for \$1,000,000 for its school operations.

Food

At the Children's Farm School, preparing, serving and eating healthy, nutritious foods is an important part of our everyday program. Examples of our typical snacks are fresh fruits and vegetables, dried fruits, nuts, seeds, popcorn, juices, cheese, muffins, breads and pancakes. Any commercially baked products used are largely whole grain with minimal sweetening. If your child wishes to bring food for a special occasion, please let a teacher know at least one class day ahead of time. You may help your child choose something appropriate to our policy. **(NOTE: candy, gum, chocolate, chocolate chips, frosting, or other sweet goods will not be distributed at any time, including holidays and birthdays).** Homemade goods are preferred.

Tables used for food preparation or eating must be wiped clean with hot water and soap before use and then sprayed with bleach/water solution. All dishes are washed by staff and a dishwasher is used for dishes children eat/drink from.

Field Trips

The Children's Farm School does not take field trips of any kind (we are the field trip!).

Health

Parents are required to keep children home from school if they have a fever, continuous runny nose, frequent coughs, rash or other obvious sign of communicable disease. Children will not be permitted to remain at school with these symptoms. Parents are expected to notify the school if their child has contacted a contagious reportable disease, such as, Hand, foot, and mouth disease, Chicken pox, COVID19, Strep infections (including strep throat), Fifth disease, Influenza, Head lice, Roseola, Scabies, Impetigo, and Ringworm. Parents will be notified by the staff through phone, email or note if children have been exposed to infectious or communicable diseases.

Teachers are expected to stay home if they have the same symptoms listed above and a substitute will be found for them.

The Children's Farm does not administer medication except under rare consideration. This includes sunscreen, insect repellent, Benadryl and over the counter cough medicine.

When snack is served away from our indoor or outdoor classroom or at other times (with teacher discretion) hand sanitizer (i.e., Germex or Purell) will be applied to children's hands.

Staff will wash hands well before all food preparation or rubber gloves will be worn if necessary. Children are to wash hands when coming indoors, and before eating or handling of food. Single use towels are to be used for drying hands.

If a child becomes ill at school the following procedures will be followed:

- The child will be made comfortable in an area apart from the other children. A quiet area is on school premises to use if needed.
- The child's health form will be consulted, and the parent will be contacted. Please be sure to enter the Farm phone number into your contacts.
- If we cannot reach a parent/caregiver, we will then begin to call the people listed as emergency contacts.
- If we are unsuccessful reaching the people listed on the emergency contact list, the child's doctor will be consulted and recommended procedures followed.
- We expect that the numbers listed will be active and someone will always be available to be contacted while your child is in school. Please update all emergency information as needed.
- The official health source for The Children's Farm is Stillwater Medical Group, 651-439-1234.

A complete copy of our health and safety policies is posted on the school bulletin board. Please notify your child's teachers if your child is taking any medication, this includes antibiotics, Tylenol, etc.

Holidays

Due to educational priorities, holidays are not celebrated at the Children's Farm School. We plan age appropriate and educationally relevant activities and expect holiday times to be reserved for family celebrations. As a result, we will not distribute Christmas gifts or Valentines, nor do we observe costumes at Halloween. Birthdays are the exception as we do sing happy birthday to a child if it is their birthday unless asked not to. Food items will continue to be in accordance with our food policy.

Horse Rides

Horse rides encourage self-confidence, physical coordination, thoughtful attention, social learning, intrinsic motivation, and empathy and understanding of another living thing.

The horse is standing in pen facing the gate with a teacher. The child will come in and climb on next to the teacher. Teacher will walk next to child on horse, hold foot if necessary to assure child has a good grip. Child steers horse. Children will climb on and off with support. Child always walks around to head of horse, not behind horse.

Medical Information

Before the child can attend class, a record of the child's immunizations is required. A report on a current physical examination of the child signed by the child's source of medical care is also required before the child is admitted or within 30 days of admission. If any allergies and/or medications are indicated, then an ICCP (and medication form) will be given to that parent and needs to be turned in promptly. These forms are distributed at registration.

Non-Discrimination

The Children's Farm, Inc., does not discriminate based on race, color, national or ethnic origin, age, religion, gender, gender identity or

expression, sexual orientation, veteran status, marital status, or any other characteristic protected under federal or state law.

Pandemic

If changes need to be made to our scheduled day due to unforeseen circumstances, your children will continue to learn from working together to take care of animals, socializing with other children, taking care of the garden, playing outdoors, and exploring the natural environment.

The Children's Farm follows guidelines from the Minnesota Department of Health regarding childcare centers, but we also must consider the recommendations from the Department of Health and Human Services, which provides our licensing. Because of this there may be some modifications necessary due to COVID19 or another pandemic and they may be as follows:

- **The Children's Farm has always valued spending time outdoors and our outside time would increase** to limit the amount of time that groups spend together indoors.
- There is a possibility that we will divide each class into groups of no more than 10 students. An extra staff person will be on hand daily for additional support for teachers/students.
- There is a possibility that we will have **staggered start and end times** for classes. This may mean your child's class could start and end 10 minutes earlier or later than our original start/end times.
- There is a possibility that the preschool **building will be closed to everyone** other than students and staff.
- **Parents/caregivers may have to wear masks** during pickup and drop-off if they get out of the car to walk their students to the benches to join their friends/teachers.
- **Teachers may be required to wear masks** inside. It may also be required outside if within 6 feet of anyone. Children will not be required to wear masks while outside. Minnesota Department of Health does not recommend that children attending childcare programs wear face coverings unless

children can reliably wear, remove, and handle masks throughout the day.

- **Daily health screenings may be required** for all students and staff. We may ask parents to take children's temperatures daily before attending school. No one who exhibits pandemic related symptoms will be allowed to participate in preschool.
- **Carpooling may be discouraged** by the Department of Health. If we do divide into groups, carpools will be placed in the same grouping.
- On **rainy days** we may only be using our barn, hayloft and other covered areas in our barnyard.

Flexibility will be key as options might change as the year progresses.

Parent Involvement

Parent involvement is encouraged through parent visiting days, parent-teacher conferences, parent discussion nights, class picnics and parent use of the classroom observation windows. Parents/legal guardians are welcome to visit the school at any time. Procedures for use of the observation window will be discussed at our fall parent orientation night.

Parent conferences will be scheduled during school hours without classroom interruptions in early December. You will be reminded of these times in the November newsletter. A second phone conference is scheduled for March.

The Children's Farm staff is always open to parents' questions and concerns. Please feel free to call your child's teachers any time between 8AM and 4PM at the school 439-7745. If you wish to speak to the director about any concerns, you may call her at the same number or her cell. State law requires that we inform you of a grievance procedure to the highest authority, that would be the director, Jeanne Leppicello, and you may expect a reply from her within 48 hours unless it is a holiday time.

Payment of Tuition

Tuition is based on an annual budget and does not vary according to the number of school days in a month or a child's actual attendance. September tuition is due on the first regular school day. Subsequent tuition is due on the first school day of each month. Once school has begun in September, if you need to cancel, your down payment is refundable with one month's notice. The nonrefundable down payment paid in January or February is used for your May tuition or, if the school is given 30 days' notice, your last month's tuition. Tuition may be paid by check, cash, or through TUIO.

Photo Use

Photos are occasionally used for marketing on our website or brochure. Please let us know if you do NOT want your child's picture used for educational publications or publicity.

Prohibited Policies

The Children's Farm policy prohibits any of the following actions by staff (state law requires that we provide this information to you):

- Corporal punishment of any kind.
- Emotional abuse, including name calling, shaming, humiliating, using frightening or threatening language or behavior.
- Punishment for lapses in toilet habits.
- Withholding food, light, warmth, clothing, or medical care as punishment for unacceptable behavior.
- Use of physical restraint other than to physically hold a child when containment is necessary to protect a child or others from harm.
- Use of mechanical restraints, such as tying.
- Separation of a child from the group unless as follows:
 - Other methods have been ineffective, and the child's behavior threatens the safety and well-being of other children.
 - The child must remain in an unenclosed part of the classroom where the child can continuously be seen

and heard by a staff person (this may be a place outside in the presence of a teacher).

- The child's return to the group must be contingent on the child's stopping or bringing under control the offending behavior and the child must be returned to the group as soon as that behavior stops, or the child is under control.
- A separation log is kept noting the child, the staff person, time, and date, and indicating the reasons for separation. If a child is separated from the group, the parent shall be notified, and this is indicated on the log. If the child is separated for five or more times in one week or eight times in two weeks, the **Exceptional Policy** must be followed.

Research and Observations

The Children's Farm agrees to obtain permission in writing in the event of any research, experimental procedure or public relations activities regarding a child enrolled in the school. Because there are observation windows in the classroom, parents should be aware that their child may be observed by student teachers or other childcare professionals on occasion. If your child is to be observed for a specific assessment, you will be notified in advance and you have the right to be present at this observation time or to receive written copies of the observation's conclusions (i.e., for kindergarten placement, evaluation of special needs, etc.).

Tools

Children learn coordination and concentration as well as practical skills using tools at the farm. The use of real tools teaches respect and understanding of materials and provides important sensory feedback and confidence building experiences. Children are supervised while using shovels, rakes, spreading knives, graters, peelers, glue guns, sewing needles, hammers, nails, and saws.

Reporting Policy for Program Services to Children

State Law requires that reporting policies and procedures must be provided to parents of all children at the time of enrollment in the childcare program and must be made available upon request. The following are the state mandated procedures for reporting child abuse and neglect.

WHAT TO REPORT

- ❖ *Maltreatment includes egregious harm, neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, substantial child endangerment, threatened injury, and mental injury. For definitions refer to [Minnesota Statutes, section 260E.03](#), and pages 3-6 of this document. Maltreatment must be reported if you have witnessed or have reason to believe that a child is being or has been maltreated within the last three years.*

WHO MUST REPORT CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- ❖ *People who are not mandated reporters may voluntarily report maltreatment.*
- ❖ *If you work in a licensed facility, you are a “mandated reporter” and are legally required (mandated) to report maltreatment. You cannot shift the responsibility of reporting to your supervisor or to anyone else at your licensed facility.*

WHERE TO REPORT

- ❖ *If you know or suspect that a child is in immediate danger, call 911.*
- ❖ *Reports concerning suspected maltreatment of children, or other violations of Minnesota Statutes or Rules, in facilities licensed by the Minnesota Department of Human Services, should be made to the Licensing Division’s Central Intake line at 651-539-8222.*
- ❖ *Reports regarding incidents of suspected abuse or neglect of children occurring within a family or in the community should be made to the local county social services agency at (651) 430-6455 or local law enforcement at (651) 439-9381.*
- ❖ *If you wish to make a report of alleged maltreatment or licensing concerns regarding licensed or certified child care centers, please contact the DCYF Central Intake Unit at 651-539-8222.*

WHEN TO REPORT

- *Mandated reporters must make a report to one of the agencies listed above immediately (as soon as possible but no longer than 24 hours).*

INFORMATION TO REPORT

- ❖ *A report to any of the above agencies should contain enough information to identify the child involved, any persons responsible for the abuse or neglect (if known), and the nature and extent of the maltreatment and /or possible licensing violations. For reports concerning suspected abuse and neglect occurring within a licensed facility, the report should include any actions taken by the facility in response to the incident.*

FAILURE TO REPORT

- ❖ *A mandated reporter who knows or has reason to believe a child is or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused and fails to report is guilty of a misdemeanor.*
- ❖ *In addition, a mandated reporter who fails to report serious or recurring maltreatment may be disqualified from a position allowing direct contact with, or access to, persons receiving services from programs, organizations, and/or agencies that are required to have individuals complete a background study by the Department of Human Services as listed in Minnesota Statutes, section 245C.03.*

RETALIATION PROHIBITED

- ❖ *An employer of any mandated reporter is prohibited from retaliating against (getting back at): • an employee for making a report in good faith; or • a child who is the subject of the report.*
- ❖ *If an employer retaliates against an employee, the employer may be liable for damages and/or penalties.*

STAFF TRAINING

- ❖ *The license holder must train all mandated reporters on their reporting responsibilities, according to the training requirements in the statutes and rules governing the licensed program. The license holder must document the provision of this training in individual personnel records, monitor implementation by staff, and ensure that the policy is readily accessible to staff, as specified under Minnesota Statutes, section 245A.04, subdivision 14.*

INTERNAL REVIEW

- ❖ *When the facility has reason to know that an internal or external report of alleged or suspected maltreatment has been made, the*

facility must complete an internal review and take corrective action, if necessary, to protect the health and safety of children in care. The internal review must indicate an evaluation of whether:

- Related policies and procedures were followed.*
- The policies and procedures were adequate.*
- There is a need for additional staff training.*
- The reported event is similar to past events with the children, or the services involved; and*
- There is a need for corrective action by the license holder to protect the health and safety of children in care.*

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY PERSON OR POSITION TO ENSURE INTERNAL REVIEWS ARE COMPLETED

- ❖ The internal review will be completed by Jeanne Leppicello. If this individual is involved in the alleged or suspected maltreatment, Nancy Jones or the board of The Children's Farm, Inc. will be responsible for completing the internal review.*

DOCUMENTATION OF THE INTERNAL REVIEW

- ❖ The facility must document completion of the internal review and provide documentation of the review to the commissioner upon the commissioner's request.*

CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN

- ❖ Based on the results of the internal review, the license holder must develop, document, and implement a corrective action designed to correct current lapses and prevent future lapses in performances by individuals or the license holder.*

_____ I acknowledge that I have received a link to The Children's Farm Family Handbook. I have read the handbook in its entirety and give consent to the procedures and policies outlined within the document. I recognize that it is my responsibility to contact the Director with any questions I might have about the contents of the Family Handbook now and in the future.

Child's Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

**Please return the signed form by
September 25
to
The Children's Farm School
(in the white mailbox)**

Thank you!

Registration

School Year: Pre-registration for returning families begins in January. Please check our website January 4 for preregistration forms. Priority placement goes to children currently enrolled and then to siblings of those enrolled, siblings of past students, and children of alumni.

Registration for new families takes place in early February. Check our website January 19 for new registration forms.

Summer: Please check our website February 1st for the dates the spring/summer registration will be happen.

Adult/child together and school age classes: Please check our website for more information.