



The Dewey School
growing inside...out
at the Canterbury Shaker Village

Caregiver Handbook

2025 - 2027

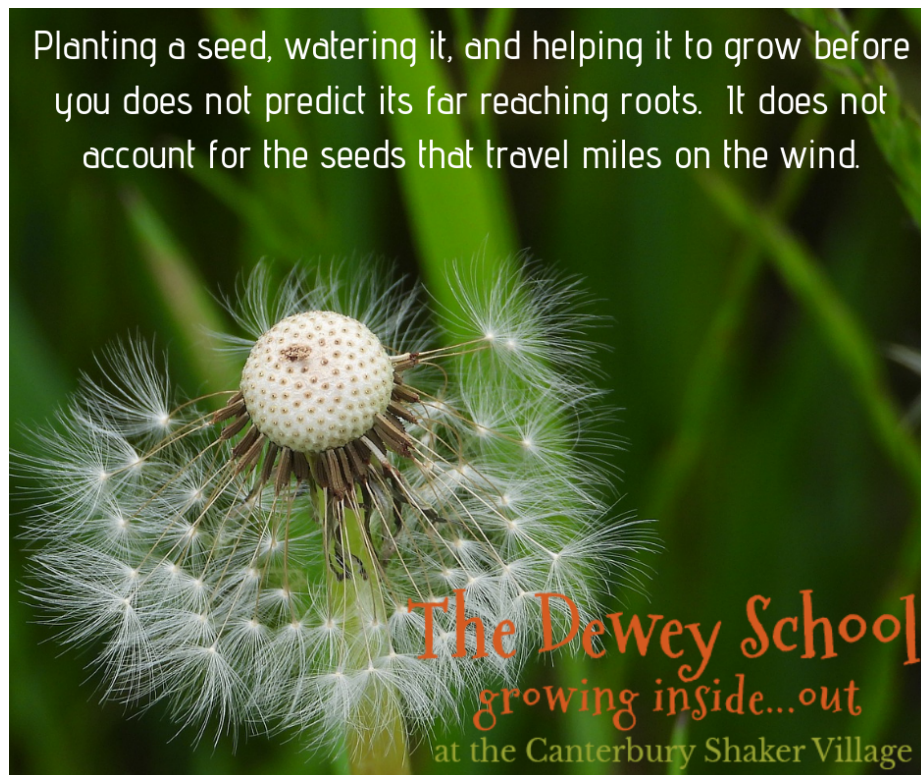
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Welcome

Thank you for choosing to enroll your child at The Dewey School. We are excited to have you join us in nature-based, Reggio inspired early learning. The Dewey School is committed to spending time outdoors and learning with joy! Time in nature allows for spontaneous exploration outside and acts as inspiration for work inside. At The Dewey School, children have the freedom to explore their own interests, growing inside...out in the community.

This handbook is designed to provide information that your family will need to refer to throughout the school year. It is a starting place in our journey together. Please feel free to contact us with questions or concerns you may have. We look forward to learning and building community with your family.



The Shaker Legacy at Canterbury

The Shaker story in Canterbury began in the 1780's with a gathering of Shaker converts at the farm of Benjamin Whitcher. In 1792, the community was formally "called to order." In 1992, Canterbury became the first Shaker community in America to reach its 200th Anniversary with a Shaker in residence. On Labor Day, 1992, the long and distinguished Shaker movement in New Hampshire reached a quiet end with the death of Sister Ethel Hudson, at the age of 96.

Canterbury was one of 19 villages established by the United Society of Believers. These villages were an alternative model of human social organization and development from that operating in the American society which surrounded them. While American society exalted individual achievement, the Shakers believed human potential was best realized collectively. Consequently, they organized themselves socially in order to de-emphasize individualism and self-interest. Within the Shaker community, human relationships were restructured to offer a countervailing force to prevailing social structures. For example, men and women were declared equal from the appointment of ruling Elders and Eldresses to the daily duties of Shaker Brothers and Sisters.

In the larger social context of the history and culture of New England, Canterbury was a progressive urbanized village within a conservative rural region. It functioned effectively in the market economy of New England yet maintained physical and psychological distance from the outside world. The Shakers at Canterbury were unusually inventive and resourceful. They were more technologically progressive than their neighbors and practiced a farsighted stewardship of land and resources. At its peak in the 1850's, Canterbury was divided into four "families" in over 100 buildings housing 300 residents. Surrounding these buildings were over 3,000 acres of farmland, woodlands, millponds, and pasture. The largest of the four Canterbury Shaker "families", the Church Family, erected a Meeting House in 1792, a three-story dwelling house in 1793, a school house where Shaker children and orphans were educated, an infirmary to house the sick, a massive laundry building, and many large industry and farm buildings.

When the Shakers established their Village in Canterbury, there was a virtual absence of natural ponds and large streams which could be used for power generation, and they were forced to rely upon a single horse-drawn saw and grist mill. By 1800, the need for power had become so great that the Shakers constructed a series of eight ponds, linked by ditching, which held water that originated in natural springs two miles to the north. Gravity carried water through the two mile system as it flowed from north to south. The mills were crucial to the economic viability of the Canterbury community, for they provided products and services to be sold to the outside world and used in Village industries.

Although the Shakers are gone from Canterbury, their legacy is still intact as the Village enters its third century. The Dewey School is excited to be located at the Canterbury Shaker Village. All registering families will receive one family membership to the Canterbury Shaker Village enabling families to participate regularly in Village events.

Mission

It is the mission of The Dewey School to offer early learning rooted in play and exploration of the natural world.

We envision a school which provides a joyful early learning environment,

- where children are viewed as capable and competent citizens who express themselves through a variety of ways;
- where opportunities to grow through play and student interests are fostered;

- where developing a sense of community is valued and exploring nature is embraced.

The Dewey Way

At The Dewey School, **children** will be valued for their ability to do meaningful work, their wonder and curiosity, their perspectives, and ability to play. **Families** will be valued for their bonds and traditions, their potential for playfulness, their commitment to work, home and community, and their dreams for their children. Our **Teachers** will be valued for their vision, their delight in children, their wealth of skills and knowledge, and their commitment to families.

Together, (children, families, and faculty, supported by our Dewey Board of Directors) we will cultivate a caring environment of mutual respect where children are active participants in their learning; negotiating play, solving conflicts, and establishing the social rules and boundaries of the group. The Dewey School teachers will view each individual child in a holistic way, understanding that children will represent themselves through the 100 languages; a hundred different ways of expression such as art, voice, drama, engineering, and more. We will respect and nurture each child's potential for physical, emotional, social, cognitive, and creative growth. In our approach to learning, curriculum is emergent and experiential. It is authentic. It provides a context for children to make sense of the world around them and to be invested in and excited about their own learning. Student learning will be made visible through documentation which demonstrates both process and product through photos, narration, and demonstration.

To support the learning path of each child, we:

- Offer a hands-on approach to education in a multi-age, natural learning environment as well as a mindfully created indoor setting.
- Cultivate the students' relationship to self, other, place and land through continuous exposure to all four.
- Utilize an emergent and integrated curriculum to develop the whole child.
- Provide a low student to teacher ratio and lots of time learning and playing through a variety of mediums.

With research as a beacon for our pedagogy, The Dewey School appreciates and respects the work of those setting forth learning standards for early learners. Children approach learning in a myriad of ways and when they are ready. That readiness is influenced by many factors. Through encounters with nature, ample free play, and vigorous physical activity, children at The Dewey School develop a solid foundation for their continued learning.

We value community. The Dewey School is a community of learners. We believe that our school should be a reflection of our community, its values, and valuable connections that it has to offer our children. We welcome the expertise of our community. If you have a talent or skill set you'd care to share, please let us know.

Daily Rhythm

We value spontaneity and take advantage of "teachable moments." We will be learning inside and out at The Dewey School! Just as we breathe, we will have active learning (inhale) followed by peaceful reflection (exhale). We'll take our time in all that we do, providing opportunity for the children to be our guides as we move through the day from active to reflective, peaceful learning. A full day may look something like this:

Arrival at 8:00.

Inhale: Work Time (inside or out)- Children are introduced to materials and invitations of inquiry. The teacher will help facilitate community by guiding children in their communication with one another, problem solving, kindness, and courtesy.

8:30ish

Exhale: Morning Circle- may be indoors or out. This gathering includes greeting songs, mindfulness moments, weather, calendar, jobs, and introduction of new activities.

9:00ish

Children clean up, wash, toilet, and ready themselves for a family style snack that is served outside or in.

9:45ish

Inhale: Outside Exploration - Children are welcome to explore the Meadow's outdoor library, mud kitchen, labyrinth, messy materials and natural habitats. Children are introduced to materials and invitations of inquiry. The teacher will help facilitate nature-based lessons. Some days are spent hiking and exploring the Village side; taking in the peace, tranquility and views to the east. And of course, we have to check on our Sky Tree.

11:20ish

Exhale: Group time-indoors or out. This gathering is for songs, stories, and group large motor activities such as games, parachute, music, and yoga. We will end our morning in song as we say goodbye to our morning friends and ready ourselves for lunch.

11:30 We say goodbye to our morning friends and ready ourselves for lunch

11:30-12:00

Inhale: The full day children enjoy a little extra exploration time outside or in choosing their work indoors.

12:00ish

Lunch as a community. Hands are washed and lunches are served and unpacked. Children help in preparing the table with napkins and glasses. The children wait until everyone is seated, say thank you for their food, and are served restaurant style. Polite conversation is encouraged at this time. Children ask to be excused and clear their own plates and glasses.

1:00-2:30ish

Exhale: Rest time, story time, reflecting the morning, activities may be based on morning topics, allowing the opportunity to further investigate both classroom and outdoor interests.

After 2:30ish

Ready for dismissal and head outdoors

Supporting Your Child's JOY at Dewey

A great day begins with a full tank. Have you ever run out of gas on your way to something you look forward to? It's frustrating to say the least. A good breakfast prevents our children from running out of gas. Whole grains, proteins, and fruits will support them tremendously rather than a bowl of empty calories. Their little bodies travel miles over the course of a morning and while we offer a healthy snack they need to begin their day with a full tank.

Backpacks are a wonderful thing! They allow children to take responsibility for their own things, they can be filled with treasures such as rocks and sticks, and they carry the gear/lunch that will be needed for the day. **Have your child practice carrying their backpack** empty and full. Have your child help pack their backpack each time they come to school. You'll be surprised at how quickly they learn what they need for layers, etc. They should be able to recognize their own mittens, coat, and hat in their bag.

Names are Important! Everything you send to school should be labeled with your child's first name and last initial. Silver sharpies work on black mittens. Black sharpies work on most everything else. While we pride ourselves in recognizing

the gear of the children, mittens are often of similar color and we have friends with the same first names. If you want to ensure that your child's gear comes and goes with them, please put their first name and last initial on **EVERYTHING**.

Have children walk on their own. We begin walking on the Meadow and then quickly head off into the forest. We begin with traveling 4 blue blazes, then add two more, and two more and so on. It doesn't take long before we almost reach Meadow Pond. You can imagine the feelings of walking such a distance and discovering such beauty. Once we are confident that the children are able to walk on our loop rope, they will head to the Village to discover the incredible architecture, orchards, Boys Island, freedom that comes from rolling down the hill in the Granite Beds, etc. Please practice walking with them, encouraging them, and affirming their abilities. They are amazing adventurers.

Sending your child on time to school each day prepared and dressed appropriately for the day's weather is an expectation. We understand that life happens and that things can go wrong as you are heading out the door...every now and again. If you find there is a daily struggle, please let us know. We can offer tools and perspective that may make your morning flow just a bit better. Being consistently late to school prevents the children from participating in their work time and morning exploration.

TOILETING

It is expected that all children attending The Dewey School are potty trained and can use the bathroom independently. Pull-ups are **not** acceptable as underwear. For boys, they may choose to stand or sit (a stool is available) to pee. Both boys and girls should be proficient in wiping their own bums after a poop.

Children are encouraged to toilet at regular intervals throughout the day: before snack, after snack/before outside time, when coming in from outside, before lunch, before rest, after getting up from rest. Children are always welcome to use the bathroom on their own after telling a teacher. We do not, as a practice, freely toilet outside.

CLOTHING

Expect your child to go outside **EVERY** day!! We will check the weather constantly for wind, windchill, temperature, upcoming storms, micro-bursts, heat index, etc. We will always err on the side of caution. Children must be dressed in adequate layers and prepared for the outdoors every morning. At The Dewey School, we believe that there is no such thing as bad weather, only inappropriate clothing choices. It is the family's responsibility to ensure their child has proper

clothing for school at ALL times. We want children to be comfortable and confident outside and being properly dressed is the first step to accomplish this.

Students are involved in many types of activities while attending The Dewey School and should be dressed accordingly. Hands-on nature based experiential education requires freedom from restrictive clothing. Students need simple, comfortable, practical clothing that will not interfere with their active work. Long pants or leggings are best for our experiences. Shorts and just skirts are not permissible as it exposes children to unnecessary scrapes, insects, and “grabby plant” interactions. Students need comfortable, protective shoes with gripping soles for running, jumping and climbing. Rain boots, sneakers, or hiking shoes work best, and closed toed sandals with a heel strap are fine for warm weather (no flip flops, clogs, crocs, dress shoes or backless shoes please).

We get dirty and/or wet on a daily basis and rely on spare clothing for warmth and comfort. It is very important that you maintain the following items in a large ziplock with your child’s name on it and everything in it to be kept at school.

Must Haves:

- 2 pair of underwear
- 2 pair of socks (1 pair wool or synthetic in nature)
- 2 pair of pants
- 2 shirts (short or long sleeved depending on the weather)
- 1 pair indoor shoes (slippers or crocs)
- 1 winter hat or sun hat as season dictates
- 1 pair waterproof mittens (seasonal)

Children do their best work outdoors when they are warm and dry!! Layers are critically important, especially in wet &/or cold weather. Layering allows you to modify your body temperature and adapt to changing conditions. Two lighter layers are better than one heavy layer. Layering also allows you to adjust clothing to match activity level.

Good Fiber Choices for Wet and Cold Weather

The best fibers to dress your child in for wet and cold weather are polypropylene or fleece--some silks and wools work too. PLEASE NO COTTON! When cotton gets wet, it has no warming or insulating ability and keeps your body wet and cold. The best plan is to wear water-resistant clothing that doesn't absorb moisture--such as polypropylene, fleece, silk and wool. Save cotton t-shirts, pants and socks for warm weather.

Getting Dirty

You should expect your child to get dirty!!! Please do NOT send them in anything you do not want dirty or wet. Please send your child in outerwear that fits. When clothing is too small or too big it does not provide your child with proper protection or comfort...especially shoes and boots.

Rain-wear

Rain pants are vital! Make sure they are waterproof and not just water-resistant. Wind pants do not provide the same protection as rain pants. Over time we have found that two pieces (pants/overalls and jacket) are more comfortable for the children, regardless of brand. Rain gloves with wool mittens will keep hands warm and dry while exploring streams, mud, puddles and more.

Snow-pants

Bib snow pants work really well as they do not allow snow to sneak in at the waist. They also act as an additional core layer.

Socks

It is just as important for us to keep our feet warm and dry as it is the rest of our body. Suggested brands are: Smart-wool, Wigwam, Darn Tough, and any sock **without** cotton! Remember that when cotton gets wet or cold it keeps us wet and cold. One thick, warm pair is better than two pairs. When we start layering socks blood flow becomes constricted and feet get cold. Please...NO COTTON IN THE COLD, WET, OR COOL weather.

Base Layers

Most outdoor clothing stores (EMS, REI, LLBean, Target, Walmart) make their own version of a base layer. The important thing is to have a base layer that is made from wicking materials and NOT cotton!

Mittens

Waterproof mittens (NOT gloves) work best for children this age. Their hands stay warm and dry and they can usually sort out how to get their mittens on and off with very little help compared to gloves.

Hats

Again, keep good fiber choices in mind. In addition to a hat, please consider a neck gaiter or balaclava style hat, both of which work well to keep necks and chins warm in windy, cold winter weather.

Boots

Most boots list their “comfort test” temperatures...look for boots that are comfort tested to 0 degrees or better. Bogs, Oaki (insulated) and Muck Boots are great brands because children can be independent in getting them on and off. They also work well for water and snow.

Dewey Gear Essentials and Suggestions

Each year we review gear that has been utilized by children and staff. We have compiled a list of gear that we require, why we require it, and recommendations of brands. [Gear Recommendations](#)

Each season gear essentials will change, here is a sneak peak of what will be needed.

Warm Weather Essentials	Cold Weather Essentials
Waterproof raincoat and pants with hood*	2 piece base layer (polypropylene or wool)
Or waterproof suit*	Warm quality socks (not cotton)
Rubber Rain Boots	Mid layer (fleece or wool)
Fleece, Wool Sweater, or Sweatshirt	Insulated waterproof snow coat with hood
Sun hat	Insulated waterproof snow pants
Sunscreen and bug spray if you have a preferred brand, otherwise we use Badger Balm	Insulated waterproof boot
	Warm hat (fleece or wool), balaclava
*Oaki has a 25% discount for Dewey students (Dewey25)	Insulated waterproof mittens

Outdoor gear discounts...

Oaki www.oaki.com Use our code for a 25% discount (DEWEY25) plus free shipping

LLBean www.llbean.com

LandsEnd www.landsend.com

Polarn O. Pyret of Sweden offers parents enrolled in an outdoor oriented school like ours a 20%off discount on their entire range of full priced outerwear. Once you sign up at the link below, you just need to be logged into your shopping

account for the discount to apply. No code needed. Sign up at https://www.polarnopyretusa.com/outdoor_schools_form

We appreciate any end of year donations of outgrown gear for our gear closet.

Guidelines and Risky Play

Being Safe and Respectful

We want students at The Dewey School to be free in their outdoor explorations and we also want to keep our students safe. We have three basic rules at The Dewey School, which your children will learn and we ask that parents/guardians help reinforce:

- Children **MUST** stay within sight of their teacher(s) and be able to see their teacher(s) at all times!
- Children **MUST always answer the OWL CALL** and return to their teacher(s) when they hear it!
- We have 3Rs at The Dewey School; respect each other & ourselves, respect nature, respect our tools.

At The Dewey School we work to maintain a safe learning community both physically and emotionally. We are kind to ourselves and to each other. When we are angry, sad, or frustrated, we stop and take a deep breath...or five. Children are allowed and encouraged to work disagreements out with one another, but an adult will intervene if necessary. Teachers will model listening and talking as resources for conflict resolution. Teachers will support children as they work to communicate with others using their regular voices so they can be heard and understood. Children exhibiting unsafe behaviors will be removed from the situation and asked to stay by a teacher's side until they are able to resume respectful play.

It is expected that The Dewey School staff and parent/guardian will work together to support the children in conflict resolution. These situations can be great learning opportunities and can have a very strong impact on the development of the child depending on how we handle them together.

Stick Play

At The Dewey School children are allowed to play with sticks and are guided by their teachers in respectful stick play. Sticks are amazing, creative tools that can be used for digging, walking, building, counting, and endless imaginary play. Our three rules for stick play are:

1. We do not point sticks at people, not even to pretend.
2. Any child using a stick must constantly be aware of others around them.
3. Sticks must be shorter than the child's arm length unless working with a friend/peer.

If a child is using a stick in an unsafe way after reminders, they will lose their stick privileges for the remainder of their time outside on that day. It is expected that The Dewey School staff and parents/guardians will work together to reinforce these rules around stick play.

Health and Safety

Health Assessment Record and Immunization Form

We are required by the state to have your child's health assessment record and immunization form **BEFORE** their first day of school. A health form must be completed by your child's physician and on file showing that your child has had a physical within the past year. Health forms **expire one year from the date of the physical exam** indicated on the form and not the date the form was completed. If your child's health form expires during the school year, you have **60** days to provide a new one. Please talk to The Dewey School director if you need an exemption.

Illness

Children are to be kept home if they have symptoms of illness such as a fever of 100 degrees or higher, sore throat, deep cough, rash, diarrhea, inflammation of the eyes, vomiting, or any infectious condition. If your child will not be present, please notify us before 8:30 a.m. on the day of their absence. Students should not be sent back to school until they have been symptom and medication free for 24 hours*. If your child becomes sick at school, you will be notified through the information you provided on the emergency contact form. If we are unable to contact a parent or guardian, then an emergency contact will be notified.

Water and Creek Play

The Dewey School will use various locations at the Canterbury Shaker Village for educational purposes and play. A seasonal creek runs through our Paradise Meadow as well as a wetland. Students may need to cross over the creek or wetland daily to access some of the hiking trails. Often we will play in the creek exploring the properties of water, flow, damming, pooling, etc. Please notify us if you or your child have any concerns about water.

Ticks/Mosquitoes

Ticks and mosquitoes have now become a consistent part of our outdoor experience. Please check your child for ticks at the end of each day. The Dewey School Staff will help to establish a daily tick check. This is a daily routine that you will also want to do with your child while getting ready for bed or taking a bath. Please feel free to spray your child's clothing with your desired spray and/or send them to school pre-sprayed. Rubber boots have been said to be of benefit as ticks are challenged to climb their slippery surface. We spray with Yaya Tick Ban and use White Mountain natural oil to ward off blackflies.

Injuries

In the event that your child is injured during their school day at The Dewey School, a staff member will complete an injury report form and parents/caregivers will be notified of the incident at pick-up time. In the case of a serious injury, parents will be notified by phone to discuss further action. If we are unable to contact a parent/guardian, then an emergency contact will be notified. In the event of a critical emergency we will contact 911 and the Canterbury Police Department (First Responders). All of our teachers are Pediatric CPR/First Aid certified with at least one being Wilderness First Aid certified.

Head Lice

Parents **must** notify the school if they discover that their child has head lice. If there is a confirmed case of head lice identified in our school community, all children will be screened. Students with head lice will be sent home from school and will be readmitted when they have been treated and are nit free.

Medication Administration

Prescription and over the counter medications should be discussed with The Dewey School director and will be handled in compliance with NH DHHS regulations.

Child Protective Services Act

The Dewey School staff are required by the state of New Hampshire to report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities.

Tuition Payment Policy

The tuition rates for the school year vary depending on the number and length of days. Your fee schedule has been given to you in your Caregiver Packet. The total tuition is based on a 10 month school year (monthly tuition is the total tuition/10 months).

Enrollment Fee

A \$200, non-refundable registration fee must accompany the completed and signed enrollment form to reserve a place for your child at The Dewey School.

Payment Schedule

A non-refundable, non-transferable tuition deposit (one month's tuition) is due upon enrollment and due August 1 and can be paid on Lillio. Subsequent tuition payments will be due the first of each month: August 1, October 1, November 1, December 1, January 1, February 1, March 1, April 1, and May 1. Tuition can be paid in one lump sum or monthly. If an alternative method is used instead of HiMama e.g. a check is either mailed or left in the tuition mailbox hanging on the wall just inside the door at The Dewey School and a payment is late or returned. There will be a \$20 late fee plus interest for payments made after the 1st of the month and there will be a \$25 fee charged for each non-sufficient funds check received. Delinquent payments will be subject to late fees, interest, attorney's fees and costs.

Early Withdrawal

I understand that the School's overhead expenses do not diminish when a student departs during the school year. I understand and agree that I will give the School's Executive Director one (1) month's prior written notice of my intent to withdraw my child from the School, and that I am responsible for the full tuition payment for the next full month following such notice. I understand that I am responsible for the full tuition payment for the next full month following such notice and that payment is subject to the same terms as late and/or delinquent tuition payments as stated above.

Lillio

All payments can be made using the Lillio billing service. You can find their app at <https://www.himama.com/childcare-app>. Here you will be able to track your billing and pay using convenient ACH withdrawal. Bills will be issued the 15th of

each month and due on the 1st. Before and after school charges will be entered as a line item on the following month's bill.

Attendance

No refunds or adjustments will be made for missed days due to illness, vacation, snow days, natural disasters or state of emergency, or any other event resulting in non-attendance including lice or injury. Regular and timely attendance is important for your child and our school community. Routine and frequent lateness is not acceptable and is not beneficial for the students.

Before-care

Before-care (7:30-8:00) can be arranged with the director for an extra fee of \$10.00 per morning. Any child that arrives at school prior to 7:50 will be considered to be part of before care and will be invoiced as such. Payment for before care will be invoiced separately through HiMama.

Celebrations

Holidays

At The Dewey School, we will celebrate the changing seasons of the earth and leave the family traditions of other holidays to you and yours. While we respect these family traditions and expect children to share them, our focus will be on connections to the earth as we celebrate the Harvest Moon, the Winter Solstice, etc. You will receive more information about seasonal celebrations throughout the school year. **Please look at The Dewey School Calendar.**

Birthdays

Birthdays are important and cherished with a simple celebration at The Dewey School. We will sing our traditional birthday song and offer a special and unique art project that will become a "permanent" installation for the year. Children are welcome to bring in a photo of themselves as an infant on their birth-day. Children will eat their snack from the "Red Plate," a simple gesture recognizing their specialness in our world. Due to food allergies, we do not have families provide birthday snacks.

Please be sensitive to each of the children's feelings when planning parties outside of school and do not send invitations for school distribution. Instead, please refer to the The Dewey School Contact List (provided after the first week of school) for emails, addresses, and phone numbers of our Dewey School family.

Items from Home

Much of our time is spent outdoors connecting to the natural world. When inside, we have prepared the learning space with thoughtful and intentional learning materials. Please have your child(ren) leave his/her toys at home. Toys that accidentally come to school will be kept in your child's backpack to be taken home at the end of the day. If your child is spending the day at Dewey, they may bring a rest time "stuffy" which will be kept in their backpack until rest time.

Communication

Meet & Greet New Children

It is expected that new parents/guardians/children attend the scheduled Meet & Greet Open House at The Dewey School with their child the week prior to school starting. During this visit, we will practice our arrival routines, get better acquainted with teachers, spend some time in play, and answer any questions. Please see the calendar for dates and times.

Meet & Greet Returning Children

Returning children will be welcomed to an open house the week before school begins.

Daily/Weekly Communications and Interactions

Clear communication between home and school is important. When questions or concerns arise, parents can utilize text (emergency only), e-mail, or phone calls to get in touch with the director. Phone calls will be returned as soon as possible and when it does not interfere with the work of the children. For emergencies please send a text message to 603.393.0418. Please do keep us notified of significant events and changes in your child's life so that we may better support them during their school day. This includes a squabble before school, a pet dying, sleepless night, etc.

Facebook and Lillio will provide updates, investigation, and exciting moments. Please download Lillio and join our facebook page to have the ability to see our learning throughout the week. We ask that you are respectful of our Dewey School community in your dialog on social media. If you have a question or concern, ask us. The success of our community is dependent upon collaboration and communication.

We will do our best to email reminders, important dates, and any additional information that needs to be shared at the end of each week. ***If email is not an option for your family, please let the director know so a hard copy can be sent home.*

Caregiver-Teacher Meetings

Caregivers are encouraged to participate in **two** caregiver-teacher meetings during the school year, one in the fall and one in the spring. You will be notified in advance when these opportunities to share and discuss your child are happening so to best coordinate scheduling.

Caregiver Involvement

Caregiver involvement is essential to the health of our program and our community. As a small non-profit school with few staff, we rely on your support in a number of ways to help our community.

Caregivers as Partners (CAP)

In establishing the Dewey community, we welcome Caregivers as Partners (CAP) as an organization of caregivers organized by the parents/caregivers who meet regularly to learn and grow with each other, help with activities, bring in speakers, offer a voice to the The Dewey School board of directors, and collaborate with the Village, etc. Please make sure to fill out and return the [Caregiver Volunteer Questionnaire](https://bit.ly/2SiXABB) (<https://bit.ly/2SiXABB>)

Your responsibilities as a caregiver/parent in support of your child while attending The Dewey School include:

- Sending your child on time to school each day prepared and dressed appropriately for the day's weather
- Providing a nutritious lunch
- Attending Meet and Greet held the week before school begins
- Be available for caregiver/teacher meetings twice a year; in October and in May to review and discuss goals for your student
- Participate in Dewey community activities as much as possible
- Read and when necessary, respond to emails and newsletters
- Participate in fundraisers whenever possible

Caregivers are always welcome and encouraged to be a part of their child's learning process. When talking to your child about their time at school, please remember that they have had a full and physically active day. The weather, peer interactions, or unexpected situations may have proved challenging for your child on any given day. We believe these challenges can be worked through and help

our students grow in many ways. Please be sensitive to these potential challenges and try asking questions specific to that day. For example: “What did you see on your hike today?” “What inspired you outside or inside today?” “What work did you do today?” Rather than “Did you have fun today?” or “How was your day?” When we ask specific questions that require more than a one word response we show our children that we are genuinely interested and clued into their world. Their responses and your presence in dialog encourages speech literacy and self esteem.

Please be mindful of your attitude toward the weather, temperatures, and wildlife. Your children are watching and listening to you and we want to set our children up for success in their indoor and outdoor adventures at The Dewey School.

Community Events

Each month there is a scheduled community event noted with an * by the date. Please reserve these dates on your family’s calendar. Our community is strengthened through your participation. Events include: Harvest Soiree and Scarecrow Build, Fairy Festival, Art Exhibition, and End of Year Celebration. More info to follow.

Donations/Fundraising

The Dewey School is an IRS designated 501(c)(3). We appreciate your charitable donations and support of us through **NH Gives in June** and **Giving Tuesday in November**. We also participate in small local fundraisers. If you have other ideas or suggestions for grants, donations, stock contributions, etc. please contact the director or head of the Caregivers as Partners (CAP) program.

Behavioral and Intervention Policy

Our goal is to meet the needs of the children enrolled at The Dewey School, acknowledging that all children have their own special needs at one time or another. We see facilitation of early intervention services as a critically important aspect of our work with young children. We watch the development of all the children in our care, and should we have questions, we will follow the steps outlined below:

- Teacher will document development and note when behaviors seem outside the norm range over time for children of their age (through anecdotal notes, samples of work, and observation reports)
- We will contact the family and communicate concern(s). We may request permission to arrange for a screening. Should the family agree, we will help to coordinate a screening through the appropriate school system agency.

- If the family refuses to pursue a screening or consult with their child's school system or a mutually agreed upon outside resource, it may be determined that The Dewey School is not able to serve the child. The Dewey School director will let the family know as early in the school year as possible of this possible outcome so that the family can pursue other placement options.

The Dewey School has these considerations when asking a child to leave:

- Has the implementation of strategies over time resulted in improvement or have the concerns persisted or escalated?
- Is your family supporting the interventions and practices of The Dewey School?
- Is the program able to meet the needs of the individual child and the needs of the group as a whole?

Each case is considered on a case-by-case basis. In some cases, we will implement a one month adjustment period after which a determination will be made about continuing enrollment. After thoughtful discussion between staff and parents a family may be asked to make other arrangements for their child.

Transitioning

We understand that transitions can be hard for both child and parent. For many children, the most difficult transition is drop-off time at the beginning of the school year. The more routine we can make drop-off, the easier for everyone involved. There are several actions you can take to help this transition and any separation fears your child may have.

As much as possible, please arrive at school on time! School begins at 8:00 (unless you have before school care which begins at 7:30) A timely arrival will offer your child a chance to self-select their work choices which are offered and settle in with their friends prior to snack and morning meeting.

- While driving to school, gently remind your child of their morning's schedule/routine. If it seems helpful, perhaps tell them one or two things you will be doing while they are at school.
- Calmly explain and reassure your child that you will be back and offer a specific reference
- Remind your child that when they arrive, their The Dewey School time begins! They can join their friends, help a teacher, explore and play.
- After walking your child to The Dewey School offer a hug &/or kiss and say your good-bye. Allow your child's teacher(s) to welcome, comfort, and take good care of your child from there. Your child may cry, but we recommend

that you continue on to your car. By doing this, you are communicating to your child that you know The Dewey School is a safe place for them and that you have confidence in their ability to handle new challenges. You are also communicating that you trust your child's teacher(s). We have found that the adjustment period can be more challenging when good-byes are prolonged.

- Please be reassured that any crying usually stops within a few minutes of seeing you drive away. However, if for some reason your child does not calm down and settle into their morning, you will be called to discuss next steps.

Arrival and Departure

Arrival

Please arrive at The Dewey School by entering through the parking lot entrance. Please do not enter the exit-only driveway at the south of the school. Parking will be **across from the granite steps of Dewey. Do NOT park in front of the red brick building as this is a private residence.** Please arrive at your scheduled time. **Before-care will arrive and be charged for any time between 7:30 and 8:00.** Morning and all day students should arrive between 8:00 and 8:10. Your walk up the stairs is a great time to begin your goodbyes. You'll be greeted at the door by a teacher who will help your child to their cubby to deposit their belongings, invite them to be with friends and explore activities, and sign them in.

Departure

Morning only friends will be picked up at 11:30 at Dewey. All full day students will be picked up at 3:00. Prompt pick up at the respective times is important for the child and is also respectful of the teacher who has their own commitments to keep. Anyone who picks your child up from school **must** be on your authorization form. We will ask for photo identification until we know our families well, students will not be released without it. In the event that different pick-up or drop-off arrangements have been made, please inform staff at drop-off that day. The Dewey School will not transport children in a vehicle.

Late Pick-Up Policy

The first five minutes after the scheduled pickup-time are free of charge. A \$10 fee for each 10 minutes you are late thereafter. This charge will be reflected on the next month's invoice.

Inclement Weather/School Closings

The Dewey School will not operate when extreme weather creates conditions which are dangerous for School staff and young children and their families. The Dewey School follows our local school districts, the Shaker Regional School District and Merrimack Valley School District, for weather events. The Director will communicate any delay or cancellation due to inclement weather by 6:00am via Lillio, and The Dewey School Facebook page.

Closures for inclement weather or natural disasters are not refundable.

FOOD

Snacks and Lunches

Food and water are a very important part of our time together. Taking good care of our bodies by nourishing them with healthy food and lots of water will help keep us energized and prepared to do our work. Mealtimes will always be eaten together with teacher(s), family style, building community as we use kind manners and enjoy each other's company.

Morning snacks will be provided by families and should be simple, nutritious, and ready for your child to access in their backpack when needed. Families are asked to ensure snacks meet any allergy guidelines, if applicable.

Children attending The Dewey School all day are required to bring their own nutritious lunch every day. Lunch needs to be in a leakproof lunch container with your child's name on it that will be placed in the fridge. Good nutrition plays an important role in the development of a child physically, mentally, and emotionally.

Please provide an insulated, reusable water bottle that will be taken home daily for washing and returned.

Food Restrictions and Allergies

Please notify the director of any food restrictions or allergies for your child. Depending on the nature of the restrictions or allergies, families may be asked to provide snack alternatives or eliminate certain types of food.

We are a 501(c)(3)

The Dewey School is an approved 501(c)(3) non-profit organization meeting the requirements as such set forth by the IRS. We work diligently to keep our tuition rates affordable while offering exceptional programming. In order to do this, The Dewey School relies on donations, grants, and fundraising to help offset our expenses. We appreciate your tax-deductible contributions, employer match, or gifts of time and effort to help in our grant writing. Please contact The Dewey School Director at director@deweyschool.net for more information.

Non-discrimination Policy

The policy of the The Dewey School prohibits discrimination on the basis of age, gender, religion, race, color, creed, sexual orientation, handicap, national or ethnic origin, or marital or parental status in the recruitment and employment of employees, in (i) the awarding and acceptance of grants and funds; (ii) the admission of students; (iii) the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, tuition assistance and loan programs, athletic and other school-administered programs and services.