



New Canaan Nature Center

144 Oenoke Ridge
New Canaan, CT 06840-4198
Tel (203) 966-9577
Fax (203) 966-6536
www.NewCanaanNature.org

New Canaan Nature Center

Preschool Floater/Aide – Job Description

M-F 9am-12pm

\$18/Hr

Position summary

The New Canaan Nature Center is a not-for-profit environmental education center and sanctuary dedicated to helping people of all ages better understand, appreciate and care for the world of nature. Under the management of the Preschool Director and the Assistant Director, the Preschool Floater/Aide is pivotal in helping make the New Canaan Nature Center's Preschool a leader as an innovative and cutting-edge nature-based preschool program. The Preschool Floater/Aide has responsibility to assist in all the preschool classes (on an as needed basis) during the school week and is also an important staff member within the larger NCNC organization. The Preschool Floater/Aide assists in supporting and guiding every child's social, emotional and cognitive development within the context of our nature- and play-based program, provides positive and proactive guidance for students, and establishes positive and productive relationships with families. The Preschool Floater/Aide assists in creating a classroom environment that is living the best practices of nature-based early childhood education and has daily class activities that incorporate as much outdoor learning and activity time as possible. Preschool Floater/Aide will help establish and maintain a clean, safe and healthy learning environment both in the classroom and out on the grounds at all times. The Floater/Aide will help ensure a well-run, purposeful preschool program, and maintain a commitment to professionalism as a Preschool Floater/Aide and NCNC employee.

Key Roles (Essential Job Responsibilities)

- Provide support to the teaching staff to ensure a safe and consistent environment.
- Be readily available to assist teachers in the classrooms or with outdoor play at all times.
- Assist in maintaining a classroom environment that is living the best practices of nature-based early childhood education as well as applying best practice in pedagogy.
- Assist in facilitating a developmentally appropriate learning environment for children throughout the school day, including indoor and outdoor learning and activity times, class meetings, clean-up, bathroom break, snack, stories, etc.
- Establish positive and productive relationships with preschool families.
- Maintain a clean, safe and healthy environment for students and other staff as well as being a part of the overall safety and security of the Center.
- Assist with inside and outside classroom organization and general cleanliness, and maintenance including plant and animal care.
- Serve as a substitute teacher for all Preschool classes, Extended Days and Lunch Bunch.
- Meet all NAEYC accreditation and Connecticut licensing mandates.
- Be open- minded and willing to try new ideas and new ways of doing things to improve instruction, relationships, effectiveness, efficiency and any other relevant behaviors and skills.
- Assist in incorporating a developmentally appropriate, nature and play based early childhood subjects and activities within a professional environment of sustainability.
- Prioritize tasks to reflect their relative importance.
- Maintain confidentiality.

- Daily assignments may include coverage for other staff during breaks and planning time, clean toys and educational materials, clean common areas such as kitchen, bathrooms, break room and outdoor play areas, remove garbage, inventory supplies, organize teacher resource rooms and recycle closet.

Other Preschool Floater/Aide Duties

- Ensure a well-run, purposeful program responsive to student, family and organizational needs.
- Ensure that classroom first aid boxes and backpack first aid items are equipped with all necessary items. Restock as needed.
- Participate in staff development and continuing education in all areas (early childhood, nature education, innovative programming) to help ensure Preschool as a leader in the field of nature-based early childhood preschools.
- Participate in any NCNC Staff and Preschool Orientations and trainings.
- Manage compliance with health and safety protocols: Understand all emergency procedures and protocols and ensure that all staff have a working knowledge of these by practicing them as recommended by the NCNC Safety and Evacuation plan.
- Participate in weekly Preschool staff meetings and monthly Education Team meetings and All NCNC staff meetings.
- Participate in a yearly performance review and mid-year review with Preschool Director.
- Meet all applicable licensing regulations.
- Read and regularly review the NCNC Employee Handbook, the NCNC Working with Children Policy and the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct to ensure that you are meeting every behavior and observation expectation described within.
- Maintain a commitment of professionalism at all times both with students, families, peer teachers and NCNC staff and administration.
- Do not use personal devices (cameras, phones, laptops, websites, etc) for taking or storing pictures or videos of children in NCNC Preschool.

Other NCNC duties and responsibilities

- Ensure that all activities are in compliance with NCNC policies and procedures.
- Role model stewardship to students, peers, parents and public at all times. Pick up trash ANYTIME you come across it.
- Complete other tasks as assigned by the Preschool Director or Executive Director with enthusiasm and excellence.

Professional Staff Duties and responsibilities

- Serve as in-house expert on early childhood environmental education, and serve a similar role for the education profession outside of the Nature Center.
- Communicate clearly and constructively needs and priorities to administration.
- Be open-minded and willing to try new ideas.
- Establish rapport and trust with others, including parents, supervisors and colleagues.
- Be engaged in actively communicating and listening with co-workers and supervisors.
- Work as part of the larger NCNC team.
- Act diplomatically in challenging situations.
- Prioritize tasks to reflect their relative importance.
- Set annual personal goals to discuss and regularly review with Preschool Director.
- Complete assignments on time with minimal direction.
- Be punctual and communicate time requests proactively.