



School of Nature RVA

Enrichment Program

Information & Presentation

Welcome to School of Nature RVA : Where Education Meets the Outdoors

Imagine a classroom with no walls, where the sun is the ceiling and the trees are the chalkboards. At School of Nature RVA, learning happens outdoors, in our beautiful Nature Areas. Our enrichment program is designed to nurture each child's academic, emotional, social, and personal development while fostering a love for the environment 🌳☀️

1. Our Mission and Philosophy

At School of Nature RVA, we are not simply offering outdoor time—we are rethinking what education can feel like for a child.

Our mission is to create an environment where children grow into **capable, confident, and grounded individuals**, through a daily connection to nature, movement, and meaningful learning.

We believe children thrive when:

- Their bodies are **active and engaged**, not confined
- Learning is **connected to real life**, not abstract and fragmented
- They are trusted to explore, try, fail, and grow outdoor
- They feel **safe, seen, and supported**

This enrichment program is intentionally small and simple.
It is not about doing more, it is about doing things **better**.

Instead of separating subjects, we guide children through experiences where everything is connected:

- A moment at the creek becomes science, problem-solving, and confidence
- Caring for animals becomes responsibility, empathy, and routine
- Exploring the forest becomes movement, creativity, and resilience

Our approach blends:

- **Outdoor, nature-based learning**
- **Child-led exploration with strong guidance**
- **Structured moments for academic growth**
- **Daily focus on emotional and personal development**

We are not trying to recreate a traditional classroom outside.
We are creating something different, a place where children can **build real skills, real confidence, and a real connection to the world around them.**

2. Program Overview

 Location : Mechanicsville (Westwood / Old Church area) : Private land with forest, creek, and outdoor learning spaces, Indoor space available for: Bathrooms, Weather safety and Naps.

Age Group : 2,5 to 5 years old	
 Group Size	Maximum 10 children - Ratio - 1 Educator for 5 children + extra assistant
 Schedule Options	Tuesday and/or Thursday Drop-off can be available Half days : 9 am - 12/12.30 pm Full days : 9am - 4pm
 Student's abilities requirements :	- Be fully potty trained and able to use the bathroom independently (including basic clothing management and hand washing). - Follow simple two-step directions (for example: "Put your backpack away and come sit on the log.") - Listen to and follow teacher instructions, especially those related to safety. - Stay with the group and respond when their name is called. - Express their basic needs verbally (Hungry, Thirsty, Bathroom, Hurt)

Age Group : 5 to 9 years old

 Group Size	Maximum 14 children - Ratio : 1 educator for 7 children
 Schedule Options	1, 2, 3 or 4 days a week - Drop-off available Day : 9am - 2pm Xtra Curriculum : 2pm - 4pm
 Student's abilities requirements :	- Follow teacher directions and respond appropriately to safety instructions. - Stay with the group and respect established boundaries. - Use the bathroom independently, including recognizing when they need to go, managing clothing, and washing their hands. - Clearly communicate when they are hurt, unwell, thirsty, hungry, uncomfortable, or need help. - Participate willingly in an outdoor program and arrive prepared for different weather conditions. - Respect teachers, classmates, animals, materials, and the natural environment. - Accept guidance and redirection without disrupting the group.

Activities : Children and/or Parents Class

 Group Size	Maximum 10 to 20 students (Depends on the activities) 1 coach + assistant for children group 1 coach for adult group		
 Schedule Options	Parents can enroll their child. Classes for adults are available. Week day Hours : 4.30 pm - 6 pm Season : September 1st - November 31st December 1st - February 30th March 1st - May 31st June 1st - August 31st		
 Class and curriculum	<table> <tr> <td> - Team sports - Martial arts - Yoga - Dance </td><td> - Painting - Singing - Pottery - Handcraft </td></tr> </table>	- Team sports - Martial arts - Yoga - Dance	- Painting - Singing - Pottery - Handcraft
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3. Learning Approach and Curriculum

Our 15 Learning Pillars

1. Mathematics & Logic 2. Literacy & Communication 3. Science, Natural Systems, Geography & Earth Systems 4. Nature & Survival Skills 5. Practical Life Skills 6. Financial Literacy 7. Emotional Intelligence	8. Community & Leadership 9. Physical Development 10. Art & Creativity 11. Critical Thinking 12. Ethics & Responsibility 13. Innovation & Design 14. Mindfulness & Self-Development 15. Languages and Cultures
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Children are always learning multiple skills at once, in a way that **feels natural and engaging**.

Our Curriculum - Learning Through the Seasons

At School of Nature RVA, learning follows the rhythm of nature.

Each season brings its own topics, energy, and opportunities for discovery.

Through the year, children explore themes such as:

Spring: growth, life cycles, planting, renewal

Summer: water, ecosystems, outdoor skills, abundance

Fall: harvest, food systems, preparation, transformation

Winter: resilience, stillness, survival, reflection

The forest, the creek, the garden, the animals, become their main learning environment.

How the 15 Pillars Are Integrated

Our 15 pillars are not taught as separate subjects throughout the day.

Instead, they are all connected within the same theme, allowing children to move through the day with coherence and meaning.

This creates: A natural flow between activities, A deeper understanding of what they are learning, A day that respects both their physical energy and cognitive rhythm

Each moment of the day builds on the previous one, so children don't feel like they are "switching subjects," but rather going deeper into the same experience.

Example of a Theme in Practice

Theme: Water & Creek Exploration - The same experience evolves through the pillars:

In the morning, children move, explore the creek, climb, balance → Physical Development

They observe water flow, insects, environment → Science & Natural Systems

They build small dams or redirect water → Critical Thinking & Problem Solving

They measure, compare, estimate → Mathematics & Logic

They describe what they see, share ideas → Literacy & Communication

They collaborate, take turns, solve small conflicts → Community & Emotional Intelligence

Later, this can extend into:

Drawing what they observed → Art & Creativity

Reflecting on the experience → Mindfulness & Self-Development

Our Educators

Who remembers that one teacher you loved?

The one who made you love what they were teaching—simply because **they loved it so much themselves**.

This is exactly who we look for.

At School & Nature RVA, our educators are **passionate people** who don't just teach—they **invite children into an adventure of learning and discovery**. They choose to be here because they want a way of teaching that is **alive, real, and deeply connected to children**.

They believe that:

- Children learn best **outside, through real experiences**
- Education should be **engaging, meaningful, and human**
- A strong connection and communication between **teachers, children, and families** changes everything

Our educators are not simply filling a role. They are **part of the vision**. They bring their energy, their passion, and their desire to contribute to something bigger, a different kind of education, and a better future for children.

4. Membership & Fees

Trial - Discovery day		
Group		Cost
2..5 - 4 yo		\$45 half day
5 - 8 yo	9am-2pm	\$60
5 - 8 yo	2pm-4pm	\$40
Activities		\$15

Age Group : 2.5 to 5 years old	
Commitment	
September 1st - May 31st	Summer is optional
Monthly Membership	
Weekly schedule	Monthly payment
1 half-day	\$195
2 half-days or 1 full day	\$384
3 half-days or 1 full day + 1 half-day	\$568
4 half-days or 2 full days	\$746
5 half-days or 2 full days + 1 half-day	\$917
Deposit	
Equal to one month's membership for the selected schedule	
Yearly Fee	
\$200	

Age Group : 5 to 8 years old Enrichment program : 9am - 2pm	
Commitment	
September 1st - May 31st	Summer is optional
Monthly Membership	
Weekly schedule	Monthly payment
1 full day	\$290
2 full days	\$554
3 full days	\$795
Deposit	
Equal to one month's membership for the selected schedule	
Yearly Fee	
\$150	

Age Group : 5 to 8 years old Xtra Curriculum : 2pm - 4pm	
Commitment	
September 1st - May 31st	Summer is optional
Monthly Membership	
Weekly schedule	Monthly payment
1 day	\$190 / month
2 days	\$368 / month
3 days	\$534 / month
Yearly Fee	
\$0 if part of the day already \$50 if only enrolled for the Xtra	

Activities : 4.30pm - 6pm		
Commitment		
3 month period		
Membership		
Child	1 activity / week	\$75 / month
Parents	1 activity / week	\$65 / month

Co-Working Space for parents	
Membership	
Monthly membership	\$100/month
1 day	\$10

5. Strong Parent–Teacher Communication

Our app provides families with a clear and consistent way to stay connected with their child's Educator.

Private Communication

Parents and Educators can communicate privately about the child's experiences, needs, progress, or any concerns.

Daily Activity Updates

Educators share regular updates about the activities, projects, and learning experiences taking place throughout the week.

Detailed Weekly Feedback

Each family receives personalized feedback about their child every week. Rather than simply describing the activities completed, the Educator shares meaningful observations about the child's development, including:

- Growth and new skills
- Strengths and successes
- Struggles or areas needing support
- Positive and challenging moments
- Helpful suggestions for supporting the child at home

A United Community Around Every Child

Children thrive when they feel that the adults around them are connected, united, and working together to support them—not divided between home and school. This sense of consistency helps children feel secure, understood, and confident as they grow. Building a strong partnership between parents and educators is therefore an essential part of our educational model.

Parents can also communicate with one another through the app, helping families build meaningful relationships and creating a close, supportive school community.

6. Safety & Environment

At School of Nature RVA, safety is a priority—especially in an outdoor environment where children are free to explore, move, and engage with the world around them.

We create a space that is both **safe and empowering**, where children can take appropriate risks, build confidence, and develop independence within clear boundaries.

Safety Expectations

Children must:

- Be able to follow instructions
- Be aware of basic safety rules in an outdoor setting
- Be comfortable navigating natural environments (uneven ground, water, weather)

Our educators provide:

- Clear guidelines and boundaries
 - Active supervision
 - Support adapted to each child's needs
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Behavior Expectations

To maintain a safe and positive group dynamic, children are expected to:

- Treat others with **kindness and respect**
- Participate in a cooperative and supportive way

Verbal or physical aggressive behavior is not accepted in order to maintain a **calm, safe, and respectful environment** for all children at all time.

Drop-Off Policy

- **Children 5 years and older** may be dropped off
 - **Parents are welcome to stay on site at any time at the coworking space or with the classroom** we simply ask that parents do not interfere with the teaching or group dynamic
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Weather Preparedness

We embrace outdoor learning in all weather conditions.

Children must come prepared with:

- Weather-appropriate clothing (rain, cold, heat, snow)

Indoor space is available when needed for:

- Safety
- Weather (If too hot outside to enjoy and learn)
- Bathroom
- Naps

Join the Adventure Today!

Give your child the opportunity to grow academically, socially, and emotionally while developing a deep connection to nature. 🌿✨

Contact Us:

- **Phone:** 804-791-8439
- **Email:** schoolnaturerva@gmail.com
- **Website:** www.schoolnaturerva.com
- **Social Media:** Follow us on Facebook for updates and photos of daily adventures.

Experience the magic of nature-based learning with a certified teacher who understands how to inspire and nurture every child's potential. 🌈

Agreement and Signature:

- **Parent /Guardian Name :** _____
- **Parent /Guardian Signature :** _____
- **Date :** _____

10. The science behind outdoor learning

Learning outside has been scientifically shown to be beneficial for children in several ways, which can be attributed to various factors related to physical health, cognitive development, and emotional well-being.

1. **Enhanced Cognitive Function and Focus:** Research has shown that spending time in natural environments can improve cognitive functions such as attention, memory, and problem-solving. Nature has a calming effect that reduces mental fatigue, allowing children to focus better and for longer periods. This is supported by studies indicating that exposure to natural settings helps improve children's concentration and cognitive performance in tasks.
2. **Physical Health and Motor Skills:** Outdoor learning naturally incorporates physical activity, which is crucial for children's physical development. Activities like running, climbing, and exploring diverse terrains help develop motor skills, balance, and coordination. Regular physical activity also promotes cardiovascular health and helps prevent obesity, which can be more challenging to integrate into indoor learning environments.
3. **Reduced Stress and Improved Mental Health:** Nature exposure has been linked to lower levels of stress, anxiety, and depression. For children, being outside in a natural setting can provide a sense of freedom and reduce the pressure they might feel in a more structured indoor environment. The presence of natural elements like trees, water, and open spaces has been shown to decrease cortisol levels (a marker of stress) and promote overall well-being.
4. **Enhanced Social Skills and Collaboration:** Outdoor learning often involves group activities that encourage teamwork, communication, and social interaction. In an outdoor setting, children are more likely to engage in unstructured play and cooperative games, which can enhance their social skills and emotional intelligence.
5. **Connection to Nature and Environmental Stewardship:** Regular exposure to nature fosters a deeper connection to the environment, which is crucial for developing a sense of responsibility and stewardship for the natural world. This connection is harder to cultivate in indoor settings and is increasingly recognized as vital for raising environmentally conscious future generations.
6. **Improved Academic Performance:** Some studies suggest that children who engage in outdoor learning and play perform better academically. The combination of physical activity, enhanced focus, and reduced stress contributes to better learning outcomes and can make children more receptive to educational content when they return to more formal indoor settings.
7. **Sensory Engagement and Creativity:** Being outside engages all the senses—sight, sound, smell, touch—which can lead to more immersive learning experiences. This sensory engagement can stimulate creativity and imagination, as children are inspired by the changing environment and the endless possibilities of the natural world.

In summary, learning outside supports children's holistic development by enhancing cognitive function, physical health, emotional well-being, and social skills. These benefits make outdoor learning an invaluable complement to traditional indoor education.