

Camp Hopewell

Opt Outside

Program

Handbook



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Welcome to Opt Outside, Camp Hopewell's day program for those families who have chosen a virtual learning experience for their children this fall due to Covid-19. Through this program, we desire to provide children with an alternative opportunity to be able to spend time outdoors in nature and in a community with other children. Our staff facilitators will act as the 'guides' to our students' learning experiences. We will support students in their collaborations with each other and work together with families to gain insight into how we can better serve their educational needs.

The focus of time spent outside is the connection between the child and nature. We aim to provide our students with many experiences communing with nature and learning about the interconnectedness of the natural world. Like our summer camp and retreat programs, Camp Hopewell welcomes families and children from all backgrounds, cultures, and faith traditions. Hopewell itself is a ministry of the Presbytery of St. Andrew (PCUSA), though the activities within the Opt Outside program will not align with any particular denomination or religious tradition.

Program Calendar

Opt Outside is scheduled for Tuesday, September 8th - October 29th. If the Oxford School District or Lafayette School District closes due to coronavirus, we expect we would be able to stay open unless we are directed to close by the Mississippi Department of Health.

Enrollment Policies

Applications are accepted regardless of race, ethnicity, sex, gender/gender identity, religion, sexual orientation, political persuasion, national origin, or ancestry.

Children enrolled in Opt Outside must be able to follow verbal directions and have basic safety awareness skills. They must show respect towards other children and their instructors and be able to communicate effectively.

Children enrolled in Opt Outside will need to be able to work fairly independently. They do not need to exhibit reading or writing skills. During "study time" (individual quiet work time) the group's facilitators will be available to answer basic questions, help with technical troubleshooting, and keep students on task. **However, our staff will not teach, tutor, or work one-on-one for prolonged time with any student.**

If we find that a child does not possess the above program readiness skills, a conference will be held with the parent, the child's instructor, and a camp director. After two conference attempts we will discuss alternate programs elsewhere that may a better fit.

Hopewell reserves the right to discharge a family from the program at any time. If serious behavior concerns occur, up to two conferences will be held with the parents, the child's instructor, and a camp director. If, after behavior modifications have been made, and there are still behavior concerns, we reserve the right to terminate enrollment.

Payment + Cancellation Policies

Registration for both sessions will open on August 19. Session I Registration Cut- Off is September 2 and September 30 for Session 2. If your child is not able to attend the rest of his/her session for COVID-19 related reasons, the remainder of your payment will be refunded. Payment will not be refunded if school resumes half way through your session.

A \$100 non-refundable deposit will be required to register. The payment deadline will be the Friday before each session (9/4 + 10/2). Payment in full will be required for your session BEFORE your arrival. However, if you need to make arrangements for a payment plan, please contact us to set that up.

A \$25 charge will be assessed for insufficient funds. Any tuition over 10 days late will result in canceled enrollment.

Registration is for one month at a time. If you need to cancel your registration with this program, 7 days' notice is required.

Drop-Off / Pick-Up Procedures

Drop-off begins at 7:45am and ends at 8:15am. You can pick up your child between 2:45pm and 3:15pm. Because our staff have cleaning and preparation duties outside of hours spent with children, we are unable to accommodate drop-offs and pick-ups outside of the specified hours.

For drop-off in the mornings, your first stop will be at the Main Entrance gate. A staff member will check off your child's name and make sure all in the vehicle are wearing a mask.

You will then be directed to drive onto the coned area on the playing field to meet another staff member, who will take your child's temperature to make sure they are not running a fever. (100.4 and higher) A staff member will then escort your child(ren) out of the vehicle and to their small group.

For pick-up in the afternoon, you will drive straight onto the coned area on the playing field and follow the path. A staff member will meet you there to sign out your child and bring them to your car.

Throughout the entirety of the drop-off and pick-up process, we ask that you please stay in your car and wear a mask while interacting with our staff.

Please be sure that anyone who might be picking up your child during the week is listed on your account as authorized pickups. This includes both parents, siblings, family friends, grandparents, and babysitters. We will not be able to release your child into the care of anyone not listed unless notified in advance!

Program Access + Staff

Only individuals who have been background checked will be allowed alone with children at any time. Per the standards set by the American Camp Association and the MS Department of Health, we will have a ratio of up to 10 children to 1 facilitator. Each group will be independent from the other groups.

Behavior + Discipline

Hopewell staff members are trained to look for appropriate behavior and reinforce students with praise and encouragement when they are behaving well. They will remind the students of the rules on a daily basis using clear positive language, telling them how they are expected to behave rather than what they are not supposed to do.

Our staff are taught to “choose their battles” and to not overreact to trivial instances of inappropriate behavior, focusing instead on correcting bigger problems and praising what children are doing right.

We will teach our students to be aware of their bodies and feelings, how to implement calming techniques during moments of frustration, and how to work through social conflicts alongside our staff as needed. We will provide choices and allow students to have individuality and an element of control to their days.

The staff is trained to never:

- Lose their temper and yell at children
- Spank, hit or grab roughly
- Use verbal abuse, profanity or derogatory remarks
- Bully children or tolerate bullying from others

Please contact the Hopewell office and speak with a director if you feel or hear that the above stated behavior guidance policy is not being followed by our staff.

Communication + Social Media

Open communication between school staff and parents is key to a successful program! Please share any pertinent information with staff upon drop-off; for instance, we want to know if your child didn't sleep well the night before, didn't eat a good breakfast, or is feeling anxious about health and wellness. Serious information that may impact the child for longer than a day or two (death in the family, serious illness, divorce, deployment, etc.) should be shared with the director in person or via phone call/email; the director will share this information with the necessary staff at the comfort of the family.

We will communicate important information about the program in person at pick-up/drop-off times and through email.

We may post photos of Opt Outside students on the Camp Hopewell social media pages or website in order to market and spread the word about the program. You are welcome to share those photos or posts from the Hopewell pages. We ask that you do not save pictures for personal use/reposting on your own social media accounts, as pictures often contain multiple children in our programs.

Safety

Our job as educators is to keep your child safe. Your child's job is to help us keep them safe! Before activities we will review safety rules and expectations, such as boundaries of the area, how to interact with the environment, what to do if you see wildlife such as snakes, etc. We want this to be a safe and fun experience for all!

There will be times during our activities where students will engage in activities around fire-making, exploring waterways, using tools, and other activities where safety rules and precautions are extra important. Your child's safety is our utmost priority as we complete these activities; our staff will instruct on and maintain all safety protocols closely.

We ask that you or your child perform a tick check every day after school. We will be spending a lot of time outside, and even with insect repellent there's a chance your child might pick up a tick during exploration. Ticks like to hide near waistbands but can be found anywhere! If you find a tick, remove it with tweezers (be sure to remove the head), place it in a Ziploc bag, date it, and put it in your freezer. If there is any question of a tick-borne illness, you will be able to have the tick tested.

Employees, guests, students, and visitors may not, at any time while on property owned by Camp Hopewell, possess or use any weapon. Regardless of whether a person possesses a concealed weapons permit or is allowed by law to possess a weapon, weapons are prohibited on Hopewell property.

Food + Snacks

Due to coronavirus restrictions, Hopewell will not provide any food service for children, including lunches or snacks. All students are required to bring at least two snacks (morning and afternoon) and a lunch.

Since nut products are a major cause of severe allergic reactions for many children, Hopewell attempts to reduce the risk of potential exposure to nut product allergens on our site by being "nut-aware." In no way can Camp Hopewell guarantee that we will be a completely "nut-free" environment; however, we take steps to reduce nut allergens. Staff and students are asked to refrain from bringing any nuts or products containing nuts to our site.

All students should bring a water bottle with them each day; they will have many opportunities to refill their water bottles at stations around our site in order to stay hydrated.

Clothing

When students are not participating in “Study” time, they will spend much of the rest of the day outside in nature. Children will be required to arrive at Hopewell ready for the weather of the day. We will be outside as long as it is safe to do so – that includes being outside in the heat, the cold, and the rain! Please ensure that your child has the appropriate clothing and shoes for any weather.

Please be aware that your child might get wet, sweaty, or dirty throughout the day! Please send your child to Opt Outside in gently used clothing you do not mind them getting dirty. We are not responsible for rips, tears, or stains on clothing from exploring the natural environment.

You will need to bring an extra set of clothing for your child in case they get really wet or dirty during the day.

We recommend labeling all clothing and items. Staff will do their best to help children keep up with their items, but we are not responsible for any lost or misplaced items. There will be a lost and found basket located at the pick-up/drop-off site. –

General Health + Wellness

Children are to be kept home or will be sent home if they have any of the symptoms or illnesses listed below:

- Sudden and severe change in behavior
- Fever of over 100.4 degrees
- 2 or more instances of diarrhea or vomiting in 24 hours
- Mouth sores or rash with fever
- Pink eye (not yet treated with drops)
- Head lice
- Impetigo (not yet treated)
- Strep throat (until 24 hours after antibiotic has started)
- Chicken pox, Rubella, pertussis, mumps, measles, or Hepatitis A
- Covid 19

If your child is home sick for the day, or has to miss school for any other reason, please notify the director by email or phone call.

Staff will be monitoring children throughout the day. If any child comes down with a contagious or infectious illness or is unable to participate in the typical routine of the day, their parent or caregiver will be notified and asked to pick them up.

All staff are certified in CPR/First Aid. Any child who is injured will be cared for immediately. Parents will be notified by phone call and/or an incident report depending on the severity of the injury.

Medication will be given to children only with signed parental permission which includes date, type, drug name, time, and dosage. It must be in the original container, not have an expired

date, and be labeled with the child's name. Aspirin, ibuprofen, acetaminophen, antacid, or an antihistamine may be provided by the facility if parental permission has been granted. These medications will be in the original container.

Children with special health care needs who require scheduled daily medications and/or emergency medications should have a care plan. A care plan will be created with the director and parent to include parameters, directions, and symptoms for needing the medications. A medication log will be kept and will include the time, date, dosage administered, and the initials of the staff who gave the medication.

There will be no refund of tuition given for school days missed due to illness. As a licensed child care provider, we are required to follow all health department guidelines. If you have a child enrolled with a vaccination exemption, your child may be required to miss extended periods of school due to illness outbreaks. These extended absences do not qualify for a tuition refund or discount.

Coronavirus Health + Wellness

Our hours of operations need to be strict. Drop off will be from 7:45am and 8:15am and will include a health screening. If a family does not arrive in this time period to be screened, they will not be able to attend Opt Outside that day. Pickup will be from 2:45-3:15pm; we cannot accommodate late pick-ups because our staff will be sanitizing spaces after students leave.

Parents are not to enter any buildings or exit their vehicles during drop-off and pick-up times.

Small Groups will consist of 10 or fewer children/staff to meet the MSDH guidelines for group size. We will be separating children by days of the week that they attend the program to mitigate cross-contamination. There will be no whole group opportunities during the day. Each class will stay in separate areas.

Masks will be required for all adults and children during drop-off and pick-up. Staff and students will wear masks when they are indoors except when they are eating or more than 6 feet away from any other person. All indoor facilities will be open to fresh air in guidelines from ACA and MSDH.

Increased hygiene and sanitization procedures will be enforced. Children will wash or sanitize hands upon arrival, before eating, and after many activities. All areas used by children will be sanitized daily before use by another group, and whole group materials will be kept to a minimum.

We will look to the MS Department of Health to guide us on closing procedures if we have a case within our program at any time. Families/Staff will be required to notify Hopewell if they believe they have been exposed or potentially/confirmed positive with COVID-19.

If a child or staff member in a group is potentially or confirmed positive, we will follow the guidelines of the health department. That group may be required to stay home/quarantine and the site sanitized. Depending on exposure entire site may be closed for a time, as determined by the health department.

In the event of closing or children being asked to stay home because they are sick, we will reimburse tuition. We are going to follow the childcare licensing guidelines and are going to work to stay open or open back up as quickly and as safely as possible in the instance of required closing.

How to Pack for Opt Outside

Make sure to label everything that you send with your child. We will have a safe place designated for your child to leave her/his belongings during the day.

- Lunch + 2 snacks (nut free!)
- Any items required for your student's virtual learning, including a laptop or tablet. If your child does not have any scheduled online schoolwork, please be sure to send them with a book, worksheets, or something else to work on while other students are working online.
- Weather appropriate shoes with backs
- Swimsuit + towel (some days will feature pool time!)
- Sunscreen + Bugspray
- Water bottle