



Good Shepherd Episcopal School seeks a **Nature Preschool Educator** for the 2022-2023 academic year. Under the direction of the Director of The Nature Preschool, a preschool educator participates in all aspects of The Nature Preschool to address the educational, social, safety, and enrichment needs of the children served by the program.

The Nature Preschool at GSES is an outdoor nature-based preschool program serving children ages 3-5. Our mission is to promote kinship with nature while supporting the growth of the whole child. Children engage in an outdoor, play-based, emergent curriculum with teachers scaffolding unique learning experiences in nature while supporting developmentally appropriate practices for early childhood education. We strive to lay the foundation for future academic achievement and environmental literacy.

The program operates almost entirely outside, utilizing Good Shepherd's natural playground, gardens, and nearby Forest Hill Park. Children play outside, rain or shine, year-round. The preschool also utilizes an indoor nature-based classroom for afternoon naps, severe weather days, and special teaching events.

#### **ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Collaboratively working with The Nature Preschool team, a Nature Preschool Teacher teacher will:

- Support the mission, philosophy, and core values of the School;
- Establish a climate of respect for each child, and maintain a safe and healthy working environment;
- Supervise students in The Nature Preschool, ensuring a quality educational experience for all participants;
- Be excited to get dirty and handle plants and the occasional animal with zeal (this includes insects);
- Assist children with toileting, diapering, and dressing;
- Present a calm mediating presence while helping children navigate conflict;
- Think creatively to scaffold high quality learning opportunities and present new ideas and concepts that build upon the children's interests;
- Collaborate as part of The Nature Preschool team of teachers to actively promote safety and the social, emotional, and physical development of each child through nurturing relationships and activity choices that reflect each child's individual needs, interests, and abilities; and
- Fulfill other duties as assigned.



## REQUIREMENTS

- Education/experience working with children ages 3-5;
- Pediatric CPR/First Aid certified, and ability to pass a state and federal background check;
- Education and/or experience in Positive Guidance, the Encouraging Classroom, or gentle guidance approaches to conflict management;
- Education and/or experience with Developmentally Appropriate Practices for early childhood development;
- Current nature-based teacher certification or willingness to obtain one;
- Enthusiasm for learning about plants/animals/ecological relationships;
- Ability to carry 50 lbs.;
- Must possess physical fitness to hike, climb over logs, navigate stream crossings, and run with children;
- Ability to pull a small collapsible wagon carrying outdoor supplies;
- Ability to handle various weather temperatures and precipitation with a smile on your face;
- Familiarity with Reggio Emilia, emergent curriculum, child-directed learning, and forest schools;
- A reflective approach to professional and personal growth;
- Interest in promoting a diverse and inclusive learning environment rooted in community;
- Desire to build strong relationships, open communication, and support for our families;
- Mindset that promotes peace education and protection of the earth and all its inhabitants;
- An environmental viewpoint rooted in science and current research; and
- Team oriented with ability to collaborate with Head of School and other teachers of K-8 school in program adjustments, evaluation, and improvement.

The Nature Preschool Educator position is 10-month, part-time benefited position at approximately 25 hours weekly. Educator hours are 8:45-2:15 on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, and 8:45-12:45 on Tuesday and Thursday, with occasional hours as needed.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Candidates interested in pursuing this position should send a cover letter, resume, and reference contact information to Head of School Ken Seward at [kseward@gses.org](mailto:kseward@gses.org). Please include "Nature Preschool Educator" in the subject line.



## **ABOUT GOOD SHEPHERD EPISCOPAL SCHOOL**

Our community spirit is strong, as we are bound by a common purpose, which is to inspire our students to achieve academic excellence within a diverse, nurturing community. Our PK-8 program allows our students to build character and foster respect for one another and our shared environment.

Our instruction and program reinforce this common purpose and allow growth through hands-on experiences, especially taking advantage of our location at the intersection of the James River and Forest Hill Park in history-rich Richmond, Virginia. We are proud of the strength of our outdoor programming, the creativity of our curriculum, and our commitment to the individual needs of our students. We are a school where creativity meets community in the heart of Forest Hill, while staying “rooted in community, strengthened by diversity, and inspired by possibility.”