



Nature School at Camp Albemarle K-8th

Mission & Educational Philosophy

Mission

Nature School at Camp Albemarle is a Christian school rooted in daily nature immersion, bringing students closer to God and nature, inspiring wonder in learning, and forming life-long learners.

Our Story and Context

Nature School at Camp Albemarle began in the fall of 2020 as a small, combined classroom serving homeschooled students. In 2021, we received official approval to operate as a private school and began offering elementary grades. Since that time, the school has grown intentionally, adding one grade level at a time and now serves preschool through 8th grade.

Our growth has been guided by a commitment to faith, nature-based education, and developmentally appropriate, high-quality academics. As we grow, we continue to build thoughtfully on the foundations established in our preschool and lower school programs.

Our Educational Philosophy

We believe the natural world is an exceptional classroom - one that inspires wonder, deepens learning, and reveals God's character through His creation. As Scripture reminds us in Romans 1:20, *"From the creation of the world, God's invisible qualities... have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made."*

At Nature School, learning about nature and learning through nature are deeply intertwined. Time spent outdoors is not at the expense of academics, but rather enhances them by providing meaningful, hands-on experiences that support curiosity, engagement, and understanding.

School should be a joyful, active, and engaging experience. We seek to cultivate inquisitive, creative, kind students who develop a strong belief in Jesus, a strong sense of self, empathy for others, and a lasting connection to the natural world. Students at Nature School spend significant time outdoors each year, allowing learning to transcend the traditional classroom and fostering awe and appreciation for our Creator.

Our Core Commitments

At Nature School at Camp Albemarle, we are committed to:

- **Sharing God's love through His creation and through our relationships with one another**
- **Connecting students to nature to inspire appreciation, stewardship, and wonder**
- **Providing a safe, nurturing environment that encourages exploration and learning**
- **Supporting positive interactions and cooperative learning that foster problem-solving and empathy**
- **Honoring the individuality, abilities, and interests of each student**
- **Promoting wellness, physical strength, and resilience through active play and movement**

These commitments guide our decisions and shape our school culture.

Teaching and Learning

We educate the whole child - spiritually, academically, physically, socially, and emotionally.

Our academic program is built on reputable, research-based, sequential curriculum aligned with standards, while remaining responsive to the needs and development of individual learners. Curriculum provides a clear framework for instruction while allowing teachers the flexibility to adapt learning experiences and make meaningful connections beyond the curriculum when appropriate.

Rather than teaching to a test, our teachers focus on building strong relationships with students and creating rich, faith-informed learning environments that nurture independence, creativity, and compassion. Small class sizes and close-knit classrooms allow teachers to know students deeply and support them as whole people.

We trust and value our teachers as professionals and support their continued growth, collaboration, and development. This trust enables consistency, intentionality, and care in how learning unfolds across classrooms and grade levels.

Community and School Life

Nature School at Camp Albemarle is a close-knit community where students learn and grow together across grade levels. Multi-age interactions foster mentorship, belonging, and strong relationships among students.

Time for free play and exploration is intentionally woven into each day and is recognized as an essential component of children's development and long-term success. Active play, outdoor learning, and shared experiences support physical health, social growth, and emotional well-being.

We partner closely with families, maintaining open and consistent communication so that students are supported both at school and at home.

A Living Mission

This mission and philosophy provide a stable foundation for our school - guiding decisions, shaping culture, and preserving the distinctive identity of Nature School at Camp Albemarle. While programs and practices may evolve over time, our commitment to faith, nature-based learning, whole-child education, and joyful discovery remains constant.