

Hidden Hollow™

Nestled in a two-acre dry kettle hole—a glacially formed depression common to Cape Cod—Hidden Hollow’s unique topography provides a stimulating and beautiful outdoor setting for discovery and learning. Children can climb stepping stumps, navigate log balance beams, construct forts, create nature-inspired art, build with blocks, dig in sand, experiment with water, make music, engage in sensory investigation with plants, and more.

Hidden Hollow™— The Facts

- The treehouse was designed by Pete Nelson, the star of Animal Planet’s hit show “Treehouse Masters”
- The design Nelson presented was inspired by Norwegian stave churches, medieval wooden churches with post and beam construction related to timber framing
- Under the direction of teacher Kevin McFadyen, students from Upper Cape Cod Regional Technical School’s carpentry program built the treehouse
- The decking of the treehouse is made of ipe, support posts made of locust, the timber framing made of red cedar and the hand rails are made of mahogany



- The first floor is fully accessible to visitors with disabilities
- Hidden Hollow™ opened on August 2, 2011 with over 500 visitors in attendance
- Large chalkboards allow visitors to experiment with different materials to create art
- The marimbas are tuned to create harmonious sound no matter how many are in use at a time
- The Discovery box clues give families a chance to discover something new on every visit
- The branches and sticks used in the Construct area are all natural materials found around Heritage’s grounds



Since Hidden Hollow™ opened in August 2011 as one of New England's first certified Nature Explore Classrooms, more than 330,000 children, teachers, and families have spent the day engaged in outdoor discovery.

The most popular feature in Hidden Hollow™ is the Splash area. The Splash area allows visitors the opportunity to experiment with water play by utilizing a hand pump to fill buckets, watering cans and other vessels to create experiments by mixing solutions, understanding kitchen chemistry, and helping to maintain the children's planting garden.

This area was recently enhanced thanks to the generous support of the James M. Stoneman Charitable Fund, The Dorr Foundation, and The Cape Cod Five Cents Savings Bank Charitable Foundation Trust. The NEW and EXPANDED Splash area will be open to children and families on April 14, 2018. The enhancements will provide expanded outdoor exploration activities, including:

- a dramatic waterfall
- a stream for hands-in water experimentation opportunities to build dams
- options to measure water flow
- Spill bowls to experiment with how objects sink or float

The new features expand children's exposure to STEM ideas as they experiment with a multitude of science concepts, including physics (flow and motion), chemistry (solutions and cohesion), biology (plant and animal life), and mathematics (measurement, equivalence, and volume).

