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**Parent & Guardian Handbook  
2020-2021**

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# 2020 COVID Care

## Health & Safety

- Firs and Fiddleheads will be open for full day Preschool, ages 3-5, for families who will be going back to work, starting in May. We deeply care about the health and wellness of everyone, and to assure we are taking necessary precautions, the following procedures are in place:
  - Each morning at check-in, we will have a registered nurse screening staff and students who enter the center. Any symptoms or signs of anyone who could be a carrier, or be at risk with the Coronavirus will be sent home.
  - Adults and children wash and sanitize hands upon arrival and frequently throughout the day.
  - Our dedicated staff is putting extensive effort into sanitizing and disinfecting our center - all touchable surfaces and toys each night.
  - Space for small group sizes and lots of time to grow, learn, and discover among our towering Firs trees and fern gardens.

## Program Modifications

- Monthly Newsletters will not be emailed out during this time.
- Parent & Guardian Involvement will be put on hold until further notice.
- We will do our best to follow best practices and keep group sizes to 10.

## Program Hours

- Spring (May-June): 7:00am - 6:00pm
- Summer (June - August): 7:30am - 5:30pm

## Typical Daily Schedule

- 7:30-9am - Drop Off & Freeplay @ Preschool Building (Indoors &/or Outdoors)
- 9-9:20am - Snack Time
- 9:20-9:45am - Morning Circle Time
- 9:45-10:45am - Small Group Activity Time (Indoors &/or Outdoors)
- 10:45-11:30am - Outside Freeplay
- 11:30am-12pm - Lunch
- 12-1pm - Nap/Rest Time
- 1-3pm - Outside Excursion
- 2-2:20pm - Snack
- 3-4:30pm - Small Group Activity Time (Indoors &/or Outdoors)
- 4:30-5:30pm - Pick Up & Freeplay @ Preschool Building (Indoors &/or Outdoors)

## What to Bring Daily

- Lunch & Snacks

- Lunch & snacks will not be provided for your child (providing the Bellingham School District opens up Food Delivery for preschoolers). Please bring a lunch, **TWO** snacks, and a full water bottle. Plan to bring items that do not require refrigeration or heating.
- In cases of severe allergies, parents may be asked to exclude certain foods from their child's lunch. If your child has an allergy or food restriction, documentation must be on file.
- Gear
  - Please bring a small backpack, labeled with your child's name. Inside their backpack should include their lunch, snacks, a full water bottle, sunscreen, and a sunhat.
- Clothing
  - It is very likely that your child will get dirty during their play here! However, appropriate clothes will help your child to remain happy and healthy throughout the day. We suggest the following:
    - Rain Jacket
    - Warm Coat or Sweatshirt
    - T-Shirt/Long-Sleeve
    - Pants *AND* Shorts (weather can change very quickly!)
    - Closed Toed Shoes
  - **Please bring the following on your 1st day**, in a Ziploc bag, labeled with your child's name (we will keep these on property for the summer):
    - 2 Underwears
    - 2 Pairs of Socks
    - 1 Cozy Pants
    - 1 Shirt

## About Firs & Fiddleheads

### Contact Information

- Preschool Phone Number: **(360) 820-2031**
- Preschool Director: Stacy Smith: (360) 223-3393, [stacy@thefirs.org](mailto:stacy@thefirs.org)
- Lead Teacher: Liz Holte (Ahi Ahi): [liz@thefirs.org](mailto:liz@thefirs.org)
- Website: [firsandfiddleheads.org](http://firsandfiddleheads.org)
- Email Address: [firsandfiddleheads@thefirs.org](mailto:firsandfiddleheads@thefirs.org)
- Mailing Address: Firs & Fiddleheads • 1150 Geneva Street • Bellingham, WA 98229

### Mission/Philosophy

At Firs & Fiddleheads, we believe that children are intrinsically motivated to learn and that they do so by exploring the world around them. We aim to foster curiosity, to guide rather than

compel, and to provide room for possibility and adventure rather than attempt to constrain children's interests to fit within a certain curriculum. Our goal is to provide each child with an inviting natural environment to encourage physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual growth, through a child-driven curriculum, small class sizes, nature immersion, and play-based experiential learning. We aim to convey relationships between all of God's creations - with each other and with the natural world that surrounds us.

## Curriculum

- Child (led) driven learning.
- Throughout the school year, we will be using the Creation Story as a framework for our exploration ... "God created \_\_\_\_\_ and it was good!"
- Other resources used in creating our daily - weekly - monthly lessons is the *Creative Curriculum for Preschoolers*.
- Celebrations, Holidays
  - Our classrooms will focus on seasonal changes and events in the natural world rather than commercial holidays.
- Field Trips
  - Field trips will not be a part of our programs. However, Family Outings will happen occasionally throughout the school year.
- Guest Teachers
  - We will occasionally invite guest teachers to join us in our classroom who will bring special topics to share. Upcoming guest visitor information will be included in our monthly newsletter.

## Preschool Schedule

### School Closures & Calendar Changes

(We will follow the Bellingham School District schedule - this includes snow days. 2-hour delays will result in class cancellation). Class closures due to extreme weather, like snow days, will be evaluated and determined on staff and families safely getting to and from school. Families will be notified if there are changes that are outside of the normal, these will be communicated to families at the earliest opportunity via email.

Observed Holidays (tuition will be prorated when the break is longer than 6 days)

- |                                |                              |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| ● Sep. 2, 2020                 | First Day of School          |
| ● Sep. 7, 2020                 | Holiday (school closed)      |
| ● Nov. 11, 2020                | Holiday (school closed)      |
| ● Nov. 26-27, 2020             | Holiday (school closed)      |
| ● Dec. 21, 2020 - Jan. 1, 2021 | Winter Break (school closed) |
| ● Jan. 18, 2021                | Holiday (school closed)      |



- If you are late to pick up your child more than once, you will be charged a late fee of \$5 each following time that your child is picked up late.
- If there is an emergency that requires you to be late, please call **(360) 820-2031**, so that we may reassure your child that all is okay.

## Parent & Guardian Information

### Communication

- If your child will be absent or late on their scheduled day, please notify us by calling or texting the Forest School **(360) 820-2031** or emailing [firsandfiddleheads@thefirs.org](mailto:firsandfiddleheads@thefirs.org).
- Newsletter
  - A monthly newsletter will be emailed out to parents and guardians for communication that will include important upcoming class information, special events, and a brief summary of the month, with photos of our adventures!
- Email
  - If you have specific questions or would like to discuss topics concerning your child, we are there to listen and help! However, we ask that you email us to set up a scheduled time to meet via phone or in person, during non-instruction times, as discussions during drop off or pick up can be difficult for staff to provide their full attention to you and to our preschoolers.

### Parent & Guardian Involvement

Later in the school year, we will have the opportunity for parents and guardians to volunteer, with more information to come as to how that will be organized.

### What to Bring Daily

- Lunch & Snacks
  - Lunch & snacks will not be provided for your child. Please bring a lunch, snack, and full water bottle (all in reusable containers!). Plan to bring items that do not require refrigeration or heating or that create excess garbage. Extra snacks are always a good idea, as your child will be exerting tons of energy playing outdoors for 4 hours! On cold days, we recommend sending your child with warm soup and/or tea in a thermos.
  - In cases of severe allergies, parents may be asked to exclude certain foods from their child's lunch. If your child has an allergy or food restriction, documentation must be on file.
- Gear
  - Please bring a small backpack, labeled with your child's name. This should be small enough for them to comfortably carry, but large enough to fit their lunch,

water bottle, and extra clothes (mittens, socks, beanie). A backpack with a chest strap is recommended.

- Clothing
  - During Morning Forest School and Afternoon Play School Forest Excursions, it is very likely that your child will get dirty, muddy and wet! However, appropriate clothes will help your child to remain happy, healthy and able to learn. We suggest the following:
    - A warm hat (wool or fleece) and waterproof/insulated mittens
    - Top and bottom long underwear made of fleece, wool, or polypropylene (these materials will stay warm when wet!)
    - A mid, top and bottom layer (fleece, a wool/blend, or a poly-blend)
    - Waterproof rain or snow coat (dependent on weather)
    - Waterproof rain or snow pants (dependent on weather)
    - Wool socks
    - Waterproof rain/insulated snow boots (i.e. Bogs, Muck Boots, Merrell, Keen)
    - Layers, layers and more layers! (Your child can always remove a layer if needed)
  - Just remember, "cotton is rotten"! Cotton wicks moisture, which not only makes us cold and uncomfortable, but can be a safety hazard for hypothermia in temperatures lower than 60 degrees. (Thrift stores are a great option for many of the clothing items listed! Many are stocked with fleece and wool.)
  - **Please bring the following on your 1st day**, in a Ziploc bag, labeled with your child's name (we will keep these at school during the year):
    - 2 extra pairs of underwear
    - 2 pairs of warm socks
    - 1 cozy pants
    - 1 long sleeve shirt

## Policies & Procedures

### Registration & Enrollment

Our class sizes are kept to 16 students, to best maximize their learning experience. If a day is already full, students will be put onto a waitlist; when space becomes available, students may take open slots. Registration Forms are available online ([firsandfiddleheads.org](http://firsandfiddleheads.org)). Space is secured when Registration Forms and fees are submitted.

### Tuition Payment Schedule

- Payments can be made by check, money order, Visa or MasterCard, or direct withdrawal. If paying by direct withdrawal, we will need an authorization form on file with the registrar. Email [firsandfiddleheads@thefirs.org](mailto:firsandfiddleheads@thefirs.org) to get a form.
- Tuition is due the first of each month. We offer a 10-day grace period. If payment is not received by the 10th of each month, a \$25 late fee is added to the bill. If you choose to mail a check, please send to:

**Firs & Fiddleheads • 4605 Cable Street • Bellingham, WA 98229**

### **Attendance**

- *Regular attendance is an important element of your child's success. If your child will be missing class for any reason, please text or call (360) 820-2031.*
- If attendance is interrupted due to illness longer than 8 days, tuition can be adjusted.

### **Withdrawal Policy**

- We ask for a month's notice, if your child will no longer be attending school with us.

### **When to Call Parent/Guardian to Pick Up Child**

- If your child is not yet toilet trained and has an accident, staff will contact you to ask you to come.

## **Health & Safety**

### **Inclement Weather**

- Our forest classroom will be used daily as our main classroom for Morning Forest School and throughout the day during Afternoon Play School, unless the weather becomes unsafe. We will move into our indoor classroom, if there are:
  - High winds
  - Temperatures drop below 28 degrees
  - Other conditions that make the forest unsafe

### **Bathrooms**

- Our preschool bathrooms are located inside of our indoor classroom (where drop off and pick up are located).
- Toilet trained is preferred, but we also understand that this happens for children at different times. If a child does have a pull-up and an accident, parents may be called to take care of the situation.

### **Health Policy**

- When to keep your child home:
  - If they have a fever of 100 degrees or more

- If they have thrown up or had diarrhea in the last 24 hours
- If they have thick green mucus coming out of the nose.

**Immunizations**

- Please fill out and return your child's immunization records with your registration packet, found at [firsandfiddleheads.org](http://firsandfiddleheads.org).

**Food Allergies**

- Food allergies and dietary restrictions need to be documented.

**Medication Plan**

- Written parental consent is required to administer any medication. All medication, including EpiPens and inhalers, must be in its original container and properly labeled with the child's name, date the prescription was filled or the medication's expiration date, and legible instructions for administration (such as manufacturer's instructions or prescription label). Children may not carry medication (of any kind) in their backpacks or administer medicine themselves.

**Sunscreen & Insect Repellent**

- We will carry both sunscreen and insect repellent on hand that we can help your child apply if needed; written permission must be given.