



Prospective Parent Packet

2021-22

Dear Parents,

We are delighted your family has considered us for the education of your child(ren). This packet includes our contact information, our current school calendar, tuition and payment information, and information on our school day offerings.

If you feel your child would be a good match with our school, please don't hesitate to contact us. Thank you for considering the Forest School. We look forward to meeting your family!

Warmly,
Sierra Parker
The Forest School, LLC

Our Covid Response:

- Most of our day is spent outside without need for masks
- Our school group is small and well supervised.
- We follow the guidance of Maine CDC for cleaning, masking, distancing • We wear masks when activities require us to be close together
- Teachers are vaccinated.
- We don't allow Covid to ruin our fun!

School Day Schedule for the 2021 / 22 school year

Monday - Thursday 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. ages 5-10

Staggered drop off: 8:30 a.m. and 9:00 a.m.

Staggered pick up: 2:15 - 2:30 p.m.

Fridays 8:30-1:30 ages 4-7 (Fridays may be used as a fifth day for older children)

Vacation days:

Forest School observes school vacation weeks and legal holidays. School vacation weeks include the week of Thanksgiving, two weeks for Winter break and one week during February and April.

Legal holidays include:

Indigenous Peoples Day, Veterans Day, Martin Luther King Jr Day, Memorial Day

Contact Information:

www.ourforestschool.com

forestschoolstaff@gmail.com

207-878-9884 / 207-615-4845

Find us on Facebook and Instagram!

School Location:

The Forest School, LLC

5 Hemlock Cove Road

West Falmouth, Maine 04105

The Forest School, LLC 2021 / 22 School Calendar

Thursday, September 9: Start -up day

Monday, September 13: First day of school

Monday, September 28: Fair Day OR 4-H Sharing Day Tuesday, October 4 Week of September 28: Montessori Peace Week

Monday, October 11: Indigenous Peoples' Day, NO CLASSES

Week of October 31: Halloween fun day followed by Days of the Dead

Thursday, November 11: Veterans Day, NO CLASSES

Meet at FS for Lantern Walk at 4:00!

November 26: Staff days followed by Thanksgiving Break

Monday, December 20 - Friday, December 31: Winter Break

Monday, January 3, 2022: Classes Resume

Monday, January 17: MLK Jr. Day, NO CLASSES

Friday, February 11 & Monday, February 14 Teddy Bear Tea / Winter Hygge fun

February 21 - Friday, February 25: February Break

Monday, April 18 - Friday, April 22: April Break

Graduation Celebration Thursday, May 26 4:00 pm

Monday, May 30: Memorial Day, NO CLASSES

Bittersweet week May 31-June 3

Wednesday, June 1: Evergreen Field Day @ Evergreen Cemetery

June 2 & 3: Last Days of School

Summer Camp Schedule 2022

Nature Camp for Littles ages 4-7 week of June 14

Solstice Camp week of June 21

Beach Camp 1 week of July 5

Beach Camp 2 week of July 12

Baba Yaga Wild Play Camp week of July 19

Girls Leadership Camp week of July 26

Alumni Open House & Fire Sunday, August 14, 2022

Academics: our school history and educational philosophy

The structure of our days

Our forest school began simply as an outdoor “nature school” for elementary school aged children, intended to supplement the activities and academic pursuits of homeschooling families. As our school grew, our focus broadened to include all aspects of community living and child education, though we have stayed with our original mission and commitment to provide children with community oriented learning focused upon each child’s relationship to the natural world. We continue to serve homeschooling families.

Daily learning activities include:

- **individual skill work** based upon traditional **Montessori academics**: reading, writing, math, exploration of passions and interests, speaking before a group, creative self expression
- **outdoor activities**, including nature lessons, work projects, animal care, outdoor exploration & creative play
- attention given to **social and emotional skills** for “living in community” effectively
- a “**study of people**” (human ecology) pursued as a community through reading aloud and discussion, coupled with traditional handwork skills and artistic expression.

Scaffolded learning: freedom with structure

Forest School themes and lessons are approached as experiential activities within our mixed age community (ages 4-10); these topics are then represented as modules of activities available within the classroom environment. Traditional Montessori materials and Montessori card work activities provide children with an orderly “scaffolding” for understanding the greater world, one which grows more complex with each ensuing year. The full Forest School coursework is intended to be a three to four year program of study.

We have found that Montessori academics compliment our nature school focus. Throughout all subjects, children are encouraged to understand that they are not separate from nature, but connected to all things in the Universe... to understand with clarity that they are part of something that is wondrous and miraculous and continuing to unfold... The role of the human being is presented as an important one: to live as conscious, interdependent beings contributing peacefully to a sustainable world. This was Montessori’s original intent, which we embrace whole- heartedly. Our children thrive and compete well in traditional school settings upon leaving our program.

Scope of activities and learning modules

We provide elementary school aged children with experiential learning in a community setting. Children of different age groups work together, encouraging cooperation and

sharing a broad mix of skills at several levels of development. Our subject matter is organized into five areas of focus: 1. integrated nature study and outdoor education; 2. science based activities, science labs, and microscope study; 3. individual skill work in language arts and math; 4. cultural studies and human ecology; and 5. social & emotional skills for living in community.

Where it all begins: The Story of the Universe

The Pageant of the Universe: Our school year begins with a storytelling experience in which children are introduced to the central story and mystery we all hold in common: the story of where we come from and how the universe continues to unfold.

Montessori's Five Great Lessons

The Five Great Lessons are detailed in a series of stories and lessons that are designed to provide an understanding of the unfolding of the Universe with an emphasis on humankind's place in that continuing story. The lessons are divided into five unique parts: *The Story of the Universe*, *Life Comes to Earth*, *The Coming of the Humans*, *The Story of Writing*, *The Story of Numbers*.

(see in Appendix for more details)

Parent-School Partnership

Parent Volunteering:

Skill sharing: Parents are invited to share skills in the classroom: knitting, outdoor skills, special interests, holiday crafts or cooking projects that contribute to a well rounded and exciting curriculum.

Specialty classes: Parents may also apply to teach specialty classes. These classes require an annual commitment and staff training.

Parent Education and Support:

Parenting support and classes are available as part of our summer programming. Specialized topics in child development are offered, including sensitive children, alpha children, and discipline which preserves and strengthens attachment relationships.

The Rhythm of Our Days

2-4 Day Schedule M-Th

8:30- 9:00 staggered drop off

8:30- 10:15 individual skill work: Montessori math, science, reading & writing, art

10:15 Good Morning Earth Circle / group lesson / storytelling & snack

10:45 Outdoor Nature exploration & project

Nature lesson / sit spots / handcrafts

12:15 Lunch & relaxed play

1:00 Lesson / read aloud & discussion

Outdoor running games & jump rope

2:15- 2:30 Departure

Friday Waldkinder Program designed for ages 4-7

Friday Waldkinder Schedule:

8:30-9:00 staggered drop off / outdoor games, chicken care

9:15 Good Morning Earth Circle /storytelling / snack

10:00 Trek to our play area of the day

Nature lesson / sit spots / handcrafts

11:45 Lunch

Quiet play/Individual Montessori lessons & 4-H projects

1:30 Departure

Tuition and Enrollment Information 2021-2022

Tuition

4 day Program: \$7,200.00 for school year

2 days: \$3,600 for school year

Friday only Waldkinder Program: \$1,850 for school year

Individual Days (by approval only): \$1,500/day for school year

Sibling discount 10% on second & third children

Tuition payments are managed through FACTS, an online payment system for schools. You may find the link to our e-cashier on the website.

We offer three payment options for the 2021-2022 school year:

- One payment, made directly to the school, by July 1
- Two payments made to FACTS Tuition Management Company with 50% of the balance due by July 5 and the remaining balance due by November 5. Facts charges a small one-time fee for this service
- Ten installments to be paid equally to FACTS Tuition Management Company from July - March. Again, FACTS charges a reasonable one-time fee for this service.

Returning Families:

Enrollment priority is given to returning students and siblings of Forest School families and alumni. Our school is small and we make a conscious effort to keep the mix of ages and genders balanced. Consideration will be given to both the needs of the school and the order of application and completion of the enrollment process.

Enrollment process:

1. Read through *Prospective Parent Packet*
2. If you think we are a good match for your child, call to arrange a visit
3. A visiting day may be arranged for your child to try out Forest School for a day.
4. We require a completed Child Record Form (available on website) and a 10% tuition deposit to reserve your child's placement.