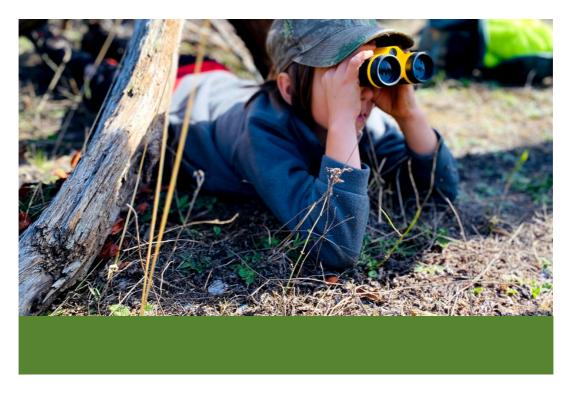
# FRESH AIR LEARNING PARENT HANDBOOK



Connecting children to nature through play and hands-on learning

www.freshairlearning.org

## **WELCOME!**



Welcome to the parent handbook for the Fresh Air Learning program. We're glad that you're here. We are a forest program in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, on the unceded traditional territories of the Squamish, Tsleil-Waututh, and Musqueam peoples.

This is a document designed to orient you to our program, and it is also a reference document with links to policies and procedures. The program orientation is at the beginning, and the policies and procedures are at the end.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS



#### **About Fresh Air Learning**

- Our Values
- Our Program Philosophy
- An Attachment-Oriented Program
- We work Together to Build Connections
- Gradual Entry
- Inclusion At Fresh Air Learning
- About Us



#### What Do We Do At Fresh Air Learning?

- Our Curriculum
- Lunches and Snacks
- What to Bring
- Communication Before and After Class
- Consent and Play
- Approaches to Problem-Solving

#### **Dropping Off and Picking Up Your Child**



- Sign In and Sign Out
- When to Keep Your Child Home
- Class Cancellations
- Alternate Pick Up People
- What Happens When a Child is Not Picked Up

#### Fresh Air Learning Policies

Program Management



- Cell Phone Use
- Conflict Resolution
- English as a Second Language
- Payment Policies
- Photography
- Privacy
- Support and Disclosure

## TABLE OF CONTENTS -CONTINUED



#### **Safety Policies**

- Air Quality and Heat
- Allergies
- Animal Encounters
- First Aid
- Lockdown
- Missing Child
- Record Checks
- Refugee Areas and Relocation
- Risky or Adventurous Play
- Snow Days
- Toileting and Handwashing
- Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

#### **Contact Info**



## ABOUT FRESH AIR LEARNING



Imagine learning that happens in nature, connecting children to the places around them. As they get to know these places, children also learn about themselves: what they are curious about, and how they want to extend into new areas of learning. They push their boundaries and find safe spaces to be themselves. They learn about the natural and human communities around them, finding their place within those communities.

This is forest school, a way to learn and place to learn - a place where children can be themselves and grow in connection and community.





## OUR VALUES

At Fresh Air Learning, we strive to create programs that are inclusive, welcome a diversity of children and families, and respect people and place.

- We believe in the importance of connecting children to the land. We acknowledge that our programs take place on the unceded lands of the x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əýəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), and səlilwəta?
   (Tsleil-Waututh) peoples.
- We commit to decolonization and anti-racist practice and acknowledge that this involves an ongoing process of reflection and growth.
- We believe that children are whole beings who are able to choose their own directions for learning, and we consider ourselves to be collaborators with children in their learning process. We support a range of experiential and play-based learning opportunities.
- We strive to be a welcoming community for families and staff across the spectrum of gender diversity and sexual orientation.

## OUR PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

We work in collaboration with families to create a caring environment for children. We work with children and their families to build the programs together. Forest school philosophy sees children as competent people with their own interests that should be nurtured by the adults around them.

Some of the principles of forest school include: :

- Children are curious, capable, and competent people.
- Children's play is important, and we should offer ample time and space for this play. Play is self-directed, freelychosen, and intrinsically motivated.
- When children choose to stretch their physical and emotional boundaries in a supportive environment, this helps them grow. This may be called risky or adventurous play.
- Facilitators share power with learners through emergent, and inquiry-driven teaching.
- Regular connections to a place over time help children grow in relationship with the land.
- It is important to build reciprocal relationships with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit, who have been learning from this Land since time immemorial.
- We build engaged, healthy, vibrant, and diverse communities through consideration of access and equity in our decisions and actions.

Source: Child and Nature Alliance of Canada



## WE WORK TOGETHER TO BUILD CONNECTIONS

In our program, we value relationship and connection with children and families. Relationships are the foundation of our learning program, and we work together with families to discuss how we can best support a child's learning, social and emotional needs. If there are challenges, we work to solve them together. Our programs meet children where they are at and work to build a safe and supportive school community within which children can develop socially and emotionally.

## GRADUAL ENTRY

We know that transitions can sometimes be challenging, and some children need a trusted adult present in the program at the beginning of the school year or beyond. Family members are welcome to stay in our classes, and we invite you to be active participants when you do stay. If you plan to assist with the class as a whole, we require a criminal record check.

## INCLUSION AT FRESH AIR LEARNING

At Fresh Air Learning, we value all families and children. We incorporate each child's interests into our days. Children feel valued for who they are, and each child brings their own unique contribution to the class community. We honour everyone's ancestors and work with local First Nations to bring deeper understandings of First Nations' cultural traditions into the program. We welcome all families and children, including children who are trans, nonbinary, or gender-diverse.

Accessibility is important to us. We offer sliding-scale scholarships to families. Due to the flexible nature of our programming, many neurodivergent children find a place within our programs. We recognize that children have different needs for support and ask families to meet with us to develop a plan for their child. Sometimes, this involves a paid support person, a volunteer, or a family member who stays to support the child.



## ABOUT US

Fresh Air Learning formed in 2011, when a group of parents and educators came together to create one of the first forest schools in Canada. Today, we are a registered charity that runs programs in multiple locations in the Metro Vancouver area. Our programs span age groups from toddlers to adults. Some of our forest school classes run in partnership with a local school, Island Discovery Learning Community, allowing children to attend forest school as a part of their kindergarten to grade 9 educational journey. We also offer collaborative programming with local schools, mentoring teachers who want to learn how to connect with and learn in the places around their school.

As a charity, we welcome volunteers in our summer and school year programs. We also accept donations through <u>Canada Helps</u>, and we hold an annual online auction to raise money for our scholarship fund. Free or low-cost programs are also funded through grants and donations.



## OUR CURRICULUM

Fresh Air Learning's programs have an emergent nature and community-based curriculum. Our preschool-age classes are almost completely child-led, supported by routines such as circle time, snack, and story. Our elementary program is a hybrid of a number of different learning philosophies such as forest school and democratic school. We invite children to co-create activities with class facilitators and to participate in a way that feels comfortable to them. The typical ratios in our classes are 1:6 for younger children and 1:8 for older children. Due to the presence of EAs, community volunteers, and parents, the number of adults attending is often higher.

On a typical day in our classes for younger children, we begin with hellos and playtime, then transition to a quick circle time that introduces some of the plans for the day. These plans incorporate activities that are inspired by the children's interests and play. We walk to a play spot, taking time to explore along the way. After some time playing, we wash our hands and have snack and a story, then play some more before walking back to our circle spot. After class, you can expect an email from the facilitator letting you know about some of the activities that happened in class that week.

On a typical day in our elementary school classes, the children gather for a game or casual conversation as they come into class. We then have a circle time with a story to set the tone for the day, and we walk to the place where we will spend our morning, taking time to explore along the way. Morning often involves a teacher-initiated activity based on the children's observed interests, a long walk to a new place, a guest, or a visit to a field trip location such as a farm. After lunch, we may have some quiet time to sit and reflect, and we also have open space for the children to enjoy games or pursue ongoing projects.

## LUNCHES AND SNACKS

When packing snacks and lunches, please make sure that your child is able to open their reusable containers. Efforts to pack litter-free lunches and snacks are most appreciated, since that minimizes the chance that garbage will end up in the forest. We recommend a balanced lunch of carbohydrates, fat, and protein to give children long-lasting energy.

Fresh Air Learning is not an allergen-free program overall, but certain classes will put in place guidelines for food depending on the nature and severity of the allergy. Please note that we cannot guarantee a completely allergen-free environment as we are working in public spaces.



## WHAT TO BRING

Children must come to class with gear that is appropriate for the weather or have that gear in their pack. If children become extremely cold and wet, we may need to send them home early. Please consider buying or selling used gear on our Gear Swap page: https://tinyurl.com/4kv9utau

- Waterproof Boots: Neoprene or lined boots are worn nearly year round
- Layered clothing (helps children adjust to changing weather and activity levels)
  - Inner layer of fleece or natural fabrics such as wool or silk.
  - Middle layer of insulation made of wool or fleece.
  - Avoid all cotton clothing if possible as cotton is cold when wet
- Rain Jacket: Outer shell jacket of waterproof clothing. Large, to allow for layers underneath.
- Rain Pants: Pants should stop at the waist so that children can easily go to the bathroom.
- Warm socks: Wool or synthetic thick socks for cold and wet weather
- **Toque & hat:** Warm wool or synthetic toque that covers the ears well or a sun hat for sunny days
- Gloves: Wool or waterproof gloves or mittens.
- Reusable hand warmers (optional): We sell these on our site here.
- A whistle attached to your child's jacket
- **Backpack:** A child-sized waterproof backpack. The backpack should be small enough for your child to carry comfortably with a good chest strap. (with a name tag or marker on pack). Popular options are MEC brand for smaller children (ages 2-5) and Deuter for children ages 5 and up.
- Water bottle: Water in a spill-proof bottle. Stainless steel Klean Kanteens are very durable.
- **Lunch & Snack:** Ideally high-energy snacks in a reusable container that is easy to open for the child independently. For programs of 4 hrs or more, children will need to bring lunch and a snack.
- Tissues: in a small ziplock bag, easily accessible.
- An emergency blanket in the backpack (such as this one).
- Extra layers: Pack a ziplock bag with a spare pair of underwear, gloves, socks, pants, top and when cold a warm layer.
- **Two bread bags:** Clean, re-used bread bags for your child's backpack. These go over the feet if they get wet, so that children can slip their feet into their boots again.

## COMMUNICATION BEFORE AND AFTER CLASS

Teachers typically communicate weekly with their classes, reminding parents of any location changes and items to bring and telling stories of what occurred in class that week. We place the registering adult's email address on the class email list. If you would like more adults to be on the email list, please let us know at <a href="mailto:info@freshairlearning.org">info@freshairlearning.org</a>. If you need to speak with your teachers, please contact them via text or email if possible and set up a time to talk on the phone. Shorter questions can be answered in person, but if the topic is sensitive or you feel that you might need more time, it's best to set up a call, as teachers are busy checking children in and out at the beginning and end of the class.

## CONSENT AND PLAY

At Fresh Air Learning, we believe in helping children learn communication skills that will set them up for safe and authentic interactions in life. We talk a lot about consent. We want to make sure that both children feel good about their social and physical interactions. If we notice that children are engaging in body-oriented play such as rough and tumble play, we will talk with them about this to ensure that both children have given consent to play in this way. If the facilitators notice that one or more children are feeling uncomfortable with certain types of interactions, we will talk with the children about those interactions to make sure that the class is a safe space for everyone.

When we are talking about bodies, we use anatomically correct terms to discuss body parts and recognize that a child's body parts do not dictate a child's gender. We remind children to keep private parts private when we are playing, and if a child asks for information, we will connect with their adults after the program to encourage at home discussion.

## APPROACHES TO PROBLEM-SOLVING

At Fresh Air Learning, we appreciate the unique contributions that everyone makes to the group. Just like adults, children can be challenged by people and situations. They might feel frustrated, sad, or angry. The role of the facilitator is to note the child's emerging concerns and work with the child to problem-solve. It is easier to problem-solve when the child is not feeling overwhelmed by emotion. If a child has strong feelings about a situation or a person, the facilitators validate the child's feelings and provide space for those feelings. This might mean that the child has some quiet time, sits beside a facilitator, or goes to do another activity. Problems that arise between children are something that we solve through discussion, encouraging the children to find their own solutions. If the children are too frustrated for a discussion, they can take a break and revisit the discussion at another time. As a parent, if you hear that your child is having a hard time with something that is occurring in the class, please contact us as soon as possible so that we can address the issue.

## DROPPING OFF AND PICKING UP YOUR CHILD

## SIGN IN AND OUT

Please sign your child in and out of class. After you sign out, please play in an area separate from the group if possible so that the teachers can more easily see the children who are not yet picked up.

If your child is not attending the class on a particular day, please let the teachers know.

## WHEN TO KEEP YOUR CHILD HOME

We ask that parents be mindful of their child's health when bringing their child to the program.

To support each child's enjoyment of each learning day and to avoid spreading illness, we ask that parents keep a child home if any of the following applies:

- Temperature over 101 F or 38 C
- Vomiting in the last 24 hours
- Diarrhea (3 profuse, watery stools)
- Communicable disease including but not limited to: Covid-19, measles, chicken pox, mumps, whooping cough, strep throat, viral pneumonia, head lice. The child in ill health may return to the program with the permission of their health care provider. Please note that any outbreak of communicable disease will be communicated to parents in writing.
- A cold or cough accompanied by a lot of difficulty breathing or very low energy.

If a child becomes ill or is injured during the course of a program session or seems to be having a hard time due to a previous illness or injury, the facilitators will call the parent or an emergency contact during the program for an early pick up.

If your child has an illness, injury or other need that occurs during the program year and may require ongoing physical or emotional support, parents should contact the program facilitators to discuss your child's needs and support strategies for your child. These strategies might include program accommodations, volunteer or parental support, or an EA.

## CLASS CANCELLATIONS

We try our best to make sure that our programs can run; however, it is possible that our programs may be canceled or relocated due to inclement weather, heat warnings, the potential for hazardous encounters with wildlife, poor air quality, or unavailability of teaching staff. Please see our policies section for more information. Teachers and administrative staff constantly assess and adjust to changing conditions. We will make every attempt to notify families of changes the evening prior to class; however some situations may require more last-minute changes or early pick ups. In the event of program alterations families will receive a text and email. If we have not heard from a family, we will phone as well. Up to 2 canceled classes will be rescheduled, if a third class is canceled, families will receive a credit.

## ALTERNATE PICK UP PEOPLE

Each child should have at least one primary contact person (parent or guardian) and at least two other contact people who are not the primary contact person. Teachers will check this information with the child's adults when they drop off the child on the first day.

A child will not be picked up by anyone who is not on the child's designated list of adults.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF A CHILD IS NOT PICKED UP

If a child is not picked up by 10 minutes after the scheduled pick up time, contact the family members on the child's pick up list, starting with the family member who dropped off the child that day. We will leave a text message and voicemail for that family member.

If the child has not been picked up and there has been no communication from the child's family 20 minutes after the scheduled pick up time, we will contact the child's other emergency pick up people via text and phone.

If the child's parents, guardians, and designated emergency contacts have not communicated with the facilitator by 1 hour after the program, the staff person will contact the program administrative staff to let them know. The staff person will remain with the child and contact the Ministry of Child and Family Development. This does not apply in situations such as extreme weather that prevent most families from doing pick up. In that case, children and teachers will shelter indoors and contact families if possible, and they will remain present until all children are able to be picked up.

## PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

#### CELL PHONE USE

During class time, teachers carry phones to allow them to communicate with the team regarding locations, hazards, and timing. They may also use their phone as a camera. Teachers will limit their phone use during class time so that they can be present with the children.

If you are attending the class and need to make a phone call, we ask that you step aside from the group so that the class is able to focus.

Please let your child's facilitator know if your child is carrying a phone. We recommend that if children have a phone, it be kept in the child's pack in a waterproof container during class and be used only when necessary to communicate with the parents. This way, it does not get damaged or lost, and the children can be fully present in the group.

## CONFLICT RESOLUTION

If you have a concern about something that occurs during class time, please bring this concern to your teacher as soon as possible. It's best to address conflicts as they arise. If you do not feel comfortable going to the teacher, please contact our program director Tricia (tricia@freshairlearning.org).

If you have a concern about a child's behaviour, please talk with the facilitator about any comments you may have rather than directing comments to the child or the child's family. The facilitator can then work with a child's parents and program staff and volunteers on ways to best meet the child's needs.

#### ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

If English is a new language for your child, please let us know. We would like to support your child, and we need to speak with you before your child begins the program so that we can learn how much English your child understands. Parents may need to attend with their child to transition for the first few weeks until the child can communicate important needs such as hunger, illness, and the need to use the bathroom.

## PAYMENT POLICIES

Each registration requires a one-time \$35 non-refundable membership. Membership fees fund our scholarship and bursary program.

The first month's fees are due upon registration. These are nonrefundable. We require 4 weeks' notice should you decide to withdraw. Remaining fees are returned and future payments are canceled. After January, fees are non-refundable unless we can fill the space. Class transfers are \$50.

We accept online learning funds and autism funding. Contact <a href="mailto:info@freshairlearning.org">info@freshairlearning.org</a> to get a discount code prior to registration Payments up to 30 days late will be assessed a 10% administration fee. Payments more than 30 days late will be assessed a 25% administration fee.

Please communicate with the facilitator if your child is unable to attend. If you are registered but do not attend class for a month and do not communicate with your facilitator, we will fill the spot.

#### PHOTOGRAPHY

When families sign up for programs, they can opt into or out of photo consent. There are three options for photo consent:

- 1. No photos taken or shared
- 2. Photos taken and shared only with the class
- 3. Photos shared with the class and on Fresh Air Learning documents and media

If there is a visitor observing a class, facilitators will communicate with families about the visit and will inform the class visitor about photo procedures. If you are attending class with your child and would like to take photos during class time, please check with the facilitator and only take photos of your child.

#### PRIVACY

Fresh Air Learning uses a registration system that has servers in Canada. A file will be maintained on each family and will be accessible to the facilitator and the administrators. Any information disclosed will be used in a discretionary manner to assist in the wellbeing and care of that child. The following is a list of forms that will be kept in this file.

- Registration and contact information
- Consent forms for Fresh Air Learning and the school district (if applicable)
- Emergency contact and medical information
- Parent volunteer form (if applicable)
- Criminal record check (if applicable)
- Scholarship form (if applicable)

We will place your requested email address(es) on the program email list so that you can receive essential updates about changes in location or instructions for class.

## SUPPORT AND DISCLOSURE

At Fresh Air Learning, we strive to be inclusive. Please let us know about any support needs that your child might have prior to the start of the program so that we know how to best support your child.

Sometimes, we need to provide information to other children, parents, or volunteers about how they can best support your child. If your child has additional needs for social, emotional, or physical support, our facilitator will talk with you to see how to address questions that might come from the children in class so that we can use the same language that you would when speaking about your child.

Ongoing discussion with parents is very important to us. Feel free to connect with our facilitator if you have any questions about your child's participation in the program. If our facilitator has questions about your child's behavior and needs for support, he/she/they will contact you as well.

If an individual child's need for support is greater than the facilitator and the volunteers can provide, we will work with you to look at additional care for your child. You can hire someone who will support your child every day that he or she attends, you can attend yourself, or you can designate a friend or family member to attend.

## SAFETY POLICIES

At Fresh Air Learning, one of the roles of the facilitator, parents, and/or community volunteers is to ensure that safety measures are in place and are followed daily. We work to create an environment that is as safe as possible by being proactive and by using sensible, simple guidelines that the children and adults can remember. Our safety guidelines include:

- Check the weather forecast the day prior to the program and make alternate plans as appropriate. This may include changing the program's location, moving indoors, or canceling class.
- Proactively assess locations before the class enters the site to ensure that we are aware of hazards, and choose to move to another location if the first one is too hazardous.
- Assess risk as conditions change.
- Move away from locations if they become hazardous.
- When moving from place to place, have a teacher in the front and back of the group.
- Head count every five minutes and when moving to a new location.
- Set up a space with boundaries.
- Articulate safety guidelines for the space and activities.
- Observe the children's interactions with each other and with nature.
- Support the children as they choose what activities to do.
- Spot the children during more challenging physical activity.
- Gently guide the children to safer activities if required.
- Implement and adapt relevant public health policies, such as child illness policies.

## AIR QUALITY AND HEAT

If Environment Canada issues a Heat Emergency warning, programming will be canceled. If there is a heat warning and daytime temperatures will reach 30 degrees or above in the shade, we will cancel afternoon programming and reassess morning programming. On warm days, educators will assess participants' comfort and safety and watch for signs of heat exhaustion. Nature educators will go to cooler places in the forest, encourage children to drink water, and limit strenuous activities.

Teachers will check the projected air quality index the afternoon prior to the program and will contact parents about adjustments to the schedule. We will run programs if the air quality is projected to be 1-6 on Environment Canada's air quality health index. We will endeavor to run programs if air quality is projected to be 7 only if we have a suitable indoor refuge location for that day. If the projected air quality health risk for the following day is very high (8-10+) we will cancel the program by 5 pm the day before the program, with a text message and email that goes out to parents.

#### ALLERGIES

If your child has a food allergy, please contact us prior to your first day of class. We will work with you to determine what we need to do to accommodate that allergy. This might involve work to avoid encountering the allergen or ensuring that children do not bring that allergen to class. Although facilitators carry an EpiPen, children with an anaphylactic allergy are expected to bring their own EpiPen to class, and you must let the facilitators know where this is located. Please note that since we are in a dynamic outdoor environment that is accessed by many different people, we cannot ensure that our environment will be completely allergen-free.

## ANIMAL ENCOUNTERS

The children may encounter animals in the forest and at various farm locations. We prepare children for animal encounters by modeling and acting out safety practices. Early in the year and on a continual basis, teachers will practice what to do when a dog approaches and what to do if the group encounters a bear, coyote, or cougar. Please contact us if you are curious as to what these practice sessions involve.

To avoid ticks, we encourage families to send children in long-sleeved shirts and long pants if possible, with the pants tucked into the socks, especially in the spring, summer, and early fall. Families are responsible for daily tick checks.

#### FIRST AID

At a minimum, our facilitators are trained in Standard First Aid and CPR Level C. One of the facilitators carries the first aid bag that will remain with us at all times. If your child gets a bump, scratch, or a bruise, we will let you know at the end of the session. In case of a medical emergency that requires more intervention, we will attempt to contact a parent or caregiver. If we cannot contact the parent or caregiver, we will contact someone on your emergency list. In case of unexpected early dismissal due to unsafe conditions or illness, we follow the same procedure. If a transfer to a medical facility is required and none of the child's emergency contacts are available, a staff member will travel to the facility with the child.

## LOCKDOWN

As we are not in an indoor classroom, during a lockdown situation due to an animal or human encounter, one adult will gather and walk with the group, calling the rangers or 911 as soon as possible. The other adult will observe the threat and walk at the end of the group, directing the group if conditions change.

#### MISSING CHILD

If a child is missing during a head count, the teacher will stop the activity and gather the group. The teacher will check with the other adults and children to determine where the child was last seen. They will then call out the child's name and survey the immediate surroundings. If the child is not found within a few minutes, the teachers will call a park ranger and local police to assist with the search.

Teachers will proactively work with the children to practice what they would do if lost, and we request that you add a whistle to your child's jacket to make it easier for them to call for help if needed.

#### RECORD CHECKS

All of our teachers and volunteers, including parents, are required to have a criminal record check with a vulnerable sector check.

## REFUGE AREAS AND RELOCATION

At every location where we operate, we have a plan in case of inclement weather. This includes high winds, lightning storms, and other emergent and hazardous weather concerns. On windy days, we will meet or move to an open field. If a lightning storm arises, we will seek indoor shelter until it is over. If it continues for a long time, we may call for an early pick up. If a forest fire occurs in the area, we will move to alternate pick up points away from the fire. Programs may be relocated to alternate locations if high winds, lightning, or other hazardous weather conditions are in the forecast.

#### RISKY OR ADVENTUROUS PLAY

In outdoor programs, children have the opportunity to stretch their personal comfort zones and develop their physical abilities through play, sometimes called risky or adventurous play. Engaging in this type of play helps children learn how to assess risk and make decisions. We support children in their decision-making about their play. We work with them to identify hazards and to jointly create rules for specific situations that we encounter. We check in with the children as they do boundary-pushing activities so that they know that we are present, and we coach them if they feel worried or stuck.

#### SNOW DAYS

If school is canceled in the area where we run programs, we will also cancel programs. We will do this as early as possible, typically through text and email by 7:30 am. As conditions are variable at each location, if there is a lot of snow and ice, we may choose to cancel the program or end it early to ensure that families are safe.

#### TOILETING AND HAND WASHING

Our facilitators carry hand sanitizer to clean children's hands, and teachers of young (2-6) year old children typically carry water and towels to clean off mud in the winter months. If you would prefer that your child not use sanitizer, please send them with a washcloth and soapy water. Children are asked to clean their hands before snack and lunch.

Children are encouraged to use the washroom facilities prior to the beginning of the program, and we often pass by bathrooms during class time. If there is a bathroom emergency when we are out in the park and we do not have immediate access to a bathroom, a staff person may bring the child to a place where that child can do a "nature pee" if the child is comfortable. We will only assist the child with toileting if the child gives consent. Children in the 2-8 year old program should bring an extra set of underwear and lightweight pants in case of an accident.



## EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

We recognize that certain groups in society are treated inequitably, and we are committed to creating an inclusive and equitable environment for students, families, and staff.

Diversity, inclusion and equity practices are based on the principles of respect, acceptance, safety, and equity. This policy complies with government policies, codes of conduct, and the BC Human Rights Code. It includes but is not limited to following dimensions of diversity and their intersections: ancestry, culture, dis/ability, ethnicity, gender identity & expression, language, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, and socio-economic status.

Our goal is to create programs that offer equitable access to and participation in quality education for all students and a school culture that values diversity, understanding of others and respect for all.

We expect that all members of the school community will:

- Foster a school culture that is responsive to the diverse social and cultural needs of individuals and groups;
- Recognize the injustice of marginalization and promote human rights; and
- Participate in the ongoing development of practices that promote equitable treatment for everyone, cultivating mutual respect and a sense of belonging.

As we strive to create racism-free environments in our schools we must recognize that racism is pervasive in our society and present in our schools. We must ensure that our practices do not perpetuate stereotyping, discrimination, or inequality.

We will maintain partnerships with Indigenous peoples including storytellers, leaders, and elders from the  $x^w m \theta kw \theta \dot{y} \theta m$  (Musqueam), skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and s $\dot{\theta}$  (Tsleil-Waututh) and other Nations and Metis communities and all of our Indigenous families.

Using a collaborative planning model, we will advocate for each student's success through respectful support, recognition of individual learning needs in all domains, and preparation for life-long learning.

Students, parents, staff, and volunteers with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions will have the right to privacy, the right to determine their own names and pronouns, and the right to their gender expression.

On an annual basis or more frequently as required, teachers and administrators will work to review policies, procedures, and practices, define areas of potential improvement, create plans for change, and implement those plans.

## **CONTACTING US**

ADMIN PHONE: 604-802-7539

#### PROGRAM DIRECTOR

TRICIA - TRICIA@FRESHAIRLEARNING.ORG

#### **ASSISTANT DIRECTOR**

KATRINA - INFO@FRESHAIRLEARNING.ORG



Thank you for reading the Fresh Air Learning Parent Handbook. If you require any further information regarding our programs, please contact us at <a href="mailto:info@freshairlearning.org">info@freshairlearning.org</a>