

EUNOIA FOREST SCHOOL

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Our Mission, Vision, and Values



Mission

Eunoia Forest School is a nature-based education program providing opportunities for holistic growth, authentic experiences, and education in the natural environment.

Vision

Our nature-based experiences will foster a love for the environment and provide education through repetitive engagement with nature. Through exploration, children will build confidence and a sense of wonder. Mentors will guide children to build deep connections with their surroundings.

Values

Eunoia Forest School is guided by values that influence our daily lives and interactions: Care, Health, Inclusivity, Respect, Responsibility and a commitment to Environmental Sustainability.



ABOUT FOREST SCHOOLS

The [Child and Nature Alliance of Canada](#) defines Forest/Nature Schools (FNS) programs as ones that,

1. “Take place in any outdoor space, including urban greenspace, playgrounds, forests, creeks, prairies, mountains, shoreline, and tundra.
2. Is a sustained process of regular and repeated sessions in the same outdoor space, supporting children to develop a reciprocal relationship with the Land, and an understanding of themselves as a part of the natural world.
3. Views children and youth as innately competent, curious, and capable learners.
4. Is led by educators who share power with learners through play-based, emergent, and inquiry-driven teaching and learning methods.
5. Values children’s play - self-directed, freely chosen, intrinsically motivated - in and of itself. FNS programs provide adequate time and space for children and youth to dive deeply into their play.
6. Views risky play as an integral part of children’s learning and healthy development, and is facilitated by knowledgeable, qualified educators who support children and youth to co-manage risk.
7. Relies on loose, natural materials to support open-ended, creative play and learning.
8. Values the process as much as the outcome.
9. Prioritizes building reciprocal relationships with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit, who have been learning from this Land since time immemorial.
10. Practices, policies, and programming reflect and prioritize the building of engaged, healthy, vibrant, and diverse communities through consideration of access and equity in our decisions and actions.”

A Message from Elisha Blair



Founder and CEO Eunoia Forest School

In 2020, when I first envisioned Eunoia for my own children, I never imagined how many families we would connect with along the way. Each child who has come through our program, has held a special place. Wide eyes looking at bugs, digging in the dirt, and hearing stories from the families about their experiences

At Eunoia, children are encouraged to develop essential skills, build confidence, and discover their sense of self. Having a voice, exploring ideas, and connecting with nature are the cornerstones of our programs—because learning should be an adventure.

And remember, if you didn't get dirty, you didn't have fun. That was my dad's favourite saying when I was growing up, and I believe it holds true today.

What is Eunoia Forest School?

Eunoia Forest School follows the Forest School ethos as outlined by The Child and Nature Alliance of Canada. We provide an educational approach where learning meets play in the natural environment.

Although there is a daily outline for learning, we follow an emergent, project based curriculum that is child-led. The children lead the learning with support and guidance from our trained staff. Children of all abilities are provided opportunities for collaborative inquiry and reflective practice each day, coming together as a group to sit and discuss what they have learned, and how they can add on to their learning the following day.





Unstructured and Risky Play

What the Research Says...

“Ensuring there is time in a child’s schedule for free play, encouraging play with natural, loose parts (e.g., sticks, branches, or rocks), and allowing rough-and-tumble play are key conditions”

“One recent study showed that outdoor play with loose parts provides children with opportunities to develop risk assessment and fundamental movement skills through repeated movements, which are both components of physical literacy “

“Free play is essential for children’s development and for their physical, mental, and social health.”

“The Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA) recognizes unstructured play as a child’s right and a critical component to child and youth health and well-being. Actions are necessary to reduce the barriers limiting opportunities for unstructured play at school and in the community. CPHA calls upon all parents/caregivers, educators, child care providers, school boards, public health professionals, the private sector and all levels of governments and Indigenous peoples’ governments to improve access to unstructured, child-led play.”

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Emergent Curriculum

What is it?

First created in 1960, under a Reggio-Emilia approach, emergent curriculum was designed to build curriculum on the strengths of the child. Emergent curriculum provides a rich environment, guided by observant educators who document and build learning opportunities off of the child's interest. Similar to Maria Montessori's focus on materials available to children, Forest School creates a program that uses the natural environment, and select materials, as the third educator.

Emergent curriculum is not a prescribed (set) curriculum. We offer opportunities for children to build their experiences with peers and educators. Language, Math, Science, Social Studies and the Arts are all built into learning opportunities in a natural way. Children are encouraged to ask questions and lead their inquiry, while educators are there to support, ask provocation questions, and build curiosity through their interactions. We are not hindered by time constraints. Learning is ever evolving, and children gain new skills because they are engaged and excited about their learning.

Research shows that children who are exposed to Language and Math through play, with educators who guide their learning, are just as, if not more, ready for the education system than those who attend a regular Kindergarten program. At Eunoia, we engage in phonics and math learning on a daily basis, through play and natural exposure to quality materials, children are given opportunities to explore ideas beyond their Ontario Curriculum age.



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Example of Emergent Curriculum in Action

Initial Inquiry:

Tracks in the mud after a rain storm. “Let’s follow them, do you think it’s a wolf” says one student to another. “No way, those are so small.” “Maybe it’s a baby wolf”

Mentor Role

Listens quietly and follows the children on their tracking expedition. Begins thinking about materials that can be introduced to further the inquiry and learning. Introduces a tracking chart.

Expanding Understanding

Children and educators co-create information that they know about tracks. Children are encouraged to write and draw information with support. With the tracking chart and information, children determine that the tracks are a coyote. They head out to find more tracks, measure them, create their own field guide about the animals that they find over the next few days.

Teacher asks questions to extend knowledge and understand.

Connects the weather to animal movement. Some animals move in the rain, others wait until it stops, etc.

Inviting in tracking experts

Sensory Opportunities

Art Activities

Books and information on animals and tracking behaviours



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Project Based Learning

What is it?

An instructional approach that engages children in sustained, inquiry-driven projects that are grounded in real-world challenges and interests. Rather than following a strict curriculum, PBL encourages children to investigate complex questions, collaborate, problem-solve, and produce meaningful work over time. Research shows that PBL fosters deeper understanding, critical thinking, and increased motivation.

Learning is cross-curricular and integrated, rather than isolated into subjects, making it a natural fit for Forest School environments where the boundaries between disciplines are inherently blurred. By embedding projects in the forest, educators can honor children's innate desire to explore while guiding them to co-construct knowledge and contribute meaningfully to their learning community.

Language and Math are naturally embedded as essential tools for inquiry, communication, and problem-solving. Learners use language to ask questions, document observations, collaborate with peers, and present their findings. Math becomes meaningful as children measure, estimate, count, graph, and analyze data within the context of their projects. Language and Math are authentically integrated, supporting real-world learning that feels purposeful and engaging.



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Example of PBL in Action

Planning:

- Map out the space
- Measure and design the garden beds
- Calculate materials
- Plan a calendar for planting and harvesting

Sustained Inquiry

- Children will plant and care for the seeds.
- Charting watering schedules and measuring their growth. Children will continue to learn about the plants and keep journals to track the changes.

Children will learning about local markets, learning about money and roles that exist in these contexts. They will create signs and marketing materials to spread information to their community. When the vegetables are ready to harvest, children will have a market day that is open for families to attend and purchase their vegetables (or other foods made with their stock).

Mentor Role

Mentors ask questions and provide sources for information. They help to connect children with resources and plan trips that are connected to their project.

Extensions

- Field Trip to a local farm.
- Guest speakers who are local growers or have been a part of markets in the past.





Forest School: Nature immersion, risk taking, holistic development, and ecological stewardship.

Emergent Curriculum: Child-led, responsive to interests and developmental needs.

Project Based Learning: Deep inquiry, collaborative, & real world relevance.

Skill-based Learning - Although children will always be learning new skills, this is the best time of day to introduce learning that is specific to a forest school. Activities include tool use, building fires, fishing, and tree-climbing. Skill-based learning is best done between 11am and 2pm to ensure maximum alertness and safety.

A Day at Forest School

Full-Day Kindergarten and Weekly Registration

8:00 - 9:00 am - Drop-off (Before 9am there is a before school care fee)

9:05 - 9:30 am - Morning check-in, welcome, land acknowledgement

9:30 - 10:30 am - Emergent and Project Based Learning

10:30 - 10:45 am - Snack

10:45 - 12:15 pm - Project Based Learning with any tool use components

12:15 - 1:00 pm - Lunch and local, emergent play

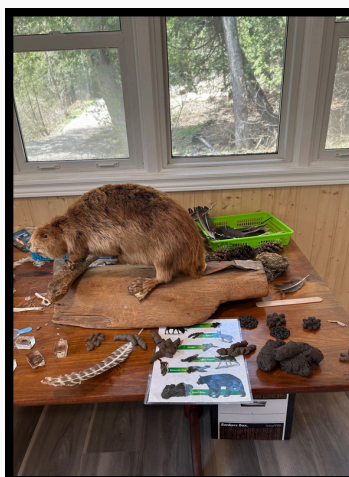
1:00 - 2:45 pm - Emergent and Project Based Learning

2:45 - 3:25 pm - Snack, story-telling, debrief

3:25 - 3:30 pm - Pick-up

3:30 - 4:00 pm - After care (after 3:30 there is an after school care fee)

*All PBL has Math and Language incorporated throughout



EUNOIA FOREST SCHOOL

2025 - 2026 CALENDAR

2024-2025 School Year Calendar																														
	Number of Instructional Days	Week 1					Week 2					Week 3					Week 4					Week 5								
		M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F				
September	21	1 H	2	3	4	5																								
October	21			1	2	3	6	7	8																					
November	20	3	4	5	6	7	10	11	12																					
December	14	1 P	2	3	4	5	8	9	10																					
January	19						5	6	7																					
February	19	2	3	4	5	6	9	10	11																					
March	17	2 B	3 B	4 B	5 B	6 B	9	10	11																					
April	19			1	2	3 H	6 H	7	8																					
May	20					1	4	5	6																					
June	18	1	2	3	4	5	8	9	10																					
Total Instructional Days	188	No School	H = Stat Holiday					B = Euroia Holiday					P = Professional Activity Days																	

Eunoia

Fee Schedule

September 2025 - June 2026 School Year

Fees are not inclusive of HST or Amilia Processing Fees

<u>Program</u>	<u>Monthly/Weekly Fee</u>	<u>Term Fee (less 3%)</u>	<u>Pay in Full (less 5%)</u>
<u>Full Day Kindergarten</u> Monday - Friday (5 days) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kindergarten - must be born in 2020 or 2021 	\$1280.00 per month. Automatically withdrawn on the 1st or 15th of each month.	\$6,208.00 Pay per term - Due August 1 and February 1	\$12,160.00 Due August 1, 2025
<u>Homeschool Families</u> Tuesday and Thursday (2 days) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kindergarten - must be born in 2020 or 2021 Homeschool families aged 4 - 12. Other: please reach out to Ellisha@eunoiaforestschoo.ca if you feel your child falls under this category 	\$138 per week. Charged monthly. Automatically withdrawn on the 1st or 15th of each month.	\$2,610.27 Pay per term - Due August 1 and February 1	\$5,112.90 Due August 1, 2025
<u>Children in Public School</u> Tuesday, Wednesday, <u>or</u> Thursday (1 day per week for 39 weeks - prorated throughout the year) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mixed aged - 4-12 years Homeschool families Public school students whose families are looking for additional opportunities in outdoor education. 	\$70 per day. Charged monthly. Automatically withdrawn on the 1st or 15th of each month.	\$1,324.05 Pay per term - Due August 1 and February 1	\$2,593.5 Due August 1

September 2025 Programs

Families save 5% if they pay their full year of fee's upfront.

Families save 3% (overall) if they pay by term (Term 1: September to January. Term 2: February - June)

Please review the Registration, Waitlist, and Cancellation policy in our 2025 Family Handbook.

About Me

I am an Ontario Certified Teacher with a degree in Early Childhood Studies and am currently completing my Master of Education in Adult Education. My goal is to expand learning opportunities for all ages, fostering a lifelong connection to both nature and education.

With experience at Durham Community Health Centre, George Brown College, and the Durham District School Board, I have gained a well-rounded perspective on education—and I have seen firsthand why children thrive when they spend more time outdoors!

My passion for outdoor exploration and learning began in childhood. Playing games in the forest with friends and camping by the lake, instilled in me a deep appreciation for nature—one that I now strive to share with others. Although I grew up in downtown Toronto, I knew I belonged in the trees.

Above all, I am a mum to two wonderful children who were the inspiration behind Eunoia. Watching them flourish in outdoor environments, gave me the push to offer this option to other families.

I wholeheartedly believe in an education that honours each child's unique spirit, providing them with a safe space to take risks, build character, and form meaningful connections.



**Our full Family Handbook can be found at
www.eunoiaforestschool.ca/family-handbook**

**Additional Registration information and Policies
are available there and on request**

Contact

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