



Parent Handbook

2026-2027



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School Culture & Community Expectations

Our mission:

Our mission is to create a community where children have the freedom and support to discover the wonders of their world.

Our philosophy:

The Farmhouse School's curriculum encourages children to learn through the discovery of their environment. Each student's classroom experience is centered on their needs, abilities, interests, and learning styles. Teachers work as facilitators to help guide learning, lead students to make connections with prior experiences and knowledge, and open up their education to new possibilities as choices and connections are made. This inspires a lifelong love for learning and fosters the growth of the whole child.

The Reggio Emilia philosophy:

The schools of Reggio Emilia, Italy, are some of the leading schools in implementing emergent curriculum. Their philosophy of respect, involvement in the community, and careful observation and documentation of learning is one that we believe strongly in. We feel that the Reggio Emilia approach blends perfectly with the developmentally appropriate practices encouraged by the National Association for the Education of Young Children and supports and enhances our guided play philosophy. Reggio Emilia educators believe that children are never alone; they are always in interaction with other children, adults, and their environment.

The approach is built on the idea that humans are interconnected and interdependent beings, and that the "competent child" can only exist in the context of relationships. Learning is seen as a collaborative process among children, teachers, families, and the wider community. Teachers act as partners, co-learners, and guides, engaging in dialogue, co-research, and shared projects with children reggio-inspired.com. Families are considered equal partners in education, not just recipients of services

Core Beliefs:

At The Farmhouse School, we believe that children learn best within a community built on respect, curiosity, collaboration, and meaningful relationships. Our philosophy is guided by the following:

We believe children are capable of constructing their own learning

Children are active participants in their education. Through play, inquiry, experimentation, and reflection, they build knowledge by making connections between their experiences and the world around them.

We believe that children are collaborators

Learning is a social process. Children develop deeper understanding as they work together, exchange ideas, solve problems, negotiate, and learn from one another. Every child has valuable perspectives to contribute to the community.

All learning happens in relationship

Relationships are the foundation of meaningful learning. Strong connections between children, teachers, families, the community and the environment create space for children to feel safe, take risks, ask questions and grow with confidence.

Children are natural communicators

Every child has a voice and many ways of expressing their thoughts, ideas, emotions, and understanding. We encourage children to communicate through words, art, movement, music, dramatic play, construction, writing, and countless other forms of expression, while learning to do so in a ways that are respectful of themselves and others.

The environment acts as the third teacher-

The classroom is more than a physical space- it is a living environment that inspires curiosity, invites exploration, deepens our understanding, and reflects the values of our community. Thoughtfully designed spaces and materials encourage independence, creativity, collaboration and a shared sense of belonging.

Teachers as partners, nurtures and guides-

Teachers learn alongside children, carefully observing, listening, documenting, and asking thoughtful questions that deepen understanding. Rather than directing learning, teachers facilitate exploration into children's interests and support both short and long-term projects that emerge from their ideas and investigations.

Parents are partners in education-

We recognize parents as their child's first and most influential teachers. By building meaningful relationships with families and working collaboratively, we create a shared understanding of each child's unique way of being. Together, we foster a rich and holistic educational experience that extends beyond the classroom.

Our Commitment to Inclusion:

At The Farmhouse School, we are committed to creating a learning community where every child and family is welcomed, valued, and respected.

We recognize and celebrate differences in culture, identity, ability, behavior, and learning style. We understand that children express themselves, engage with others, and make sense of the world in many different ways.

We strive to create an environment where all children feel a strong sense of belonging and are supported to participate in ways that honor who they are. This includes thoughtfully adapting our environment, expectations, and teaching approaches to meet the diverse needs of our community.

We view differences as strengths that enrich our classroom and deepen learning for everyone.

Inclusion is an ongoing commitment, and we partner with families to support each child's growth, development, and sense of belonging.

Our Commitment to Sustainability:

We believe children learn to value sustainability through meaningful experiences with nature, including daily outdoor play, exploration, and hands-on interaction with natural materials. These experiences foster curiosity, gratitude, and a sense of connection to the living world.

We strive to model sustainable practices in our classroom and community. This includes reducing waste, reusing and repurposing materials whenever possible, and choosing natural, durable, and environmentally responsible resources in our learning environment.

We encourage children to see themselves as stewards of the earth—capable of making thoughtful choices that support the well-being of their community and the planet.

Enrollment & Admissions

Our Anti-Bias Statement:

At The Farmhouse School, we aim to create a community that supports all dimensions of human difference. We take a proactive approach to helping children to become advocates for a more equitable, just world.

Together, we celebrate diversity, challenge our biases and practice thinking critically about how we treat one another. We engage in dialogue and learning opportunities that support children as they develop whole and meaningful self-identities, practice empathetic interactions and learn to think deeply.

Enrollment Process:

Enrollment for the upcoming school year opens in January for returning families. Returning families, alumni, and siblings are given priority in the enrollment process.

Returning Families-

Returning families are first invited to complete a Returning Student Enrollment Form to confirm re-enrollment for the upcoming school year. Prior to enrollment, families will also be invited to a conference with their child's teacher to discuss progress, development, and placement options for the following year. This process helps ensure thoughtful continuity and supports each child's individual needs and growth.

New Families-

Following the returning family enrollment period, registration opens to new families. At this stage, families may complete the enrollment process if space is available.

Once we have closed tours and open houses, we will form our classes and confirm your child's enrollment via email. Receipt of the required registration paperwork, deposit and fees confirms your child's spot in the classroom.

Tours & Open Houses:

We host several open houses and in-class tours throughout the enrollment period. These visits provide families with an opportunity to learn more about our program, observe the classroom environment and ask questions.

Wait Pool Policy:

A wait pool will be formed for each class when enrollment reaches maximum capacity. To be added to our wait pool, please contact Regina at regina@thefarmhouseschool.org. If a qualifying spot opens up for your child, we will reach out to offer you an observational tour and an opportunity to submit an enrollment application.

Registration Notification List:

If you are interested in enrolling at The Farmhouse School in the future, you may be added to our Registration Notification List by emailing Regina at regina@thefarmhouseschool.org. We will then contact you when we open enrollment for the following year. You may wish to receive registration notifications if you have a sibling you wish to enroll at a later date.

Important Forms and Paperwork:

Over the summer, you will receive important enrollment paperwork via email. All required forms must be completed and submitted on or before our Meet the Teachers event. Returning your paperwork on time ensures that everything is in place for your child's first day.

It is important that each child maintains a complete and up-to-date file. All required forms must be completed and submitted by their due dates in order for a child to attend school.

We will not accept paperwork on the first day of school as our attention and focus needs to be on helping the children settle into school.

Updating Enrollment Paperwork:

If your child is returning to The Farmhouse School, you will not need to complete a new enrollment packet. However, it is important that we maintain up-to-date information for all students.

Updating Enrollment Paperwork continued:

If your child is returning to The Farmhouse School, you will not need to complete a new enrollment packet. However, it is important that we maintain up-to-date information for all students.

Your child's enrollment paperwork will be available for review in their file on the back porch during the second summer playdate and the Meet the Teachers event. Please carefully review all information and make any necessary updates, such as changes to emergency contacts, caregivers, addresses, phone numbers, medical information, allergies, or authorized pickup individuals.

Once you have reviewed and updated your forms, please place them in the file labeled "updated paperwork." Keeping paperwork current helps us ensure the safety and well being of all children in our care.

Tuition & Fees:

Tuition Policy:

Tuition at The Farmhouse School reflects the full annual cost of the program and may be paid in one full payment or in 10 monthly installments. The first tuition payment is due on September 1st and may be brought to our Meet the Teachers event or made online. In order for your child to attend on the first day of school, tuition must be received prior to the start of the school year. This allows us to focus on the incoming children as they adjust to their new surroundings.

Tuition Deposit:

Upon enrollment, families are required to submit a tuition deposit equal to one month's tuition. For students who remain enrolled through the end of the school year, the deposit will be applied toward June tuition, the final month of the program.

If a family chooses to withdraw from the program prior to the end of the school year, the tuition deposit will be forfeited and is non-refundable. In addition, one month's written notice is required, and the monthly tuition payment remains due during the notice period, regardless of attendance.

This policy provides the school with the time and financial stability needed to thoughtfully fill the vacant space while maintaining balanced classroom communities, consistent staffing, and the high-quality educational experience our families expect.

Tuition Deposit continued:

There is no tuition reimbursement or credit for absences of any kind, including illness, vacations, or other time away from school. Tuition reserves your child's space in the program and is not adjusted based on attendance.

Payment Options:

Tuition may be paid by cash, check or online payments.

Checks should be made payable to The Farmhouse School.

Cash and checks should be sealed in an envelope with your child's name on it, and deposited into the black drop box on the back porch during business hours. No tuition should be left in the drop-box on weekends or after school has closed for the day. Please never hand payment directly to a teacher.

Online Payment Options:

Tuition payments may be made by check, or Zelle with no additional processing fee.

For the convenience of our families, we also accept credit card and ACH bank transfer payments. Families choosing to pay by credit card or ACH are responsible for any applicable processing fees charged by our payment processor. The processing fee will be clearly displayed at the time of payment or included as a separate line item on the invoice.

website payments-

You can make payments directly through our website at www.thefarmhouseschool.org. Follow these steps:

website payments continued:

You can make payments directly through our website at www.thefarmhouseschool.org. Follow these steps:

- Visit our website at www.thefarmhouseschool.org
- On the website header, click 'classes' and then 'classes and tuition'
- Scroll to the bottom of the page and click the pay button associated with your child's class
- Enter your child's name
- Input payment details. Review details and press 'pay'

Zelle:

To use zelle to pay your tuition online, please follow the following steps:

- Enroll in Zelle. You can enroll through your banks mobile app or the zelle app. If your bank doesn't offer Zelle, you can register with the Zelle app.
- Select 'The Farmhouse School' as the recipient. Add farmhouse-school as the business ID.
- Enter the tuition amount.
- Note your child's name under 'Memo'
- Review the transaction details and select 'Send'

Reoccurring Payments:

Families who use a bank that supports recurring Zelle payments may choose to set up an automatic monthly payment directly through their online banking or mobile app. Tuition can be scheduled to be sent on the first of each month to The Farmhouse School's Zelle account. Please note that recurring payment features and limits vary by financial institution.

Late Fees:

Monthly tuition payments are due on the first of the month. A five-business-day grace period is provided. Tuition payments received after the grace period will incur a \$50.00 late fee.

Returned of dishonored checks will incur an additional \$50.00 fee. After two returned checks, future tuition payments will be accepted on a cash or card only basis. The Farmhouse School reserves the right to terminate enrollment at its discretion in cases of nonpayment or consistently late tuition payments.

Tuition for the 2026-2027 School Year:

- Threes Class- \$550/month or \$5,500/year
- Fours Class - \$600/month or \$6,000/year
- Afternoon Class- \$725/month or \$7,250/year

Receipt & Tax Information:

Receipts are available upon request and may also be automatically generated through your selected payment method or invoicing platform.

Families are responsible for maintaining their own payment records for tax purposes. Upon request, The Farmhouse School can provide an annual tuition statement summarizing payments received during the calendar year.

Our Washington State Unified Business Identifier (UBI) number is available upon request for families who wish to claim eligible childcare or education-related tax benefits. Please consult your tax professional regarding the deductibility or eligibility of preschool tuition expenses. If you need documentation for reimbursement, employer-sponsored childcare benefits, or tax reporting, please contact the school office, and we will be happy to assist you.

Withdrawal Policy:

Families wishing to withdraw from The Farmhouse School must provide at least 30 days' written notice prior to their child's last day of attendance.

Tuition remains due in full during the 30-day notice period, regardless of attendance, and is not prorated for partial months.

The enrollment tuition deposit is applied toward the final month's tuition only for families who remain enrolled through the end of the school year. Families who withdraw before the end of the school year forfeit their tuition deposit, which is non-refundable. The forfeiture of the deposit does not replace the requirement to pay tuition during the 30-day notice period.

This policy allows the school the time and financial stability needed to thoughtfully fill the vacant space while maintaining balanced classroom communities and consistent staffing commitments.

School initiated termination of enrollment:

The Farmhouse School reserves the right to terminate a student's enrollment when it determines that continued enrollment is not in the best interest of the child, the classroom community, or the school. Whenever possible, concerns will be communicated to families and reasonable efforts will be made to work collaboratively toward a resolution before termination is considered.

Reasons for termination may include, but are not limited to:

- Child or adult behavior that poses a risk to the safety or well-being of students, staff, or themselves.
- Child or adult behavior concerns that persist despite collaborative efforts to address them.
- A family's unwillingness to support or respect the philosophy, policies, or educational approach of The Farmhouse School.
- Behavior by a parent, guardian, or family member that negatively impacts staff, other families, or the learning environment.
- Failure of a parent, guardian, or student to comply with school policies and procedures.
- Repeated late pick-ups or failure to adhere to school hours.
- Situations in which the school determines that it is unable to adequately meet a child's needs within the scope of the program.
- School initiated termination of enrollment continued:
- Termination of enrollment decisions will be communicated to families in writing and will include relevant details regarding timing and next steps.

School Resources

School Calendar:

Our school calendar includes all planned closures for the year, including holidays, breaks, and professional development days. We encourage families to review the calendar carefully at the start of the school year.

Please note that additional closures may occasionally occur due to unforeseen circumstances such as weather, safety concerns, or other unexpected events. In these cases, we will communicate updates as promptly as possible.

The Farmhouse School Calendar 2026/2027

- September 8-First day of school for the 4's & Afternoon class
- September 10-First day of school for the 3's class
- October 30-Teacher work day - no school for students
- November 11-Veterans day - no school for students or staff
- November 25- 27-Thanksgiving holiday - No school for students or staff
- December 21-January 1-First winter break-No school for students or staff
- January 18-Martin Luther King, Jr. day-No school for students or staff
- February 10-Teacher work day-No school for students
- February 15-19-Second Winter Break-No school for students or staff
- April 12-16-Spring break-No school for students or staff
- May 10-Teacher work day-No school for students
- May 31-Memorial day-No school for students or staff
- June 9-Last day of school for the 4's class
- June 10-Last day of school for the 3's and afternoon classes

Important Dates:

Throughout the year, we also plan a variety of special events to support connection and community, including family gatherings, in-class celebrations, parent night out events, and occasional field trips. These additional days are planned during class or after school. Dates for these events will be shared with families in advance via email.

Teacher Contact List:

Contacting us via email is the most effective way of communicating with your child's teachers. Important information should not be shared in passing, in-between or after class. We are focused on the children during times of transition and will likely forget this shared information. Please share all important information via email.

- regina@thefarmhouseschool.org
- caitlin@thefarmhouseschool.org
- rebecca@thefarmhouseschool.org
- rachel@thefarmhouseschool.org
- bella@thefarmhouseschool.org
- cait@thefarmhouseschool.org
- kelvin@thefarmhouseschool.org

Communicating important information:

If you have a question or concern, we ask that you email us to set up a time to talk. Aside from a quick conversation in passing, we will not have time to properly address your concerns during times of transition (i.e., drop-off/pick-up or as we are cleaning up between classes)

Questions about tuition should be directed to Regina.

Please be sure to check your email daily for correspondence from the school. This is how we share important information with our families.

Class directory:

Thank you for providing your preferred contact information for inclusion in our class directory. The directory is intended to help foster connections and build community among the families in your child's class.

A draft directory will be emailed to all participating families for review. You will have one week to verify your information and request any necessary changes before the directory is finalized. Because the directory is distributed to all families at one time, changes requested after the one-week review period cannot be incorporated into the finalized version.

If your contact information changes later in the year, we will gladly send an email to the families in your child's class with your updated information so they can update their own copies.

Contacting us:

Open and consistent communication is an important part of the partnership between home and school. We value strong relationships with our families and strive to communicate in ways that are timely, respectful, and supportive.

Email is the best way to communicate with your child's teachers, as it allows us to respond thoughtfully and ensures important information is documented and shared with the teaching team.

We also have a school cell phone for time-sensitive communication.

Please save this number in your phone:

The Farmhouse School

(425) 391-4400

Contacting us continued:

We kindly ask that each parent or guardian in your child's household send us a brief text message from their phone so we can save your contact information. If you are new to our school community, a simple message such as, "Hello! This is Bob, Sally's father," is perfect.

We strive to answer phone calls as they come in and are able to respond to most calls right away. If we miss your call, please leave a voicemail, and we will return it as soon as we are able. Response times may vary depending on classroom needs, staff availability, and our commitment to being fully present with the children.

To help us communicate effectively, we ask families to use the following guidelines:

- Email is the preferred method for non-urgent communication, detailed questions, developmental updates, or correspondence outside of school hours.
- Text messages are best for non-urgent but time-sensitive communication during the school day, such as letting us know you are running late, notifying us that someone else will be picking up your child, or sharing other important same-day information.
- Phone calls should be reserved for urgent matters or emergencies that require immediate attention.

Daily School Life

School hours & schedule:School Hours:

The Farmhouse School is in session September through June.

Our school hours are:

- Monday: 9:15 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.
- Tuesday: 9:15 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.
- Wednesday: 9:15 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.
- Thursday: 9:15 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.
- Friday: 9:15 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.

Class Schedule:

3's Class

Thursday & Friday
9:15 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

4's Class

Monday & Tuesday
9:15 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.
Wednesday
9:15 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.

5's Class

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday
12:30 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.

Daily routine:

- Drop-off
- Sign-in
- Group time
- Free play (all areas of the classroom are open for the children to explore)
- Clean up
- Snack/Lunch
- Outside play
- Goodbye group time
- Pick-up

We feel that having a good deal of flexibility in our daily schedule allows us to delve deeper into areas of interest, so we do not adhere to strict time constraints. That being said, research shows that routines are important to children (and teachers, too!) We follow our daily routines as often as possible to provide the children with that structure.

After a couple weeks of observation, the teachers may re-work the order in which certain activities happen during the day. For example, if we have a class that has a great deal of energy in the mornings, we may start our day outdoors or if we have a class that gets hungry early, we may have snack earlier in the day. We reserve the right to make these changes as we see fit, while adhering to the same start and end times.

Arrival procedure:

Unless otherwise specified by your child's teacher, children should be dropped off at the front door of the school.

During the first weeks or months of the school year, teachers invite parents to enter the classroom with their child to support a smooth transition into the school environment. As children become more comfortable and confident, teachers may decide to transition to drop-offs at the front door.

This transition is made thoughtfully and with the needs of the classroom community in mind. Door drop-offs encourage children to practice independence in their self-help skills, build confidence in their abilities, and begin to see themselves as capable learners. They also help create a calm and peaceful arrival experience, particularly for children who may become overwhelmed by large groups of adults or extended goodbyes.

To help create a consistent and welcoming start to the day, we follow the same arrival routine whenever possible:

- Parents or guardians will sign their child into school by initialing the sign-in sheet located outside the front door.
- Your child will be warmly greeted by a teacher.
- Children will enter the classroom, remove their outdoor shoes and coat, put on their indoor shoes, and hang up their backpack and belongings.
- Children will wash their hands.
- They will find their name tag and practice writing their name on the sign-in sheet as part of our daily literacy routine.
- After signing in, children will place their name tag above the fireplace to indicate they are present.
- Children will then choose a place to play and explore until group time begins.

This predictable routine fosters independence, responsibility, and a sense of belonging while providing a gentle transition from home to school.

Departure procedure:

Unless otherwise specified by your child's teacher, children will be picked up from the playground at the end of the school day.

To ensure a safe and organized dismissal, we ask families to follow the departure routine below:

- A teacher will be positioned at the gate to the playground during dismissal. Parents or guardians must meet the teacher at the gate and initial the sign-out sheet before their child is released.
- Once the child has been signed out, the teacher will dismiss the child to their parent or guardian. Children must be sitting at the benches to be dismissed, which allows us to safely supervise all children during the dismissal process.
- Please check your child's art basket and folder each day for important notices, completed work, and school communications.
- If you plan to use the playground after class, we ask that you wait for all children to be dismissed to their parent or guardian before entering the playground.

Separation Anxiety:

Separation anxiety is both normal and developmentally appropriate behavior for preschool aged children. Our teachers are very experienced at handling separation anxiety in a loving and compassionate way. We have found that remaining calm during stressful separation helps your child to adjust. This shows your child that you are confident that you chose a safe place for them to learn and grow and that you have confidence in them. We have found that it is helpful to have a plan in place for a child who suffers from separation anxiety.

We have found that it is helpful to have a plan in place for a child who suffers from separation anxiety.

What we find works-

- Come up with simple steps that you and your child will go through before you leave. For example- "When we get to school, mom/dad will watch you sign in and hang up your nametag. Then you can show me where you will start your day. Then I will give you a hug and say goodbye." Try not to overcomplicate or overprocess your plan. Be clear and concise

- Be consistent. Follow the same steps in the same order each day and do not waiver
- Have confidence and remain calm
- Arrive on time for school. Your child will be more likely to settle if they have time to get involved in an activity before group time
- Share your plan with your child's teacher via email prior to the first day of school. This way, we will know what to anticipate and how we can best support you and your child. Communicate with teachers if you would like us to help and how
- If your child is inconsolable, we will call you
- If your child's separation anxiety continues for a prolonged period of time, we will set up a meeting and come up with a new approach to support you and your child

Late Pick-up:

You must pick up your child on time. Arriving late to pick up your child directly impacts your child's teachers who use time between classes to prepare for the following class and eat lunch. If a family consistently picks up their child late, it is The Farmhouse Schools right to terminate enrollment.

There are occasions when unforeseen circumstances may cause you to be late to pick up your child. In such cases, please contact us immediately so that we can anticipate your late arrival. You may email your child's teachers.

Late drop-off:

At The Farmhouse School, we understand how tricky it can be to get out of the door each day, especially when you have young children! If you are anticipating a late drop-off, you may let us know via text or email, but it is not necessary. If you arrive and the door is locked, please knock and a teacher will greet your child at the door.

Attendance:

It is important that your child attend school on a regular basis so that they maintain a sense of belonging at The Farmhouse School. Frequent absences can be disruptive for your child, their classmates and the teachers. If your child is going to miss school, please share their projected absences with your child's teacher via email.

Authorized pick-up:

For your child's safety, we follow the procedures below for all pick-ups:

- All families provide a list of authorized pick-up individuals during enrollment. We will refer to this list at all times.
- If someone other than a parent or guardian is picking up your child, their full name must be written in the comments section of the sign-in sheet or communicated to teachers by text/email.
- If a name is not listed on the sign-in sheet, we will verify it against the authorized pick-up list before releasing your child.
- Valid photo I.D. is required for any individual who is not yet familiar to staff.
- Caretakers, grandparents, or regularly authorized individuals who are listed in your child's enrollment paperwork will not need to show I.D. once they are familiar to staff.
- If plans change unexpectedly, please notify teachers as soon as possible with the full first and last name of the person picking up your child.

For safety reasons, we will not release a child without proper authorization and verification.

Your child's belongings:

Please ensure that all of your child's belongings are clearly labeled with their first and last name. This includes coats, shoes, water bottles, lunch boxes, backpacks, and any other personal items brought to school.

The Farmhouse School is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged items.

Dress Code:

Children will naturally get dirty at school as they engage in meaningful, hands-on exploration throughout the day. We do not limit children's participation in art, sensory experiences, or outdoor play in order to preserve clothing. Instead, we encourage families to dress children in comfortable, practical clothing that can get messy and is not considered special or irreplaceable. This helps children fully participate in the rich, open-ended experiences that support their learning and creativity. The Farmhouse School is not responsible for clothing that is stained or ruined.

Dress Code continued:

For safety reasons, we ask that children do not wear necklaces, scarves, or any items that go around the neck during school hours.

Toileting Policy:

The Farmhouse School understands that toilet learning is a developmental process, and we are committed to supporting children and families through this stage. We accept children who are not fully potty trained and encourage families to be actively working toward independence in the bathroom.

If your child is not yet fully potty trained, please email us before the first day of school with an update on their current stage of toileting. This helps us support your child appropriately.

How Families Can Support at Home

- Encourage awareness of body cues
- Talk positively about using the toilet at school
- Visit the school bathroom during playdates or meet-the-teacher events
- Use the bathroom before leaving home and upon arrival
- Send clothing your child can manage independently

How We Support at School

- Regular bathroom reminders
- Support for independence with space and privacy
- Guidance through the toileting process when needed
- Assistance with changing out of wet clothing

Diapering & Bowel Movements

We are not able to provide diaper changing for bowel movements, as our facility is not set up for this type of care.

If a child has a bowel movement in their clothing, we will call a parent or caregiver to come help with cleaning and changing. We will care for and support the child until a family member arrives.

We appreciate your understanding as this policy helps us maintain a safe and appropriate environment for all children.

Soiled clothing:

If a child's clothing becomes soiled for any reason during the school day, they will be supported in changing into clean clothing provided by their family. We will do our best to inform families when their child has needed to change clothing during the day.

Any wet or soiled clothing will be placed in a plastic bag and sent home at pick-up.

We ask families to please restock their child's extra clothing as needed. This can be done by placing clean replacements in the labeled bag in your child's cubby or by providing a new labeled bag and giving it directly to a teacher.

If a child does not have a change of clothing in their spare clothing bag, the school will provide clean clothing for the child to wear.

Please launder the clothing and return to the school as soon as possible. This includes seasonal items such as rain gear and cold-weather clothing (for example, rain suits, jackets, or mittens) that may be loaned to support children when appropriate clothing has not been provided from home.

Bathroom Autonomy & Privacy

At The Farmhouse School, we recognize toileting and bathroom care as an important part of children's growing independence and bodily autonomy. Teachers provide support in the bathroom as needed, always with respect for each child's comfort, dignity, and privacy. We have two bathroom options available to children: one with a door and one without. Children are invited to choose the bathroom that feels most comfortable for them.

Teachers will not enter or open a bathroom door without first knocking and ensuring the child is aware, in order to protect privacy at all times. Support is provided only when needed, and always in a way that respects the child's autonomy and sense of control.

Classmates are instructed not to open a closed bathroom door or go around the partition in the doorless bathroom if it is occupied. If a child is unsure whether the bathroom is occupied, they are encouraged to ask a teacher for help checking before entering.

What to Bring to School on the First Day to be Left at School :

- A pair of indoor shoes or slippers (with grips on soles.) These shoes must be easy for your child to get on and off
- A full set of extra clothes (shirt, pants, socks, underwear) in a gallon zip lock bag labelled with your child's name
- A 4x8 or 5x7 family photo to be displayed in the classroom
- Any emergency medications. Please note expiration date on all medications and replace them as needed. Please hand medications directly to your child's teacher.

What to bring to school each day :

Items that go to and from school should always be in the child's backpack. Your child's backpack must be large enough to accommodate everything on their list, apart from their coat and boots/shoes.

- A backpack- Your child's backpack should be large enough to hold their rain gear and water bottle. While lunch boxes may be carried separately, it is helpful if they can also fit inside the backpack when possible.
- A warm coat
- Insulated rain boots during the rainy season. In warmer, dryer weather, please help your child choose footwear that is comfortable to walk in and made for running and climbing. No flip-flops.
- Rain gear -You are required to pack rain gear every day, regardless of the forecast. Your child's rain gear may be either a full rain suit of separate pieces. We will assist your child in getting dressed in their gear before heading outside while also supporting them in practicing the necessary skills to dress themselves.
- A FULL water bottle
- An insulated lunch box with an ice pack and a nutritious snack/lunch and any utensils needed to eat their meal. NO NUTS.

Toys from Home:

Children are not permitted to bring toys from home, with the exception of a designated comfort item or a special item brought in on their allotted sharing day.

We have found that toys from home can be distracting from the carefully curated learning experiences provided in the classroom and may disrupt the sense of focus, engagement, and harmony within the group. Limiting personal toys helps ensure that children are able to fully participate in shared materials, collaborative play, and the intentional learning environment we create each day.

Toys from Home Continued:

Comfort items, such as a security blanket or special transitional object, are welcome when needed and will not be required to be shared. Items brought for sharing day will be returned to your child's backpack after their sharing time and will not remain in the classroom.

your child has something meaningful they would like to share—such as an item found in nature, an object from a vacation, or a photo of a new sibling—we invite you to share it with your child's teacher. If we feel it is a meaningful and beneficial addition to our curriculum or classroom conversations, we will gladly incorporate and share it with the class.

Lost and found:

The Farmhouse School maintains a Lost and Found basket for misplaced items. Any items that are found and are not labeled, or whose owner cannot be readily identified, will be placed in this basket. It will be set out weekly for families to review and reclaim any missing belongings.

To keep our spaces organized and manageable, the basket will be emptied on a quarterly basis. Any items that remain unclaimed at that time will be donated or responsibly recycled.

Cubbies:

Your child may be sharing their cubby with a student from another class. We ask that children not use their cubbies to store anything other than their inside shoes and extra clothes. Coats and backpacks may be hung on the hook below your child cubby.

Files:

Each child will have a personal file located in a classroom file box, which will be placed on the back porch on most school days. This file is where you will find your child's artwork, dictation and storytelling projects, important forms, and other correspondence from the school. We encourage you to check your child's file regularly, as it serves as an important means of communication between home and school and is often where special projects and keepsakes will be sent home.

Art Basket:

Easel paintings and other artwork that is too large to fit in your child's file will be rolled and placed in the art basket on the back porch. We encourage you to check the art basket regularly, as it is where larger projects and creations will be sent home.

The children work hard on their artistic endeavors, and we want to ensure their creations make it home safely to be enjoyed and celebrated with your family.

Outdoor Play:

Outdoor play is a core part of our program and supports children's physical, social, and emotional development. Time outside allows children to build strength, coordination, and confidence as they run, climb, and explore natural spaces.

It also encourages problem-solving, creativity, and cooperation as children navigate shared environments together. Being outdoors in all-weather helps children develop resilience, awareness of their bodies, and a deep connection to the natural world. We play outside in all weather, rain or shine. Our playground can become muddy, with plenty of puddles for jumping and exploring. Because of this, it is very important that children are dressed appropriately for cold and wet weather.

Cold Weather Gear:

When cold weather arrives, the following gear is required:

A warm hat

Waterproof gloves, or two pairs of mittens with glove covers

Warm layered clothing (fleece or long underwear is especially helpful for staying comfortable)

Insulated boots

Warm socks

We will notify families by email when cold-weather gear becomes necessary.

Playground use:

Currently enrolled families are permitted to use The Farmhouse School playground between classes, provided they have signed the Playground Release of Liability form. Please respect and adhere to the following guidelines:

- Only currently enrolled families may use the playground. No guests, please.
- You must accompany your child at all times and actively supervise their play.
- Lock the gate after use.
- Clean up all toys and materials before leaving.
- Sand must remain in the sandbox and woodchips must remain in designated areas.
- Digging is not permitted outside of the sandbox.
- The tool bench must remain closed outside of school hours and between classes.
- Do not enter the chicken coop.
- Do not pick flowers, leaves, or plants.
- Do not enter the garden.
- Two children are permitted on the bench swing at one time.
- No food is allowed on the playground.

The Farmhouse School reserves the right to revoke playground access at any time. The school is not liable for accidents or injuries that occur outside of school hours. A signed Playground Release of Liability form is required in order to use the playground outside of class time.

Walking field trips:

We are fortunate to be surrounded by many parks and natural spaces here in Issaquah, and we explore them often.

Whenever possible, we will inform families in advance when we are leaving the school grounds by posting a notice on the door and sharing information verbally during drop-off. However, due to the responsive and emergent nature of our program, some walks and explorations may be spontaneous.

We begin by practicing safe and responsible walking routines in the immediate area around Gilman Village. As children develop confidence, awareness, and group readiness, we gradually expand our range of exploration beyond the school neighborhood.

Health & Safety

Illness policy:

To help keep our school community healthy, we ask that you keep your child home if they are experiencing any of the following symptoms:

- Green or yellow nasal discharge
- Ear pain or complaints of ear discomfort
- Productive (wet) cough
- Sore throat
- Pink, itchy, burning eyes, or eyes producing discharge
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Fever
- Rash accompanied by a fever
- Any contagious illness
- Lice or nits
- Open or oozing sores
- Any symptom that prevents them from participating comfortably in normal school activities

If your child has a chronic condition, such as seasonal allergies, the school may require a note from your child's healthcare provider stating that the symptoms are not contagious before they may return to school.

Returning to school:

The Farmhouse School's policy is that students and staff must be symptom-free, without the use of fever reducing or symptom masking medications, for at least 24 hours and no longer contagious before returning to school. This practice helps reduce the spread of colds, flu, and other communicable illnesses within our community.

Children with open or oozing sores may return to school only after the sores have been appropriately treated, covered, and, when prescribed, antibiotic treatment has been administered for at least 24 hours.

Medication policy:

The Farmhouse School does not administer routine over-the-counter or prescription medications. Families should plan for these medications to be given before or after the school day whenever possible.

The exception to this policy is emergency medications that may be necessary to protect a child's health and safety, such as an EpiPen, inhaler, or other physician-prescribed emergency medication.

Before any emergency medication can be kept at school or administered by staff, parents or guardians must complete and sign a Permission to Administer Medication Form. This form will be kept with the medication in our emergency backpack so that it is readily available in the event of an emergency.

All emergency medications must:

- Be handed directly to a teacher and may not be sent in your child's backpack.
- Remain at school and may not travel back and forth between home and school each day.
- Be in the original pharmacy or manufacturer packaging.
- Be clearly labeled with your child's name and current dosing instructions.
- Be unexpired and replaced by the family prior to the expiration date.

Emergency medications are stored securely in our emergency backpack, where they are readily accessible to staff while remaining out of children's reach.

Parents and guardians are responsible for notifying the school of any changes to their child's medical needs or emergency medication requirements and for ensuring that all required documentation remains current.

Immunization policy:

Parents are required to submit a completed Washington State Certificate of Immunization Status (CIS) or Certificate of Exemption (COE) demonstrating compliance with current Washington State immunization requirements.

A child who has been granted an exemption from one or more required vaccinations is considered at risk for the disease(s) for which the vaccination provides protection. During an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease, exempted children may be excluded from school or childcare settings and activities in accordance with state and local public health requirements. Tuition will continue to be due during any period of exclusion.

Students who are not fully immunized, or who are attending under conditional status and fail to make satisfactory progress toward meeting immunization requirements, must be excluded from attendance as required by state law.

All immunization records must be medically verified and complete. Please review all immunization forms carefully and ensure that all required information and signatures are included before submitting them to the school.

Head lice policy:

Head lice are a common occurrence among young children and are not associated with poor hygiene or cleanliness. Because lice spread easily through close contact, we ask families to help us minimize transmission within our school community.

If live lice or nits (lice eggs) are discovered at school, a parent or guardian will be contacted and asked to pick up their child as soon as reasonably possible.

Children may return to school after appropriate treatment has been initiated and the child is free of lice and nits. We encourage families to continue checking and combing their child's hair for several days following treatment to help prevent reinfestation.

If a case of head lice is identified, families in the affected classroom will be notified that a case has occurred. To protect the privacy of the child and family, identifying information will not be shared.

Emergency Contacts:

Parents and guardians are required to provide current emergency contact information as part of their child's enrollment paperwork. Each child must have at least two emergency contacts, in addition to their parent or guardians, who can be reached and are willing to assume responsibility for the child if necessary.

Emergency contacts should be individuals who can arrive at the school promptly if a parent or guardian cannot be reached. It is the responsibility of the family to notify the school immediately of any changes to phone numbers, addresses, emergency contacts, or authorized pickup individuals.

In the event of illness, injury, emergency school closure, or any situation requiring a child to be picked up, The Farmhouse School will first attempt to contact the parent or guardian. If a parent or guardian cannot be reached, we will contact the individuals listed on the child's emergency contact form.

For the safety of all children, only individuals listed as authorized pickup persons may pick up a child from school unless prior arrangements have been made with the school.

Accident & injury procedure:

Minor bumps, scrapes, and other everyday childhood injuries are a normal part of active play and exploration. When a minor injury occurs, staff will provide appropriate first aid, comfort measures, and supervision as needed.

Parents or guardians will be informed of any significant injury that occurs during the school day. Depending on the nature of the injury, notification may occur at pickup, by phone call, text message, or through a written incident report. Parents will always be notified of injuries involving a child's head, face, teeth, or eyes, even when the injury appears minor.

If a child experiences a serious injury, illness, or medical emergency, staff will immediately take appropriate action to ensure the child's safety. This may include contacting emergency medical services (911), administering emergency medications when authorized, and then notifying the child's parent or guardian and emergency contacts.

Accident & Injury Procedure Continued:

As part of the enrollment process, families provide emergency contact information, insurance information, physician information, and dental information. In the event that medical treatment becomes necessary, The Farmhouse School will use this information as appropriate to assist emergency personnel and medical providers in caring for your child. If emergency transportation is required, we will request that your child be transported to your family's preferred hospital whenever reasonably possible. However, emergency medical personnel may determine that another medical facility is more appropriate based on the child's condition, location, or other circumstances. In such cases, the recommendations and decisions of emergency personnel will take precedence.

If emergency medical treatment is required and a parent or guardian cannot be reached, The Farmhouse School is authorized to seek emergency medical care for the child. Any expenses associated with emergency medical treatment are the responsibility of the child's family.

Accident Reports:

An Accident Report will be completed whenever a child sustains an injury that requires first aid or medical attention beyond basic care, such as cleaning a minor scrape or applying a bandage.

The report will be completed by the teacher who provided care to the child and will include a description of the injury, how it occurred, any first aid or treatment provided, and the names of any witnesses who observed the incident.

Accident Reports will be reviewed and signed by the teacher, the Director, and the child's parent or guardian. Two copies of the report will be made: one copy will be provided to the family, and one copy will be maintained in the child's file.

Incident Reports:

An Incident Report will be completed whenever a child causes physical harm to another child or when a significant behavioral incident occurs that warrants documentation.

The report will be completed by the teacher who observed the incident and will include a factual description of what occurred, the actions taken by staff, and the names of any witnesses who observed the incident.

Incident Reports continued:

Incident Reports will be reviewed with the parent or guardian of the child involved and signed by the reporting teacher, the Director, and the parent or guardian. Two copies of the report will be made: one copy will be provided to the family, and one copy will be maintained in the child's file.

To protect the privacy of all children, Incident Reports will not include the names of other children involved in the incident.

Weather Guidelines:

We value outdoor play as an important part of children's learning, health, and development. Whenever possible, children will spend time outdoors each school day.

We closely monitor weather conditions and follow local weather advisories and safety recommendations. In the event of an air quality advisory, children will remain indoors. During wind advisories or other weather conditions that create unsafe outdoor environments, outdoor play may be canceled or moved indoors.

during periods of extreme cold or heat, teachers will use their best judgement to determine how much time can safely be spent outdoors.

Weather related school closure policy:

The Farmhouse School follows the Issaquah School District for all weather or natural disaster-related closures. If the Issaquah School District is closed, The Farmhouse School will also be closed.

In the event of a delay, morning classes will be cancelled. Afternoon classes will operate as usual, provided all educators are able to safely arrive at school.

Families will be notified of any school closure by 7:00 a.m. via email. We allow for up to three days of missed school due to weather or natural disaster. Any additional missed instructional time beyond these three days will be made up either by adding days to the end of the school year or by extending class hours.

The Farmhouse School will not reimburse tuition for school missed due to weather or emergency closures.

Sunscreen policy:

The Farmhouse School does not apply sunscreen during the regular school year. Parents and guardians are responsible for applying sunscreen to their child prior to arrival at school on warm or sunny days.

Because our program operates during the cooler months and school hours typically occur during times of day when sun exposure is limited, we generally do not experience weather conditions that require sunscreen reapplication. On warmer days, we may adjust our schedule and begin the day outdoors in order to take advantage of cooler temperatures and reduce the likelihood that sunscreen reapplication will be necessary.

In the event of unusually hot or sunny weather that may increase the risk of sunburn, we may shorten or modify outdoor activities to help protect children from excessive sun exposure.

An exception to this policy may be made during summer camps. Any sunscreen requirements, permissions, or reapplication procedures will be outlined in summer camp correspondence.

Emergency Drills:

At The Farmhouse School, we conduct emergency drills on a regular schedule to ensure that children and staff are familiar with safety procedures and feel confident responding in the event of an emergency.

We complete quarterly fire drills and earthquake drills throughout the school year. These drills are practiced in a calm, age-appropriate manner and are designed to support children in understanding routines rather than creating fear or anxiety.

Teachers prepare children in advance by explaining what will happen during each drill using simple, reassuring language. During drills, staff guide children step-by-step, maintaining a calm environment and ensuring that all children are accounted for and supported at all times.

Our goal is to build familiarity and confidence so that in the event of a real emergency, children are able to respond quickly and safely under the direction of their teachers.

Meals & Nutrition

Mealtime philosophy:

At The Farmhouse School, we believe mealtimes are wonderful opportunities for connection, conversation, and community building. Shared meals provide children with meaningful opportunities to practice social skills such as turn-taking in conversation, listening to others, and engaging respectfully with peers and teachers. We also encourage children to eat mindfully, supporting them in noticing their hunger and fullness cues and developing a positive relationship with food.

Mealtimes are also a valuable opportunity for children to build independence. We encourage children to unpack their own food, open their containers and packaging whenever possible, and take responsibility for their belongings. These routines support the development of confidence and self-help skills.

Wednesday produce snack & lunch:

On Wednesdays, children will bring a lunch from home, which we will eat together as a class. In addition, families will take turns providing a shared produce snack for the group.

Families will receive an invitation to sign up for 2–3 Wednesdays throughout the school year to provide a produce snack for approximately 16 children. All produce must be washed prior to arrival. We encourage families to offer a variety of unique fruits and vegetables to give children opportunities to try new foods and expand their palates. After signing up, please make a note of your snack dates. Sign-up genius will send a reminder two days prior to your snack day. Should you forget, we will provide snack and you will be asked to replenish

To ensure that all children can safely participate, we ask that only fresh produce be provided for this shared snack. This helps us accommodate children with allergies and food sensitivities. Families will be notified of any known allergies in the classroom, and we ask that you avoid bringing any produce that may pose a risk to a child in the group.

We provide plates, napkins and silverware

Wednesday produce snack and lunch continued:

Families may choose to bring produce in a variety of forms to support children's independence and self-help skills. For example, bananas and oranges may be unpeeled, while whole apples, pears, celery, and similar items may be brought uncut so that children can practice food preparation using child-safe tools with teacher support. Any leftover produce will be sent home with families unless a family specifically requests that it be composted at school.

Families are responsible for noting their assigned snack dates on their calendars. SignUpGenius will send a reminder approximately two days prior to each scheduled date. If a snack is forgotten, the school will provide a substitute snack, and families will be asked to replenish it at a later date.

On Wednesdays, the 4's class will also have lunch at school. Please send a nutritious lunch in an insulated lunchbox with an ice pack, along with a full water bottle. We will eat lunch together as a class, creating an opportunity for shared conversation and connection during mealtime.

Snack:

After several weeks of observation, your child's teachers will decide on an appropriate time to eat based on the needs of the children.

Sometimes we eat all together, and other times, children are invited to eat as they get hungry.

Your child's snacks should be packed in an insulated lunchbox and should include all necessary utensils.

Foods not permitted:

For safety reasons, and in alignment with early childhood best practices around choking prevention, the following snacks should either not be brought to school or should be prepared with children's safety in mind:

- No nuts
- No hard candy
- No popcorn
- Grapes must be halved or quartered
- Meat sticks must be cut into small pieces
- Fruits and vegetables must be cut into small, manageable pieces

Allergies & food safety:

The Farmhouse School is committed to maintaining a safe and thoughtful environment for all children. Families are asked to inform the school of any known allergies or dietary restrictions prior to the start of the school year, as well as any updates as they arise. All allergy information is shared with classroom staff and kept accessible during school hours to ensure appropriate safety measures are in place.

Children are supported in learning not to share food with peers, as part of our overall health and safety practices.

In some cases, when a child in the classroom has a significant allergy, we may ask that the allergen be avoided by all children in the class. When this is necessary, we will communicate clearly with families about specific foods to avoid and work together to create safe and realistic guidelines for the classroom community.

Our goal is always to balance inclusion, practicality, and safety while supporting the well-being of every child in our care.

Food Sharing Policy:

At The Farmhouse School, food experiences may occasionally be part of classroom learning, celebrations, or cultural sharing. Many families enjoy volunteering for cooking or baking activities, or to share foods that are meaningful to their family's culture and traditions.

When food is brought into the classroom for any reason, we will communicate in advance with all families via email. This communication will include our intention for the activity, what will be served, and a full list of ingredients.

Families are asked to carefully review this information and notify teachers if any adjustments are needed to ensure the safety of their child. We will work collaboratively to modify recipes or ingredients whenever possible.

Food Sharing Policy continued:

If a family chooses not to allow their child to participate in the consumption of a specific food or ingredient, we will honor that decision fully. In such cases, we will not serve that item to any children, as we are committed to ensuring that no child feels isolated or “othered” during shared food experiences.

Our goal is to balance safety, inclusion, and meaningful cultural and educational experiences for all children in our community.

Forgotten lunch or snack:

If a child comes to school without a lunch or snack, one will be provided for them.

School-provided snacks are nutritious, organic, vegetarian, and nut-free. We also take all known allergies and dietary restrictions seriously and will ensure that any food provided to your child aligns with their individual needs and intolerances.

Our goal is to ensure that every child is cared for and able to fully participate in their day, even when food has been forgotten from home.

Communication

Day to day communication:

At The Farmhouse School, we communicate with families in a variety of ways depending on the type of information being shared.

For general school information, important dates, reminders, and routine “housekeeping” updates, we primarily use email. Non-urgent updates and shared information will also typically be communicated through email.

If a topic requires more in-depth conversation or is time-sensitive, we will reach out via email to schedule a time to meet in person so we can give the matter our full attention.

We also share a window into our daily experiences in several ongoing ways. Families receive photos and updates through the Homeroom app, offering a glimpse into the children’s learning, play, and discoveries throughout the day.

Day to day communication continued:

We also share a window into our daily experiences in several ongoing ways. Families receive photos and updates through the Homeroom app, offering a glimpse into the children's learning, play, and discoveries throughout the day.

In addition, we send monthly newsletters to keep families informed about classroom themes, upcoming events, and important reminders.

Communicating concerns & grievances:

At The Farmhouse School, we value open, honest, and respectful communication. We believe that concerns and grievances are opportunities for collaboration and problem-solving, allowing us to work together in support of each child's well-being and success.

If a parent, caregiver, or teacher would like to discuss a concern, we ask that they reach out via email to arrange a time to meet in person. This allows all parties the opportunity to prepare thoughtfully for the conversation and ensures that adequate time can be dedicated to the discussion.

When appropriate, teachers will meet with one another in advance to discuss observations, consider possible solutions, and gather any other pertinent information. To help us prepare, we encourage families to briefly share the topic they would like to discuss when requesting a meeting. This allows everyone to reflect on their observations and come prepared for a productive conversation.

Communicating concerns & grievances continued:

During these meetings, we may develop a plan of action to support your child both at school and at home. This plan may include specific strategies, goals, observations, or recommendations intended to help your child be successful in the classroom environment. When recommendations are made, we ask families to make every reasonable effort to follow through with them in support of their child's growth and well-being. Meaningful progress is often most successful when families and educators work together with consistency and shared goals.

To ensure clarity and shared understanding, teachers may take notes during meetings. If specific agreements, action steps, or plans are established, families may be asked to review and sign the meeting notes acknowledging that the discussion took place and that all parties understand the agreed-upon next steps. A copy of the signed notes may be retained in the child's file.

While our goal is always to support every child and family, there may be situations in which a child's needs exceed the resources, staffing, or support available within our program. If sufficient progress is not being made despite collaborative efforts, or if we determine that we are unable to provide an appropriate educational environment for the child or maintain the safety and well-being of the classroom community, The Farmhouse School reserves the right to discontinue enrollment.

Observation & goal setting:

Observation is a central component of our teaching philosophy and an essential tool in informing our pedagogy. Through careful observation of children at play, we gather meaningful information about their interests, relationships, strengths, dispositions, and ways of engaging with the world. These observations help us create responsive learning experiences that are grounded in the children themselves.

During the first few months of the school year, teachers spend time intentionally observing each child as they settle into the classroom community. We pay close attention to where children choose to play, who they spend time with, how they approach new experiences, and

Observation & goal setting continued:

the unique qualities they bring to the group.

Using these observations, we prepare an individualized letter for each child to share with their family. This letter offers a snapshot of the child's experience at school, including observations about their play preferences, common playmates, emerging interests, and aspects of their personality that have become visible in the classroom environment.

As part of this process, teachers also identify a personalized goal for each child. These goals are intended to support the child's growth and development and may relate to social-emotional skills, independence, communication, confidence, or other areas that will help the child thrive within our learning community. Throughout the school year, teachers intentionally support children in working toward these goals and celebrate their progress along the way.

We view this process as an opportunity to deepen our understanding of each child and to strengthen the partnership between home and school as we work together to support their growth.

Parent-Teacher conferences:

For children in the 4's and Afternoon classes, we offer optional parent-teacher conferences during the school year.

In preparation for your child's conference, a teacher will conduct a casual, low-pressure assessment using games, puzzles, conversation, and other engaging activities. These experiences are designed to feel natural and enjoyable for children and are not intended to be tests. Rather, they provide teachers with additional information about a child's developing skills and areas of strength.

Through these play-based assessments, we gather information about your child's development in the following areas:

- Early academic skills
- Fine motor development
- Gross motor development

Parent-Teacher conferences continued:

In addition to these assessments, teachers will draw upon their daily observations of your child in the classroom, as well as input from families, to discuss:

- Social-emotional development
- Self-help and independence skills
- Relationships with peers and adults
- Learning dispositions and classroom participation

During the conference, we will also review the individualized goal established for your child earlier in the school year and discuss their progress toward meeting that goal.

For children approaching kindergarten, we will share our professional recommendation regarding kindergarten readiness. This recommendation is based on a holistic view of the child and takes into consideration academic skills, social-emotional development, self-help skills, attention and engagement, independence, and overall readiness to thrive in a kindergarten environment.

Progress Updates for 3's:

For children in the 3's class, we do not typically hold formal parent-teacher conferences. Instead, families will receive a second individualized email later in the school year that provides an update on their child's growth and development.

This update will include information about the child's progress toward the individualized goal established earlier in the year, as well as observations about their social-emotional development, emerging interests, relationships, independence, and overall experience at school. As with our initial observation letter, these updates are grounded in our daily observations of children at play and are intended to provide families with meaningful insight into their child's development within the classroom community.

Student intake questionnaires:

As children prepare for the next step in their educational journey, families may occasionally request that teachers complete assessment forms, questionnaires, or recommendation documents on behalf of a prospective school or program.

We are happy to share our observations and professional insights in support of your child's transition.

To allow adequate time for thoughtful completion, we ask that families provide any forms or requests at least two weeks before they are needed. While we will do our best to accommodate shorter timelines when possible, we cannot guarantee completion of forms submitted with less notice.

Photography & media policies

Photography policy:

At The Farmhouse School, photographs are an integral part of our pedagogy and documentation practices. Rather than simply capturing moments, teachers use photography as a tool for observation, reflection, and making children's learning visible.

Photographs help us document children's thinking, problem-solving, relationships, creativity, and ongoing projects. They allow teachers to revisit experiences alongside children, reflect on learning, and thoughtfully plan future curriculum based on children's interests and discoveries. Photography also provides families with a meaningful window into the learning that takes place throughout the school day.

Photographs may be used in the following ways:

- Classroom documentation displayed on the walls of the school
- Individual child journals
- Group learning journals and project documentation
- Monthly newsletters
- The school's private Homeroom photo-sharing and communication platform

Photography policy continued:

Families are given the option to opt out of having their child's image used in public-facing materials, including social media posts, promotional materials, advertisements, marketing publications, and other school communications intended for audiences outside of our enrolled school community.

Homeroom photo sharing app:

The Farmhouse School uses Homeroom as our private school communication and documentation platform. Through Homeroom, we share classroom photos, videos, documentation, updates, and school communications with families.

Homeroom is a secure, closed system used exclusively by The Farmhouse School and enrolled families. Access is limited to approved parents, guardians, and school staff. Families are invited to join directly by the school, and accounts are not publicly searchable or accessible.

Homeroom uses secure login credentials to control access, meaning only invited users with verified accounts can view content. Information is stored on secure servers and protected through authentication systems requiring a private username and password. Content shared through Homeroom is not visible to the public and cannot be accessed without authorization.

Photos and videos shared through Homeroom remain the property of the individual who created them. By participating in Homeroom, families and staff grant the platform a limited license to securely store and display content within the approved school community. To protect the privacy of all children and families, photos, videos, and documentation shared through Homeroom may not be downloaded, reposted, shared, or published outside of the platform without permission from both the school and the families involved.

Homeroom allows us to share children's learning, experiences, and discoveries with families while maintaining a protected and respectful environment for our school community.

Media & technology in the classroom:

At The Farmhouse School, technology use is very limited and is used only when it meaningfully supports children's learning and exploration. We believe that young children learn best through play, relationships, hands-on experiences, creativity, and interaction with the natural world. These experiences remain at the heart of our program.

The classroom has an iPad that is used occasionally for educational purposes. This may include researching topics that emerge from children's interests, looking up photographs or visual references, identifying plants or animals, answering questions that arise during projects, or extending children's investigations.

We also occasionally use a projector as part of classroom provocations and creative experiences. Images may be projected onto walls to inspire artwork, support dramatic play, create immersive environments, or provide visual references for children's creations and explorations.

Technology is always used intentionally, under teacher supervision, and in direct connection to children's interests and ongoing learning. It is not used for entertainment, routine screen time, videos, games, or independent device use.

Our goal is to use technology sparingly and thoughtfully as one of many tools available to support children's curiosity, creativity, and understanding of the world around them.

Privacy & confidentiality:

We ask that parents and caregivers do not photograph children inside the school other than their own child. This helps us protect the privacy of all children and maintain a safe and respectful environment for everyone in our community.

When sharing documentation externally, we will not use children's names alongside their photographs in any outward-facing materials.

Privacy & confidentiality continued:

All photos are deleted from school-approved devices at the end of each school year. The exception to this is when families have provided consent for their child's image to be used in promotional or advertising materials. In those cases, approved images may be securely stored in our school Dropbox account for ongoing use in school marketing.

We appreciate your partnership in helping us uphold privacy and ensure that all children and families in our program feel respected and protected.

School picture day:

Each year, we welcome a professional photographer to the school to take individual and class photos. This typically takes place in the spring and is done during regular class time.

Participation is included as part of the school experience; however, families are not required to purchase photos.

Celebrations & traditions

Birthdays:

We celebrate birthdays with a special ceremony during group time. In honor of their birthday, each child will receive a collaborative gift created by their classmates.

If your family would like to donate a gift to the school in honor of your child's birthday, we would be delighted to present the gifted item during our birthday celebration. Donations might include a favorite children's book, art materials, a toy for the classroom, or another item that will enrich our learning environment. A school wish list can be found on our website under the "Parents" section. We also gratefully welcome gifts of plants for the garden or monetary contributions to our tuition assistance fund, which helps support families in need.

Please remember that donations are entirely optional. We are happy to simply celebrate your child and their special day with our school community.

For children with summer birthdays, we celebrate their half-birthday during the school year so that every child has the opportunity to be recognized and celebrated with their classmates. We will share your child's celebration date with you before the start of the school year.

Birthdays continued:

to help accommodate allergies, dietary restrictions, and family preferences, we ask that treats not be brought to school for sharing.

We also ask that cubbies not be used to distribute party invitations. If every child in the class is invited, invitations may be placed in classmates' files. Invitations for events that do not include the entire class should be distributed outside of school.

Holiday policy:

At The Farmhouse School, we strive to create an inclusive environment where every child's identity, family, and cultural background are respected and represented. Throughout the year, we will learn about a variety of holidays, traditions, and special celebrations observed by the families in our community.

The ways in which people celebrate help shape their identities, values, beliefs, and family cultures. By learning about one another's traditions, children develop empathy, curiosity, and an appreciation for the diversity that exists within our school community and the wider world.

Our goal is to foster understanding rather than participation. We will not celebrate religious or cultural holidays as active participants. Instead, we will explore the history, traditions, symbols, and meanings associated with various celebrations through stories, conversations, books, music, art, and other age-appropriate learning experiences.

We welcome families who would like to share aspects of their traditions or celebrations with the class and encourage open communication about the customs and values that are important to your family.

Curriculum & learning

Spanish class:

The Farmhouse School hosts an immersive Spanish class as an enrichment opportunity for children in the 4's and Afternoon classes. The program is supported with the help of parent volunteers, who help ensure a meaningful and engaging group experience.

More detailed information about Spanish class, including scheduling and expectations, will be shared with participating families around December.

Curriculum & learning

Emergent curriculum:

Emergent curriculum is an approach to teaching and learning in which curriculum develops in response to children's interests, questions, and interactions, rather than following a fixed, predetermined set of themes or lessons.

In this approach, learning experiences are shaped by ongoing observation of children's play and engagement. Teachers identify patterns, interests, and lines of inquiry that emerge naturally in the classroom and use these as the foundation for planning experiences, materials, and provocations.

Curriculum is not static; it evolves over time as children's ideas deepen and new areas of curiosity arise. This allows learning to remain responsive, meaningful, and connected to children's lived experiences and developmental needs.

Learning through play:

The Farmhouse School is a play-based program. This means that children's learning is primarily supported through play rather than through direct, teacher-led academic instruction. There are very few, if any, teacher-directed academic lessons in the traditional sense. This does not mean that academic learning is not valued. Rather, academic concepts are introduced in developmentally appropriate and meaningful ways through play, stories, songs, movement, puppetry, and hands-on experiences.

Teachers intentionally observe children to understand their strengths, interests, and areas where they may need additional support. These observations help guide how and when academic concepts are introduced.

Academic learning is then embedded into play-based provocations that are responsive to each child. Teachers use children's interests and strengths as entry points for learning.

This approach allows academic learning to emerge naturally within play, making it more engaging, accessible, and meaningful for young children.

Projects and investigations:

In the Reggio Emilia approach, project work refers to in-depth studies that emerge from children's interests, questions, and experiences. Projects are long or short-term investigations that evolve over time as children explore a topic in greater depth.

Rather than following a fixed plan or set of lessons, project work develops organically. A project may begin with a child's question, an observation, or an event in the classroom. As children engage with the topic, their ideas are revisited, expanded, and made more complex through continued exploration.

Project work is highly collaborative and involves children working individually and in groups to investigate ideas through a variety of materials and forms of expression. These may include drawing, construction, storytelling, movement, conversation, and symbolic representation.

Teachers support project work by observing children closely, documenting their thinking, and offering materials, provocations, and experiences that extend their inquiry. The focus is on making children's thinking visible and supporting deeper exploration over time.

Projects are not predefined or time-limited in a rigid way; instead, they end naturally when children's interest and inquiry begin to resolve or shift toward new ideas.

Documentation:

In the Reggio Emilia approach, documentation is the practice of observing, recording, and making visible children's thinking, learning processes, and experiences.

Documentation is used to capture not only what children do, but how they think, communicate, collaborate, and develop ideas over time. It may include photographs, transcriptions of children's words, work samples, and teacher observations.

Rather than serving as a final record, documentation is an ongoing process that supports reflection, dialogue, and deeper understanding of children's learning. It is used by educators to reflect on practice and by children to revisit and build upon their ideas.

Nature-based learning:

Nature-based learning is an approach that centers children's experiences in the natural world as a primary context for play, exploration, and discovery. Children spend regular time outdoors engaging with natural materials, changing seasons, and open-ended environments that encourage curiosity and problem-solving.

Our natural play yard is intentionally designed to support this type of learning. It includes elements such as natural terrain, plants, loose parts, and open-ended materials that invite children to climb, build, observe, imagine, and interact freely with their environment.

Time in nature supports physical development, sensory exploration, creativity, social interaction, and a sense of connection to the natural world. Through daily outdoor play, children develop resilience, confidence, and a deeper awareness of the environment around them.

Our philosophy on art:

We believe that art and expression are an essential part of a child's development. All children are artists who create and communicate in meaningful ways, even when their expression does not resemble traditional forms of art. We value the process of making over the final product and affirm that there is no "right way" to create.

We honor all forms of artistic expression, including painting, drawing, building and constructing, storytelling, dance, music, dramatic play, and acting. Through these experiences, children are supported in exploring ideas, emotions, and relationships with materials and with one another.

Loose Parts Play:

Loose parts play refers to open-ended materials that children can move, manipulate, combine, and transform in a variety of ways. These materials do not have a fixed purpose and can be used creatively based on children's ideas and imagination.

Examples of loose parts include natural materials (such as sticks, stones, pinecones, and shells), recycled materials, fabric, blocks, and other non-prescriptive objects.

Loose parts support creativity, problem-solving, collaboration, and flexible thinking, as children decide how materials are used rather than following a predetermined outcome.

Risky Play:

“Risky play” refers to opportunities for children to engage in age-appropriate challenges that involve uncertainty, testing limits, and exploring physical and emotional boundaries in a controlled and supported environment.

This may include activities such as climbing, balancing, jumping from heights, moving at speed, using tools, or navigating uneven terrain. These experiences allow children to assess risk, build confidence, develop physical skills, and strengthen decision-making.

At The Farmhouse School, we recognize risky play as an important part of healthy development. It helps children develop resilience, body awareness, problem-solving skills, and an understanding of their own capabilities.

We support children in engaging in mindful, calculated risk by carefully observing their abilities, providing appropriate environments and materials, and offering guidance when needed. Teachers are present to assess safety, set clear boundaries when necessary, and intervene when risk becomes unsafe, while still allowing children space to test and explore within their developmental range.

Our goal is to help children build confidence in their own judgment while ensuring they feel supported, capable, and safe.

Our Agreements:

At The Farmhouse School, our core agreements are simple: be kind and be safe. These shared expectations guide how we learn, play, and interact with one another throughout the school day.

In addition to these core agreements, children are given regular opportunities to generate their own agreements. These are ideas and expectations that matter to them in their classroom community and daily experiences. This process supports autonomy, ownership, and a sense of responsibility for their shared environment.

By contributing to the agreements that shape their space, children develop a deeper sense of agency, belonging, and respect for themselves, others, and their classroom community.

The role of the teacher:

At The Farmhouse School, we strive to build deep, meaningful, and lasting relationships with each child, getting to know them as individuals and building connections grounded in trust, respect, and care.

In the Reggio Emilia approach, the role of the teacher is not to deliver fixed instruction, but to act as an observer, researcher, and facilitator of learning. Teachers carefully observe children's play, interests, and interactions in order to understand how they are thinking and what they are exploring.

These observations are used to support and extend learning through thoughtful materials, provocations, questions, and shared experiences. Teachers respond to children's emerging ideas and help make their thinking visible through documentation and reflection.

The teacher's role also includes supporting a classroom environment where relationships, curiosity, and collaboration are prioritized, and where children are seen as capable, competent learners who actively participate in shaping their learning experiences.

The role of the parent:

At The Farmhouse School, the role of the parent is to support their child as their first and most important teacher. Parents are active partners in their child's learning journey and play a key role in helping children feel secure, supported, and connected between home and school.

We value collaboration between home and school as an essential part of a child's experience. Families and teachers work together to share insights, understand each child more deeply, and create consistency and continuity between home and the classroom. This partnership helps bridge the gap between home and school, supporting the child in feeling known, understood, and supported in both environments.

We are also committed to building meaningful, respectful relationships with families. These relationships are grounded in trust, open communication, and shared care for each child's growth and well-being.

The role of the environment:

In Reggio Emilia-inspired education, the environment is considered the “third teacher,” alongside the child and the educator.

The environment is intentionally designed to be welcoming, beautiful, and thoughtfully arranged to invite exploration, curiosity, and engagement. Materials are accessible and organized in ways that encourage independence, creativity, and collaboration.

Rather than being a passive space, the environment actively supports learning by offering opportunities for discovery, problem-solving, and interaction. It reflects the interests of the children and evolves over time based on their ideas and experiences.

The environment also communicates value and respect for children’s work by displaying documentation and making learning visible. In this way, it supports ongoing inquiry and deepens children’s connection to their learning experiences.

Social-Emotional support & learning:

At The Farmhouse School, we place a high value on supporting children’s social and emotional growth. Social-emotional learning is woven into nearly every aspect of the day, rather than being treated as a separate or occasional focus.

Children are given ongoing opportunities to practice empathy, self-advocacy, social problem-solving, respectful listening, collaboration, and communication in real and meaningful contexts. These skills are introduced, modeled, and reinforced throughout daily interactions and classroom experiences.

Teachers support this learning through one-on-one interactions, small group work, and whole-group experiences. In each setting, children are guided in navigating relationships, expressing their needs, and working through challenges with support and care.

A key part of this work includes helping children identify and name their emotions, as well as learning healthy and appropriate ways to express them. Over time, children build emotional awareness, self-regulation skills, and confidence in their ability to engage positively with others.

Mindfulness practices:

Mindfulness is a regular part of our daily rhythm. We intentionally teach, practice, and incorporate mindfulness activities throughout the day to support children's emotional regulation, focus, and overall well-being.

Mindfulness techniques help children develop awareness of their thoughts, feelings, and physical sensations. These practices support self-regulation, reduce stress, and help children feel more grounded and present in their bodies and environment. Over time, children build tools they can use to calm themselves, refocus, and navigate challenging moments with greater ease.

Affirmations:

The Farmhouse School, we work together as a community to generate affirmations and regularly practice speaking them out loud. These affirmations are positive, intentional statements that help children build a sense of confidence, belonging, and self-worth.

For young children, this practice supports emotional development by helping them internalize positive messages about themselves and their relationships with others. Repeating affirmations helps children begin to shape their self-concept, strengthen their confidence, and develop a sense of agency in how they approach challenges and interactions. This practice also supports social-emotional learning by reinforcing ideas of kindness, capability, and connection. When children hear and say affirmations regularly, they begin to integrate these ideas into how they think about themselves and their role within the classroom community.

Over time, affirmations become a simple but powerful tool for building resilience, encouraging positive self-talk, and supporting children as they navigate both successes and challenges.

Approach to collaborative problem solving:

At The Farmhouse School, we do not take an authoritarian approach to discipline. We do not use time-outs or practices that shame children or draw attention to behaviors we are trying to reduce.

Instead, we focus on supporting children through collaborative problem-solving. When an incident arises, we begin by bringing the children involved together in a calm and supportive way.

Approach to collaborative problem solving continued:

Each child is given the opportunity to share their perspective and describe what they observed or experienced. Teachers do not act as judges or jurors; instead, their role is to facilitate respectful communication and ensure that each child feels heard.

Once all perspectives have been shared, children are encouraged to generate possible solutions. Teachers may initially offer suggestions and help support children in putting their ideas into practice when needed. If a solution does not resolve the issue, the group comes back together to reflect and try another approach.

Over time, children develop the ability to engage in this process more independently. With continued practice, they begin to generate and implement their own solutions with increasing confidence and minimal adult support. At this stage, teachers primarily observe and step in only when necessary for safety or guidance.

This approach supports children in developing confidence as problem solvers, strengthens social bonds, encourages empathy, and reinforces collaboration and communication skills. It helps children see themselves as capable contributors to resolving conflict and maintaining a respectful community.

Family partnership:**family participation opportunities:**

Parents and family members can participate in the life of the classroom in a variety of meaningful ways. Volunteers may support by guiding a special art project, serving snack, hosting a cooking experience, helping plan a special event for students or staff, reading stories, sharing a special skill or interest, or introducing a cultural tradition or practice with the children.

We also warmly welcome other important family members such as aunts, uncles, and grandparents to participate in classroom experiences. Anyone who is an important part of your child's life is welcome to be involved in our community.

All volunteers are required to complete and submit a background check prior to participating in the classroom.

Social Coordinator:

Each class may have a volunteer (or volunteers) who coordinates monthly social events for families outside of school hours. These gatherings help strengthen community connections and support children's social development beyond the classroom.

Events can be simple, such as a park meet-up, or more structured experiences such as a fire station visit, pottery painting, or other shared activities. Some classes may choose to meet more frequently, though this is entirely optional.

The social coordinator is responsible for planning the monthly event and communicating details to families, typically through email and/or tools such as SignUpGenius or Evite, to ensure all families have access to information and can participate if they choose.

A list of past activity ideas can be provided for inspiration. Please let us know if you are interested in this role or would like to support your class in this way.

We find that these social opportunities make a meaningful difference in children's social development and help build a strong sense of connection and community within each class.

If you would like to act as a social coordinator in your child's class, please reach out to the teachers and we will help support you in getting started!

Chaperones:

We occasionally invite parent volunteers to serve as chaperones on field trips and park days. These experiences are shared with families in advance, and we aim to provide equitable opportunity for participation.

Chaperones support teachers in maintaining safety standards and helping supervise children while we are away from school. All chaperones are required to complete and submit a background check prior to participating in any school-related outing.

family inclusion & belonging:

We deeply value our relationships with the families in our school community and strive to nurture these connections in meaningful ways. We host occasional all-school evening events, invite parents to participate in the classroom, and open the playground to families who would like to use the space in between classes and after school, supporting further connection between children and their families.

We strongly encourage families to connect with one another outside of school. We strive to build a community that extends beyond the walls of the school—one that is supportive of each other, nurtures lifelong friendships, and sets an example for what it looks like to be an active participant in a thriving community.

We also observe that when families make an active effort to connect and build community, the classroom environment feels more harmonious. Children experience a stronger sense of belonging and develop deeper connections with their peers, strengthening the overall classroom community.

for the duration of the day.

The Farmhouse School offers tuition credit to parents who participate as substitute teachers.

If you would like to be added to our substitute list, please request, complete, and return the Parent Substitute form to your child's teacher. All substitute teachers are required to have a cleared Washington State background check prior to working in the classroom.

Background check continued:

All adults volunteering or working in the classroom must complete a clear background check through WATCH (Washington Access to Criminal History).

To complete this requirement, please visit:

www.watch.wsp.gov/public/watch and submit the name and birthdate background check (\$11 fee). Volunteers and substitute teachers are responsible for the cost associated with this background check. Once you receive a clear result, please print or email the confirmation provided to the school.

We also accept more comprehensive background checks, such as those completed through a school district.

