

# **Suncatcher Forest School Parent Handbook**

## **Dear Parents and Guardians,**

Thank you for entrusting Suncatcher Forest School with your child's early childhood education. Our teachers and staff are committed to providing quality education in a safe and nurturing environment.

The handbook explains many of our policies and procedures, but it does not address every possible situation or question about the preschool's operations. The policies and procedures in this handbook are for general reference only and may not be applicable in all cases. Suncatcher Forest School management reserves the right to revise, modify, delete, or add to any and all policies, procedures, or school rules stated in this handbook or in any document at any time. Please feel free to reach out with any questions – we are more than happy to connect and address concerns.

We look forward to working with you and your family!

## **Land acknowledgement**

We would like to acknowledge that we operate on the traditional land of the first people of Seattle, the Duwamish People past and present and honor with gratitude the land itself and the Duwamish Tribe.

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## Philosophy and Values

Every child is unique and special, deserving of love and attention. Our teachers will help each child discover and cultivate his/her talents and find their own unique way to learn and reach their potential. The research shows that children learn best by doing and through engaging their five senses.

The emphasis of our program is on exploration and process, questioning, and discovering. We believe that helping children develop a strong sense of self-esteem and social competence at a young age is paramount to their success in school and in life. We strive to include in our emerging curriculum a wide range of activities that promote holistic development and help children to grow healthy and happy.

### Free play and child-initiated learning

*“It is paradoxical that many educators and parents still differentiate between a time for learning and a time for play without seeing the vital connection between them”.*

-Leo Buscaglia

In Suncatcher Forest School, we recognize that play is how children learn. We believe that every child is a capable learner, and genuine curiosity is a best driver for learning. In our outdoor classroom we have created inviting space for exploration and inquiry. We allow ample time for free play every day. We help every child to engage with nature in a unique way, ask questions, explore and co-create space around them. This is why we use an emergent curriculum in our outdoor school.

Emergent curriculum is a philosophy of teaching and learning that focuses on planning curriculum in response to the interests, ideas and thoughts of the children themselves. Emergent curriculum allows us to better honor unique interests and needs of each child and help children to grow into lifelong learners. Academic skills as math, science, reading, writing and social studies are covered within the context of this approach.

### Healthy risk taking

Risks are ubiquitous in modern life. Healthy risk taking is a vital part of our philosophy and benefits kids in multiple ways. According to studies, keeping children safe involves letting them take and manage risks. Risky play helps kids develop good judgement, persistence and resilience. It ultimately contributes to higher self-esteem, confidence, decision making, and honors problem-solving skills. Studies show that children who were allowed to participate in a risky play in early childhood are less likely to get seriously injured compared to children who were not. They also are less likely to engage in hazardous behavior and misconduct during middle and high school.

## **Nature at the core of the program**

*“Time in nature is not leisure time; it's an essential investment in our children's health (and also, by the way, in our own).”*

— Richard Louv, Last Child in the Woods

We believe that all living things, even tiniest ones, are important. Through our everyday exploration we learn how everything in nature is interconnected and learn to care for the world around us and how to be good stewards of the land. Teachers and staff model behavior of care and respect for nature and help children to learn age-appropriate eco-friendly practices. For example, we learn a “leave no trace” approach, about water and nutrients cycles, how to recycle and reduce waste, conserve water and resources. On our property we strive to be free of pesticides or other harmful chemicals.

## **Diversity and inclusion**

Suncatcher Forest School provides the highest quality program for toddlers and kids. We are inclusive to the best of our ability. Enrollment decisions are made without regard to race, religion, color, gender, gender identification, sexual orientation, and national origin.

## Program description and rules

Our program is designed around open play and outdoor exploration. We spend all our time outdoors. Parents at Suncatcher Forest School must understand and agree that:

- We go outside rain or shine. The only exception is made to severe inclement weather events that are of safety concern (more on this in Safety chapter)
- Children will occasionally get wet and muddy. Appropriate clothing is required. If a child is not dressed for the weather, a teacher has a right to not admit him/her in a program or contact parents for early pick-up. Please, see “What to bring” chapter for recommendations on how to dress your child.
- Under careful supervision of a teacher, children will participate in risky activities. Risky activities include, but not limited to: tree climbing, forcing small streams, big body play (such as pillow fight, catch-ups, etc.), foraging for native plants, building a fire, encounters with domestic and wild animals, use of tools and instruments. Please, read more on a risky play and in our Safety policy chapter.
- We encourage our children to choose healthy food. No sugary food or junk food will be allowed. If any child in our care has documented food allergies, we will notify all parents and ask not to bring food containing that allergen.
- All adults in our outdoor preschool, including parents, caregivers, teachers and volunteers should model behavior of care and respect to children and other adults. No foul language, conflicts, or showing up intoxicated with alcohol or other substances would be tolerated.
- All questions and concerns should be addressed to a teacher after pick-up time or communicated to Suncatcher Forest School via email.

## Liability Insurance

Suncatcher - Adapted 10/20/2022

Suncatcher Forest School **HAS** liability insurance coverage for this business.

## Child Protective Services

Because we have regular contact with children, are required to report (or cause a report to be made) whenever physical, sexual, or other types of abuse has been observed or is suspected, or when there is evidence of neglect, knowledge of an incident, or an imminent risk of serious harm or exploitation, or when a child talks about suicide, as well as inappropriate sexual contact between two or more children or the worst when imminent risk of serious harm could happen. This is mandated by Washington State Law.

If an accident or an injury occurs involving a child in attendance at an early learning program which requires the services of a medical professional (including a dentist), not only are parents called but licensing and Child Protective Services (CPS). It is possible that CPS and or licensing will then come out to verify the scene of the incident and determine if the correct procedures were taken to assist and the next steps to take.

## Core Routines, Schedule and Tuition

We use children's interest and ideas as a guide for shaping our curriculum. Due to the nature of emergent curriculum, our schedule can be flexible and have slight changes from day to day, depending on the flow of the day. At the same time, we recognize that some structure and routine is beneficial for children. Thus, we incorporate next everyday routines in our program.

### Day Schedule

#### **9:30 AM Children arrival and drop-off**

A teacher will cheer each family upon arrival, and prompt children to freely explore our outdoor classroom.

#### **9:45 AM -10:30 AM Circle time**

After all kids arrive, it is time for a circle time. We will sing a welcoming song, read a story or put on a puppet show and choose activities for the day (kids will actively participate in this part). Activities may include building from natural materials (dens, shelters, forts), nature craft (playing with clay, making bird feeders, mud pies, etc.), learning about Indigenous people, nature and wildlife observation (weather patterns, observation of amphibians, insects, birds), plant identification and foraging, hiking, climbing trees and active play, gardening and taking care for farm animals.

#### **10:30 AM -12:00 PM Time for activities and free play**

Nature play provides many opportunities for learning. Our teacher will incorporate in everyday activities learning of STEAM, problem solving skills, language development and social skills. For example, playing on a mud kitchen boosts creativity and is great for teaching math (weighing, measuring, counting, creating and following recipes). Observations of nature are helpful to learn about patterns in nature, scientific worldview, predictions and hypothesis testing.

**12:00 PM-12:30 PM Snack/lunch time.** After play and exploration, we will gather in our circle place for snacks. During snack time each child will be given a chance to talk about his/her experience and express her ideas.

**12:30 PM-1:30 PM Quiet time, we offer quiet activities like drawing and coloring, board games, books**

**1:30 pm – 3:00 pm Supervised and free play in the forest**

**3:00 PM – 3 30 pm Good-bye song, Parents arrival and pick-up time**

### Hours of Operation

Monday - Friday 9:30 AM – 3:30 PM

### Staff-to-Child Ratio

2 staff for the group of up to 12 children in multi-aged classroom (30 mos – 6 yo)

If your child's teacher is absent the replacement teacher will be another lead teacher. The individual needs of each child will be carried out by this substitute teachers. The teachers-to-

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Tel: 425 974 50 76

child ratio would be maintained by having enough teachers to cover the hours needed. Teachers will have contact information for the director should an emergency arise. And will follow our daily schedule.

## **Fees and Payment Plan**

Monthly tuitions are:

Half-Day Program (3 Hours)

Morning: 9:30–12:30 | Afternoon: 12:30–3:30

Schedule (Days per Week)

1 day \$320 (only 4+)

2 days \$620

3 days \$880

4 days \$1,155 days

5 days \$1,450

Full -Day Program (6 Hours)

9:30–3:30

Schedule (Days per Week)

1 day \$460 (only for 4+)

2 days \$720

3 days \$980

4 days \$1,300

5 days \$1,600

We provide 15% sibling discount for a second child in the family.

Rates are evaluated yearly and may be changed in January. Four weeks' notice will be given to families for rate increases.

## **What to bring and how to dress your child**

Please, bring a labeled backpack with next child belongings.

- Reusable water bottle, labeled with a child's name.
- Set of extra clothes: underwear, socks, pants and t-shirt
- Lunch in a lunch box (the meal shouldn't require heating)

Please, dress your child's weather appropriately, and provide us with an extra set of season appropriate clothes to change if your child will get wet or muddy.

## **Clothes for Winter**

What to wear for playing outside in the Seattle winter:

- Wear multiple layers.  
For the base layer wear long pants and a long sleeves shirt. Use an additional layer of a fleece jacket and pants. If your child easily feels cold when outside you may want to add even more layers (down jacket, for example).
- Outer layer is the most important.  
Choose waterproof (NOT just water resistant) pants and a jacket or a rain suit. I personally love Oaki and Tuffo rain suits.
- Use insulated rain boots.  
Unlike regular rain boots, insulated rain boots will keep little feet warm even in the temperature below freezing and even if they happen to get wet (which happens when we encounter an especially deep puddle). Bogs and Oaki make good insulated boots.
- Use waterproof mittens (such as snow mittens) and have an extra pair available. Or you can purchase rain mittens (Polarn. O. Pyret, for example) and use it in a pair with wool gloves or mittens.
- Wear a warm hat.
- Kids can (and will) get wet and muddy, so putting a box or a plastic container in your car for muddy gear is a great idea.

In the spring and fall, you can use the same gear as in winter but wear less layers. During winter, spring and fall bring a rain suit even on a rain-free day, because the ground, bushes and leaves can still be wet.

## **Clothes for Summer**

What to wear for playing outside in the Seattle summer:

- Long pants. It better protects knees from bruises and scratches than shirts or skirts.
- Long-sleeve shirt to protect from sunburns and scratches.
- Sun hat
- Fleece jacket
- Closed-toed shoes.
- Optional: sunglasses
- Optional: sunscreen. Although we will provide sunscreen for children in our care, if you have certain preferences, you can always put a sunscreen of your choice in a child's backpack.

## **Teachers, Staff and volunteers**

We are proud of our warm and nurturing staff who take a sincere interest in child development and apply their knowledge in the program. Our teachers value working as a team with parents and colleagues.

All teachers are CPR & First Aid certified. In addition, in compliance with WA state regulation, all our teachers receive ongoing professional training. During these trainings, they study and learn various concepts: child growth and development, positive guidance and discipline, health

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18701 SE 60<sup>th</sup> St.  
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and safety procedures, early childhood teaching methods, and child abuse prevention and recognition. Teachers receive training in forest school teaching, early environmental education or naturalist training.

There are always at least two adults supervising children, including volunteers. If you would like to volunteer for a program, field trip, or special event, please, contact your teacher.

## Safety policy

### Risk vs hazards

For the purpose of our program, we define a hazard as a condition posing likelihood of injury which cannot be assessed by children and over which children cannot exert any control. Because children are unable to assess hazards, there are no benefits for child development associated with hazardous play, and hazards should be avoided as much as possible. Some examples of hazards include dead branches on a climbing tree, broken equipment or hazardous weather conditions.

Risk is a chance of getting injured associated with certain activity, which a child can assess and control. Developmentally appropriate risk is clearly visible for children and presents a valuable learning opportunity. For example, for three years old a developmentally appropriate risky activity is climbing. Child at this age can understand consequences of falling from height (Yes, it will hurt), decide whether she/he wants to take this risk and climb a tree or not, and control the risk by deciding how high she/he will climb.

The role of the teacher is to encourage developmentally appropriate risk-taking, manage risks in a way that maximize benefits for children and minimize danger, and help children to learn how to assess risks. A teacher will always follow a safety protocol to minimize risks of injury.

### Safety protocol

1. Each teacher holds CPR/First Aid certification and there is always a first aid kit readily available.
2. Before children arrive, a teacher assesses hazards to the best of his/her ability. He/she looks for broken tree limbs after storm events, damaged equipment, hazardous waste, signs of stranger presence on the property, signs of inclement weather, etc.
3. A teacher eliminates hazards, or, if elimination is impossible, adjust activities accordingly. For example, if after a severe storm a big broken branch overhangs above the circle place, we will move our circle time to another place.
4. For each risky activity, the teacher performs a risk-benefit assessment and set rules. Specifically, for tree climbing we will discuss how high one can climb and a safety zone under a tree where no one should stand while someone is climbing.
5. Risky activities are done under teacher supervision.
6. If children's behavior becomes hazardous, the teacher stops risky activity and discusses with children what went wrong.
7. Occasionally, minor cuts, bruises, and scrapes can happen. It will be treated with a first aid kit. With some minor injuries parents will be called to help decide whether the child should go home. In case of an emergency, the program will call 911 and contact the parent/guardian or emergency contacts provided with the youth's registration.
8. In case of any injury more serious than minor cuts, bruises or scrapes, a teacher will fill out an accident report. Copy of an accident form will be sent to parents. We will use this accident form to inform and improve our safety policy.

## Discipline Policy

Discipline is a process of reinforcing positive behavior while teaching children how to behave acceptably. Our policy is to provide an environment of love and encouragement which will enable children to resolve their differences and grow in maturity and self-control. Positive discipline is different from punishment. Punishment tells children what they should not do; positive discipline tells children what they should do. Punishment teaches fear; positive discipline teaches self-esteem.

We use positive discipline by planning:

- Anticipating and eliminating potential problems
- Having a few consistent, clear rules that are developed with the children's input
- Having a well-planned daily schedule
- Providing structure and support for children to resolve conflicts
- Shared ownership of the classroom (our room, our toys)

We use positive discipline by intervening when necessary:

- Redirecting to a new activity
- Providing individual attention to help child deal with a situation
- Diverting child from area of conflict
- Providing alternative activities
- Offer a choice of two acceptable options
- Provide acceptable way to release feelings
- Discuss the behavior not the child

We use positive discipline by showing love and encouragement:

- Reinforcing positive behaviors through acknowledgement and praise for appropriate behaviors
- Using encouragement rather than competition, comparison or criticism
- Demonstrating respect and caring for each child

## Child Guidance Plan

If a child is unable to calm down or follow the program rules, the child is given a safe place to sit or stand to regain his/her self-control. The teacher gets down on the child's level to speak to him/her to explain in simple terms the program rules. The child would remain under the direct supervision of a teacher or the director during this separation keeping in mind the child's developmental level, language skills, individual and special needs, and ability to understand the consequences of his or her actions.

For toddlers, the toddler teacher will talk with the child in a calm voice and allow the child to calm down.

## **Child Restraint Policy**

Holding a child so they cannot move even if that is gently as possible is considered a form of restraint.

The first step is separating the to put him/her into an area that is less stimulating where the child cannot hurt themselves or others and notify the parents. We only use the minimum amount of time necessary to control the situation. If the parent has not arrived within the reasonable time, and restraint is required for the safety of the child, restraint may be used if a teacher has received training.

If you the parent knows ahead of time your child is at risk of being out of control, then we must set up a restraint policy/individual care plan in advance. Part of that plan would be that we would document the incident, with date, time, who was involved, duration and what happened before, during and after the child was restrained. This would go into your child's file for future reference.

## **Corporal Punishment**

Corporal Punishment is defined as: The infliction of pain by any means for the purpose of punishment, correction, discipline.

The following behavior is forbidding hitting, biting, jerking, shaking, spanking, slapping, striking or kicking a child or other means of inflicting physical pain or causing bodily harm by any person to a child in an early learning.

Parents are not allowed to spank their child or children while on the premises of Suncatcher Forest School.

## **Communication with the parents**

### **Parents engagement**

We ask parents to be actively engaged in their child education. Every week we will share information about your child's experience in the class. We encourage parents to have regular conversations with their child about her/his day in a preschool. We ask parents to communicate any significant events in the life of your child, such as grief due to loss of significant ones, parents' divorce, serious illness of a family member, etc. Knowing what's going on in your child's life will help us to support your child during difficult times.

We recognize that sometimes children may benefit from the presence of a parent or other responsible adult in the class. For example, if a child's behavior is of safety concern for themselves or other children, we may ask a parent to attend a class with a child for a while.

Throughout the year we will provide several opportunities for teacher-parent communication. We will host several on-site family days and will host parent workshops on benefits of nature play. All parents and caregivers are encouraged to take an active participation in these events. Several volunteer opportunities will be available for parents through the year. This may include volunteering on field trips, help with building play structures, help in designing and caring for our organic garden, participating in special events. If you would like to volunteer in our

preschool, please, contact your teacher or email us.

### **Children's Records and Keeping Information Current**

A record for your child is very important to us. The records will be used to plan your child's curriculum, classroom setting, daily activities and in emergency situations. All children's files, including immunization records, must be updated by parents. To keep children's records current, please notify the office regarding changes to address, employment, contact information, health, and updates to immunizations. Child's records are reviewed by the office once a quarter.

Children's records include all admission forms, medication information, injury and incident reports, attendance records, payment history and other information obtain while caring for your children. This Information will remain confidential. You have the right to access your child's records any time. Anything of a sensitive nature will be shared outside of the presence of the children. On a need to know basis, staff members may access your child's file to obtain contact information, medical information, classroom placement information and other information to support your child having the best experience while at this child care.

DCYF may also access your children's files.

### **Parent's Free Access**

All parents have free access to areas used by their children during operational hours while your child is present at the early learning program. Parents have access to their child's paperwork, as well as access to the teacher's training and professional development records. To avoid the distraction of too many adults in the classroom, it is preferred that appointments are made to observe the classroom. But parents are welcome to drop in and observe. Please schedule a time to talk to one of the directors or your child's teachers. During class time, the teachers and staff are focused on the children's learning and will not have time to talk.

In any licensed early learning program, parents have the right to see DCYF complaints filed against the program. Parents are also allowed to look at DCYF licensing checklists, compliance agreements, inspections reports, and notices of enforcement actions.

### **Meals and Snacks**

A parent or guardian should provide a healthy lunch/snack for their child. Good examples of healthy snacks include fruits, vegetables, berries, nuts, cheese, yogurt, whole grain crackers or bread. No sugary food or junk food will be allowed. All food brought from home should be labeled with child's name and the date when the food was prepared.

If a child doesn't bring food from home, we offer back up menu for the extra fee. Back up meals menu and prices for next week will be available not later than Friday.

Occasionally, teachers will prepare food for students for special events and celebrations. It is the parent's responsibility to notify staff of any allergies or adverse reactions your child may have with certain foods or beverages. If any child in our care has documented food allergies, we will notify all parents and ask not to bring food containing that allergen.

All meals and snacks are prepared and served in accordance with the U.S. Department of Agriculture guidelines (USDA).

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18701 SE 60<sup>th</sup> St.  
Issaquah, WA, 98027  
Tel: 425 974 50 76

## Admission Process

Suncatcher Forest School program is designed for kids 30 mos. – 6-year-old in the multi-age classroom. We enroll kids who is 30 mos by the beginning of the school year. To enroll in the program a child should be fully potty-trained or in the process of active potty-training. An exception could be made on individual basis for children with special needs. All children must be current on their immunizations or provide a signed Certificate of exemption. If there is a signed Certificate of exemption from a licensed physician for a specific vaccination, the child will be excluded from child care if there is an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease that the child has not been immunized for.

## Reservation of Time Slot

By enrolling your child at Suncatcher Forest School, you are reserving a space / time-slot for your child. There will be no refunds or adjustments made for early learning tuition for time missed due to illness, or non-attendance. There is a 30-day withdrawal notice at the end of the Parent Handbook. This may be used to end your child's tuition contract with Suncatcher Forest School.

## Deposits and Registration Fees

**Deposit:** Your child's position is reserved upon receipt of the tuition of the first and last months of the enrollment. The last month tuition deposit will be applied to the last month of your child enrollment in the program.

If you should terminate your child's care without notice, the deposit will not be refunded.

**Registration Fee:** a non-refundable registration fee of \$100 will be charged to cover administrative costs.

## Introductory Visit

Each new family needs to visit the preschool at least one time prior to enrollment. Please, call in advance to schedule a visit. You can see the place and get acquainted with the daily routine of the program.

## Trial Period

The trial period will be 2 weeks. This period is used to observe the child's adjustment to care and to talk about concerns. We will talk to you daily about your child's day. After a two weeks trial

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period, we will determine if the services are satisfactory to our client's needs. If any problems cannot be resolved, the care is terminated, parents/guardians will get a pro-rated refund.

Family members are encouraged to visit and spend time with kids during their first days in the program.

### **Enrollment Procedure**

Any required registration forms must be completed before a child enters the program. No child will be allowed to attend the program before completing all forms and receiving payment from their parents

## **ARRIVALS, ATTENDANCE, DEPARTURES, SIGNING IN AND OUT**

### **Arrival and Check-in**

Parents should park their cars at the parking lots in front of the Suncatcher Forest School territory. Drop off and pick up must occur in the presence of a teachers. We must be aware at all times of every child's arrival or departure whether it's inside or outside.

A child's presence in the program must be documented on a daily basis by the child's parent/guardian or by an authorized person by using electronic sign-in and sign-out procedure for each child in attendance.

If the electronic check-in is not working, then an alternative method will be provided.

The parents of any children not attending care or arriving late are to email, message or call within one hour's time of the contractual time of arrival.

No child may leave the early learning site or get into any vehicle without being accompanied by the parent who has signed them out for that day.

Parents have the option to have another person pick up their child. On the enrollment form there are spaces to add these trusted adults. If you, the parent, sends someone that is not known to the staff at Suncatcher Forest School, we will ask for a driver's license to verify the identity. In circumstances where someone new must be sent to school to pick up your child, please notify the program in writing via email or messaging. No child will be allowed to go with any adult if that adult is suspected of intoxication/ or high at the time of pick up.

### **Family/Parent/Guardian Vacations and Absences**

- You are required to give 2 weeks advance notice for vacation.

- Please call and inform us when your child will not attend due to illness or some other event.
- Payment will not be reduced during your vacation days.
- Please advise us upon enrollment if you plan to remove your child from child care for any length of time (i.e., the summers for the school teachers, or when you are on maternity leave with another child, etc.).

### **Holiday Pay**

Fees are not reduced during months/weeks that have holidays or vacations. The planned time off is calculated into the annual tuition amount.

### **Provider Vacation/Emergency Closure Policy**

We will give you at least 2 weeks advance notice of any closure dates such as summer vacation, Spring break or other schedule dates of closure. Payment will not be reduced during these breaks.

Suncatcher Forest School follows the Issaquah School District calendar (<https://www.isd411.org/calendar>). That means that Suncatcher Forest School program is closed when Issaquah Schools are closed. There are exceptions. We do not follow the school district's half days, school conference closures and leap days closures.

Usually, we run school break camps when schools are closed. For the Suncatcher Forest School students we offer 100% discount for the camp programs on the days when they are enrolled to the Forest School.

In cases of inclement weather (i.e.; snow, ice, or other), we will close if ISD closes. But we will not follow ISD School District's late start policy during inclement weather. We will start at our normally scheduled time. **No time is unpaid- all days are paid, all the time.**

### **Back up Childcare Policy**

We recommend that you have access to an alternate child care arrangement. You may need care for school closure days or emergencies such as no electricity. If there is an emergency or reason that center needs to be closed you will be notified as soon as possible so that you can make other arrangements. It is always your responsibility to find backup child care. For a child care referral, please call:

*Child Care Aware of Washington 1-800-446-1114*

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Tel: 425 974 50 76

## Late Fees and Late Checkout

Children must be picked up by the end of program time, generally 3:30 PM. Late fees will be charged for pick up after this time. A \$10.00 fee will be assessed for the first 1 to 15 minutes late, after 15 minutes, an additional \$1.00 per minute will be assessed. Failure to pay any additional fees may result in termination of care.

If a child is not picked up within 15 minutes after scheduled closing time site staff will call parent(s) and emergency contacts. If no one can be reached within 30 minutes after program end time, staff reserves the right to contact the Police Department and/or Child Protective Services to take the child until the parent is located. Chronically late pick-ups will be grounds for dismissal from the program.

## Extra Charges

Field Trip fees: Field trip fees will be charged when necessary. You will typically receive a month's notice of any charges.

## Receipts and taxes

Upon request we will give you a payment receipt when you pay for child care.

## Termination of Services Policy

To terminate your contract with Suncatcher Forest School, a 30-day written notice is required. This notice will end your financial obligation to the program, your deposit will be applied to the last month of participation tuition.

## Expulsion Policy

At our facility we will work with each individual child promoting consistent care and maximize opportunities for child development and learning. When a child exhibits behavior that presents serious safety concern for the child or others and the program is not able to reduce or eliminate the child's care will be terminated. Such

- Unruly behavior
- Child not conforming to the school rules regarding treatment of others
- Child exhibits behavior that presents a **serious safety concern** for that child or others
- Negative behavior toward teachers or director from a child or parent

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- Intentionally breaking toys or equipment
- Child leaving the program without permission (no one is allowed outside the building without adult supervision, even when parents are here). This could be a CPS call.
- Lack of attendance according to prearranged schedule
- Suncatcher Forest School does not meet your needs for your child.

Prior to expulsion of services due to child's behavior we will provide the following supports:

1. We will have a parent or guardian meeting weekly or sooner as needed.
2. We will review the expulsion policy with the parents or guardians.
3. We will record the incidents that led up to the expulsion, include the date, time, staff involved and details of the incidents
4. We will give the parents or guardians a copy of the steps that were taken to avoid expulsion
5. We will give the parents or guardians a description of the environmental change, staff change and other reasonable modifications that were made.
6. We will have a behavior plan developed with the parents. A copy of this plan will be given to all teachers, support staff and parents or guardians.
7. We will give the parents or guardians referrals to community-based programs/settings

## **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND EVACUATION PLAN**

You will find our programs evacuation plan posted on the information board close to children's cubbies. We will practice and document monthly fire drills, quarterly emergency/disaster drills, and an annual lock down drill. Please refer to the posted evacuation plan for a full list of details, plan, and gathering place, so you are aware of our emergency and natural and unnatural disasters /evacuation procedures.

Should this facility become inhabitable in a disaster, we will be found in the emergency shelter (the house) or on the parking lot in front of the house.

Our emergency preparedness includes developmentally appropriate training with the children on how to respond in an emergency such as calling 911 and when it is appropriate to evacuate

The program will have a prepared disaster kit that includes the following: water, non-perishable food, battery powered radio, flashlight, first aid kit, extra batteries, whistle, dust mask, plastic sheeting and duct tape, moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties, wrench, manual can opener, cell phone and charger. One of the directors will grab disaster kit on the way out of the building.

Suncatcher  
18701 SE 60<sup>th</sup> St.  
Issaquah, WA, 98027  
Tel: 425 974 50 76

Parents are responsible for supplying an emergency kit for their child/ren. The kit should include non-perishable food, water, band aids, space blanket, flashlight and candy.

We check food, water, and supply expiration dates at least annually and rotate supplies accordingly. We maintain essential prescribed medications and medical supplies on hand for individuals who need them.

Grab and Go Backpack contents:

- Labeled for easy identification
- Emergency forms for students and staff
- "Rescue" medications with authorization forms
- First aid kit
- Flashlight and batteries
- Whistle
- Bottle of water
- Paper cups
- Age appropriate snacks
- Tarp or ground cover and emergency blanket
- Tissue or toilet paper and/wipes and diapers
- Plastic bags
- Age-appropriate time passers (books, crayons, paper, etc.)

We will keep the children at our facility until the parents are able to safely arrive to pick up their children after a disaster and will not leave your child unsupervised.

### **EARTHQUAKE PLAN:**

- Move to clear area, as far as possible from glass, brick, and power lines.
- **DROP & COVER.**
- Adults will talk to children in a calm reassuring tone until it is safe and the earthquake is over
- A head count of the children will be taken to ensure all children are present

#### **After earthquake:**

- Account for all children, staff, and visitors
- Check for injuries and administer first aid as necessary. Call 911 for life-threatening emergency

- Determine if evacuation is necessary and if outside areas are safe. If so, we will evacuate building calmly and quickly to our designated meeting spot located: If gas is smelled; the main gas valve will be immediately turned off
- We will monitor our portable radio or cell phone for information and emergency instructions
- Our designated out-of-area contact will be notified of our status when possible and if needed.

Monitor radio for information and emergency instructions.

- Stay off all phones (for 3-5 hours) unless you have a life-threatening emergency.
- Call out-of-area contact when possible to report status and inform of immediate plan.
- Remain outside of building until it has been inspected for re-entry.

### **Fire Evacuation plan**

- Activate fire alarm or otherwise alert staff that there is a fire (yell, whistle).
- Gather in meeting spot outside and account for all children, staff, and visitors.
- Call 911 from outside of building.

### **Lockdown /Shelter on place**

Lockdown drills are means of practicing preparedness in the event that a bear spotted or a criminal act is ongoing in the area close to the facility. A lockdown begins when the police or an official agency notifies our early learning program that it is unsafe to leave the facility or be outdoors. The center can also choose to lockdown and call 911 if there is a person at or near the center that is making children or staff uncomfortable.

### **General Lockdown Guidelines:**

- Immediately let staff know of dangerous or potentially dangerous person
- Relocate children and staff to the emergency shelter (house)
- Lock outside doors and windows. Close and secure interior doors. Close any curtains or blinds.
- Notify emergency personnel by calling 911, if there is a real threat to your early learning.
- Give notice to parents as to what is happening and when they can pick up their children.
- Turn off lights. Keep everyone away from doors and windows.
- Stay out of sight, preferably sitting on floor. Maintain a calm atmosphere in room by reading or talking quietly to children.
  - Keep children in classrooms and initiate **LOCKDOWN**.

## INJURY OR MEDICAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND REPORTING

- All staff have First Aid, Child CPR, and HIV/Aids/Blood Borne Pathogens Prevention training.
- Minor cuts, bruises, and scrapes will be treated. Parents will be notified with an injury report. With some minor injury's parents may be called to help decide whether the child should go home.
- Head injuries, severe bleeding or other serious injuries we will contact the parent immediately and write an injury report.
- In the event of a serious injury or emergency, we will call 911 and administer first aid or CPR if needed. We will notify you as soon as safely possible.
- If injury results in medical treatment or hospitalization, we are required to immediately call and submit an "Injury/Incident Report" to my Department's Licensor and child's social worker, if any. You will be given a copy.
- All injuries that the child arrives with will be documented and an injury report will be written.

### Medicine Management

**Prescription medication.** Prescription medication must only be given to the child named on the prescription. Prescription medication must be prescribed by a health care professional with prescriptive authority for a specific child. Prescription medication must be accompanied with medication authorization form that has the medical need and the possible side effects of the medication. Prescription medication must be labeled with:

The child's first and last name; the date the prescription was filled; the name and contact information of the prescribing health professional; the expiration date, dosage amount, and length of time to give the medication; and instructions for administration and storage.

- A detailed medication log, inclusive of documentation of when a medication is given or not given as prescribed, or as indicated on the permission form will be kept with all medicines given out at our child care facility.
- Storage: Medications must be stored in the original container. The container must have the patient's name, instructions and date of expiration. It will be stored out of the reach of the children. Medication will be stored according to its label including medication that states it must be refrigerated. Controlled substances will be locked up.
- Oral medication: Any medicine taken by mouth for children under two will need written permission from your doctor and stored separate from topical medications.
- Permissions: Doctor's permission is required for all prescription medication and is not required for non-prescription drugs (parent permission is required for all medication, both prescription and non-prescription).

- Training: a child's parents or guardian (or an appointed designee) will need to provide training for special medical procedures that are part of a child's individual care plan. This training must be documented and signed by the provider and the child's parent or guardian (or designee).

**Unused medication:** All unused medication must be taken home by the parent or guardian.

### **Exclusion/Removal of sick person**

Each child will be observed daily for signs of illness.

Children who are contagious must stay at home. All parents of children in my care, will be notified by phone within 24 hours of communicable diseases or food poisoning. The health Department will be notified of food poisoning and of all reportable diseases at the facility.

Please call if your child will not attend due to illness. If you are unsure if your child should come or not, please call.

If a child should become ill during the day, you will be notified immediately and will be expected to pick up the child as soon as possible. In such event, we will reasonably prevent contact between the ill child and other children until you arrive.

The parent is responsible for finding substitute care in case of the child's illness.

Children and staff who are exhibiting the following symptoms will be excluded from child care per instruction of the Department of Public Health. A doctor's letter may be required to return to child care:

- diarrhea
- vomiting
- rash
- thick mucus or pus draining from the eye or pink eye
- sore throat
- open sores
- fever, whooping cough; A fever 101 degrees Fahrenheit for children over two months (or 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit for an infant younger than two months) by any method
- and behavior change or other signs and symptoms of illness (including sore throat, earache, headache, rash, vomiting, diarrhea);
- lice, ringworm, or scabies:

**An Illness or condition:** that prevents your child from participating in normal activities such as outdoor play.

# Hygiene Policy

## Hand washing Policy

During the program kids can come in contact with animals, animal droplets, soil, mud, sand and other elements. We promote healthy hygiene habits by asking children to thoroughly wash their hands with soap or apply hand sanitizer in next situations:

We don't have any washing sink, and water used for hand washing will drain directly to the ground. To minimize our impact on the environment, we will only use castile biodegradable soap.

Parents or caregivers may provide soap for their child; however, it must be castile and biodegradable.

To reduce the spread of germs and infections we will help direct, assist, teach, and coach, your children to wash their hands. We will use the following steps

Wet hands with warm water, apply soap to the hands, rub hands together to wash for at least twenty seconds, thoroughly rinse hands with water, dry hands with a paper towel, single-use cloth towel and properly discard paper single-use cloth towels after each use.

We will have all children wash their hands at the following times:

After using the toilet;

After gardening activities;

After playing with animals;

Before eating or participating in food activities including table setting;

and

As needed or required by the circumstances.

Staff will wash their hands

When arriving at work;

After toileting a child;

After personal toileting;

Before and after preparing, serving, or eating food;

Before and after giving medication or applying topical ointment;

After handling or feeding animals, handling an animal's toys or equipment, or cleaning up after animals;

After handling bodily fluids;

After gardening activities;

After handling garbage and garbage receptacles; and

As needed or required by the circumstances

Please set a good example for your child and help them to wash their hands with the steps above.

Hand sanitizer will be used but will be not substituted when regular hand washing procedures can be practiced. Hand sanitizers will not be within reach of the children.

## **Toileting**

We have a portable toilet installed on our property.

Before the beginning of each class the teacher will clean it with disinfectant solution. If a child needs assistance, one teacher will assist a child while a second adult will supervise other children. After toileting the teacher will prompt a child to wash hand with soap or use hand sanitizer. If a child occasionally soils themselves, the teacher will assist with cleaning and changing clothes (clothes must be provided by parents).

## **CLEANING, SANITIZING AND DISINFECTING PROCEDURES**

Tables, kitchen equipment and all food contact surfaces are cleaned and sanitized before and after each meal, snack or other messy play activity. Carpets and blankets within the child care space are vacuumed daily and undergo a deep clean at least once a year. Toys will be cleaned on weekly basis.

## **Blood Born Pathogen Plan**

All staff caring for children in Suncatcher Forest School have completed the Blood Borne Pathogen training. When staff comes in direct contact with bodily fluids, we will wear disposable gloves, follow proper cleaning procedures and disinfect the items and surfaces that are contaminated. We will properly dispose of all waste and send soiled clothes home in double plastic bags. All persons exposed will wash hands before returning to care.

## **Pesticide policy**

We will take appropriate steps to safely prevent or control pests that pose a risk to the health and safety of adults and children in and around the licensed space. Our pest control steps include: Taking steps to prevent attracting pests including, but not limited to, identifying and removing food and water sources that attract pests; if evidence is found; we will document all steps taken to remove or exterminate the pests; and provide notification to all parents or guardians of enrolled children what pesticide will be applied and where it will be applied no less than forty-eight hours before application, unless in cases of emergency (such as a wasp nest). Pesticide will only be applied when children are not present. We will always comply with the Washington Pesticide Application Act chapter 17.21 RCW. We will emphasize prevention and natural, nonchemical, low-toxicity methods where pesticides or herbicides are used only as our last resort.

## **Injury prevention**

We will check daily to make certain that play areas are safe for children and families – free from broken glass, equipment are safe and the area is free from hazards. We will provide close supervision and have a program that is developmentally appropriate for your child to reduce injuries while your child is in our care.

## **Pet policy**

- In Suncatcher Forest School we have farm animals in our premises
- Currently we have chickens and rabbits
- Animals are carefully chosen in regards to care and their temperament
- Children and adults wash hands after feeding animals or touching/handling animals or animal home or equipment.

## **Other policies**

### **Special Events**

Staff may plan special events for their site. These include field trips, service projects, family showcase nights, and other specific events at the site that may happen outside of the normal program day. Staff will post information fliers on-site before a special event.

### **Religious Activities**

Suncatcher Forest School is not affiliated with any religion. There will not be any form of religious activities going on in our program.

### **Items brought from home**

It is acceptable for a child to bring a special soft toy or animal. We strongly encourage parents to label everything in permanent marker in order to identify lost items. Suncatcher Forest School cannot assume responsibility for loss or damage to any personal belongings' children bring into class.

It is distressing for children to misplace or lose belongings and sometimes difficult for teachers to identify the owner. Therefore, children are encouraged to leave toys at home. Please help your child understand why it is not wise to bring toys or other objects that they may not wish to share with other children.

may ask to see the parent's photo ID. This is for the protection and safety of your child.

## Transportation and off-site field trips

- Parents are responsible for transportation to and from home.
- If we take a field trip off site, you will be notified and asked to sign a permission slip. If there is a fee for a field trip, you will be notified in advance.
- Transportation for field trips will be provided by private cars or walking.
- Children's emergency contact and medical release forms and medical/immunization records, a first aid kit, first aid/CPR certification, and any medications needed by individual children will be taken on all field trips. Any medication administered will be recorded.
- Parents who volunteer on field trips will not have unsupervised access to the children (excluding their own child) unless they have been pre-qualified with a criminal background check.

## Birthdays

Children love to celebrate their birthdays! If you wish to supply a special snack or activity, please feel free to speak with your child's teacher in advance. You are welcome to celebrate with us. Goodie bags are permitted if they do not contain chocolate, candy, or gums.

Teachers will supply a first name only list of your child's classmates upon request. We realize you can't always invite the whole class therefore if you wish to hand out invitations for birthday parties, please give them to your child's teacher to discreetly put in the children's bags.

## Photography

**They may also be used for the purpose of promoting and marketing Suncatcher Forest School and may be used on but not limited to; Suncatcher Forest School's website, Facebook, Instagram, print advertising, etc with parent's permission.**

Yes, I confirm that I have read and understand the above, and agree to have my child(ren)'s photos used for the purpose of keeping parents informed of My Childcare Academy happenings and for the purpose of marketing for My Childcare Academy.

No, I do not wish to have my child (ren)'s photographs published

### Contact information:

**Suncatcher Forest School**

**Tel:** 425 974 50 76

**Email:** ksenkho@gmail.com

**Suncatcher Forest School address:** 18701 SE 60<sup>th</sup> St., Issaquah, Washington, 98027

Parent/Guardian Signature:

Date

Suncatcher  
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## TOILET POLICIES

Potty training is essential skill for the happy and easy time in the forest school. It takes a lot of time and efforts to change child's underwear in the outdoor settings. If you child is not yet potty trained Suncatcher Forest School Teachers re ready to cooperate with the parents until the child will be fully potty trained.

If the child soils his clothes regularly a diaper or pull-up should be worn. Staff will change diaper once a day, however parents should remember that we don't have diaper changing station. A diaper will be changed on a standing child. It's parents' responsibility to provide extra diapers and wipes.

If the child is secure in his potty-training efforts fabric underpants may be worn. If a child soils his clothes two consecutive days he should be returned to a diaper or Pull-Up. Potty training oneon-one at home can frequently be much more effective than in childcare setting during busy day.

If accident happened the child will be escorted to a bathroom by a teacher or assistant. We will help to remove the soiled clothing. The child will be placed on the toilet and encouraged to complete the action to ensure that the bladder/bowler have been completely emptied and then to wipe. The remainder of the soiled clothing will be returned to the child's school bag in a zipper plastic bag. The teacher will assist the child in getting dressed as necessary.

If a child refuses to change diapers or soiled underwear it's up to staff to make a decision if the child can stay till the end of the day or should be picked up early. The parent's will be informed and keep updated.

Staff will remind kids to go potty at least twice a day.

If you have questions regarding this policy please ask a staff.

Parent/Guardian Signature:

Date