

Information on the Forest Explorers Program

Here are some of the basics:

Teachers Running the Program	Misty, Alex, Mary and Lily
Hours of Care	2:25pm-5:30pm (no morning care)
School for Pick Up	Pauline Haarer (between 2:25pm-2:35pm) with our bus
Fees	See below. Payments due the 1 st of each month
Food Included	Yes. A healthy snack is provided for the afternoon each day
Locations	Colliery Dam, Westwood Lake, Departure Bay Beach, Buttertubs Marsh, Bowen Park and a variety of local Nanaimo playgrounds. We also have an indoor space at 929 Hecate Street for extra cold days.
Pick Up Location	929 Hecate Street between 4:45pm-5:30pm

PROGRAM FEES AND REDUCTIONS

FOREST EXPLORERS PROGRAM	Age	Daycare Fees	Additional Programs	Total Monthly Fees =	Possible Affordable Child Care Benefit
Monday - Friday from 2:30pm-5:30pm	Kindy	\$244.40/month \$400- \$155.60 CCFRI	Healthy Food Project Fees \$80/month	\$324.40/month	Minus up to \$175/month
Monday - Friday from 2:30pm-5:30pm	Gr 1- Gr 3	\$292.50/month \$350- \$57.50 CCFRI	Healthy Food Project Fees \$80/month	\$372.50/month	Minus up to \$175/month

STAFFING AND CHILDREN

This program will run with two staff at all times. Our staff are either qualified ECEs or ECEAs. We hire staff that have experience and training in outdoor leadership. All staff in this program will have up to date first aid certification. At least one staff member on duty will have their Class 4 driver's license in order to drive the bus. Some of our staff speak a little French but the program will be run in English.

The children in the program range from Kindergarten to Grade 3. This is a program that will focus on play and emergent curriculum, as it pertains to exploring the forests, beaches, lakes, and marshes. The number of children enrolled in the program will not exceed 14 (putting us at an 7-1 ratio, where as the required ratio for this age of care is 12-1 with a RA – Responsible Adult).

We may decide to split the group at various points based on interest or skill level, but the groups will always be close in proximity to each other for safety reasons.

Safety is a great concern while on locations. Teachers do daily site inspections and activity assessments. Children must be able to follow instructions around safety and stay with the group. If there are ongoing safety concerns with your child, we will have a discussion with you to come up with a safety plan.

We do not require nor suggest that the children to do homework from school during our program. To be honest, we don't believe in homework for this age range. If they would like to sit at any point to work on school work, they can but we will not be asking them to do this. Teachers may be able to provide extra support with school work. We do read books with the children and support their learning about our local flora and fauna using field guides.

THE FLOW OF THE PROGRAM

Children will be picked up at the school in the bus between 2:28-2:38 and then head out to one of our usual locations - Colliery Dam, Westwood Lake, Departure Bay Beach, Buttertubs Marsh or Bowen Park. We plan to be outside each day and then return to the daycare at 4:45pm, where the children will read stories and do activities outside or inside our library. Pick ups are typically at 929 Hecate Street between 4:45pm-5:15pm.

EARLY PICK UPS

The teacher will determine the location for the day based on a number of factors—interest of the children, temperature, and safety. Parent are able to pick up their child early from our location. If you need to pick up your child early you can do two things:

1. Email forest@nanaimoinnovation@gmail.com the day before and set up a plan.
2. Call or text the Forest Program cell phone at 250-797-4214 between 2:00-2:25pm on the day of and arrange an early pick up on location.

GEAR:

Children will have an individual mesh sack that is kept on the bus. They are expected to leave a pair of boots and rain pants in the tub for the week. This can be taken home to clean at any point, as long as they are brought back the next day. Children must have access to their boots and rain pants each day, even in the summer months.

In the winter months, we will provide families with a gear list, to ensure that their child is warm and ready to play outdoors.

REALLY MISERABLE DAYS

We believe there is no bad weather, only unprepared clothing.....but we know some days are really hard for the kids. On really cold/miserable days, we have planned to come back early to spend time in our new library room on the second floor of our new building at 929 Hecate Street. We also have plans to visit local libraries too.

BUS COMPLICATIONS

Some times we have to have the bus repaired or serviced. If we are without a bus for a short period, our teacher will communicate this to parents and will pick up the children at the school and walk to Maffeo Sutton Park for the afternoon. Parent pick ups will be done at the park location or back at the school.

PRO-Ds AND CLOSURES

In addition to our regular daycare academic schedule, we have prepared an amendment on how we are doing SD68 and NIA Pro-D days. Please see the attached amendment.