



Information on the Forest Explorers Program

Here are some of the basics:

Teachers Running the Program	Patti, Alex, and Misty
Hours of Care	2:30pm-5:30pm (no morning care)
School for Pick Up	Pauline Haarer (between 2:25pm-2:35pm) with our bus
Fees	\$292.50/month starting the 1 st of each month
Food Included	No. Parent must pack an extra snack for the afternoon
Locations	Colliery Dam, Westwood Lake, Departure Bay Beach, Buttertubs Marsh, or Bowen Park.
Pick Up Location	At the daycare in the big yard between 4:55pm-5:30pm

STAFFING AND CHILDREN

This program will run with two staff at all times. Our staff are either qualified ECEs, EAs, 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 currently range from Kindergarten to Grade 2. 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 16 (putting us at an 8-1 ratio, where as the required ratio for this age of care is 12-1 with a RA – Responsible Adult).

Currently, the majority of our enrolled children are in Kindergarten or Grade 1. 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. Teacher may or may not 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 2:25-2:35 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 4:55, where the children will play in the big yard from 5:00-5:30 for pick ups.

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. Parents 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 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 tub 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 library room in our new building on the second floor (slated to be done in Oct 2023). 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. Pick ups will be done at the park location.

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 and SD68 vacation periods. These days are at no extra cost. Please see the attached amendment.

FEES

Here is the link to fees page on our website: <https://www.nanaimoinnovation.org/child-care-fees>