



## **FOREST SCHOOL COVID-19 GUIDELINES: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

Forest School at Cumming Nature Center might look a little different this year, but the experience of discovery and exploration will be the same. CNC staff are working to ensure the safety of each student through a multi-pronged approach that includes:

- Holding programs outside or in open-air classrooms
- Sanitizing spaces and items daily
- Providing foot-powered hand-washing stations/access to hand sanitizer at outdoor program sites
- Social Distancing
- Mandatory masks
- Self-contained groups (cohorts)

The following list of frequently asked questions addresses some of the common questions that parents have about safety measures at Forest School.

### **SELF-CONTAINED GROUPS**

**What does 'self-contained groups' mean?** Self-contained means that students from different groups will not be in contact at all. Pick-up and drop-off will happen in specified locations for each group. Cohorts will be in small groups of around 12-15 students. It is likely that students will remain in family groups.

**What things are you considering when grouping students?** We're going to be as deliberate and safe as possible in our sorting process. We will try to keep families together. We are going to try to keep those attending public school together, and we are going to try to keep homeschool students together.

**How many students will my child be with?** Each cohort is around 12-15 students. Note that if your child attends multiple days of Forest School, each daily cohort will be composed of different students. We will work diligently to be deliberate about our groups and how we will build them with both students and staff safety in mind.

## **MASKS & SOCIAL DISTANCING**

**Will the kids have to wear a mask all the time?** Instructors will enforce mask wearing when students are not socially distanced. It is critical that students remain socially distanced if they aren't wearing a mask.

**Do students in a specific cohort have to maintain a 6-foot distance from each other at all times?** No. As a baseline, masks or face coverings are required to be worn any time or place that individuals cannot maintain appropriate social distancing. If students need a break from wearing their mask, then students can step away from others and remove their mask.

**What about lunchtime and snack time?** Students will need to maintain social distancing while eating.

**What if some kids won't wear a mask?** Mask wearing is a baseline expectation for us right now. It is possible that kids who repeatedly refuse to wear a mask may be asked to leave the program.

**What if my child can't wear a mask?** Your child will not be forced to wear a mask if they have a relevant medical reason for keeping their face uncovered.

## **NON-COVID-19 ILLNESSES, COVID-19 CASES, AND LOCKDOWNS**

**What will happen if my child doesn't come to Forest School one day because they don't feel well?** If a person is not diagnosed by a healthcare provider (physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant) with COVID-19 they can return to CNC programs:

- Once there is no fever, without the use of fever reducing medicines, and they have felt well for 24 hours;
- If they have been diagnosed with another condition and has a healthcare provider written note stating they are clear to return to school;
- A negative COVID-19 test.

**What do I do if my child gets sick and we don't think it is COVID-19?** See question above.

**What happens if there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 in a CNC program?** All program participants will be notified. Most likely, that student's cohort will need to be quarantined for 14 days or provide a negative COVID-19 test to return. Because groups are self-contained, it is our hope that not all groups and cohorts will be impacted. The Director of Cumming Nature Center along with the Ontario Department of Public Health will determine the appropriate measures for all the students. We plan to offer online programming for the cohort that is impacted.

**What might cause Forest School to go online?** Forest Schools might go online if there is a positive case of COVID-19 in any students or staff. We also could go online if there is some sort of regional, state, or federally-mandated shutdown.

**What happens if we go on lockdown again?** Forest School instructors will be teaching online for the duration of a lockdown. Tuition will not be refunded for that time. It is important to us to keep our wonderful instructors employed through these difficult times.

**What does online Forest School look like?** Typically, there will be 1-2 hours on Zoom singing songs, checking in, telling stories, and generally being a little goofy. Students will be given an outdoor activity or “mission” such as a craft, nature observation assignment, or the like. We have found that the younger students (ages 4-7) usually need a parent or sibling to help with their activities.