



Family Handbook 2022-23

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Welcome to Fremont Community School

About This Family Handbook

This Family Handbook helps to explain our Preschool and our operational policies further. We reserve the right to update this handbook at any time, but we will let families know if we do. Please take a few minutes to become familiar with this information, along with the Tuition Contract provided to you. On your Tuition Contract, you are asked to abide by the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook.

About FCS

Fremont Community School (FCS) is an independent, non-profit school providing a multi-age preschool and pre-kindergarten program in a progressive early childhood learning environment. Our program is inspired by Rudolf Steiner's Waldorf education curriculum. As a non-profit, we are governed by a volunteer Board of Directors.

Fremont Community School was established in 1986 and, in 2003, we moved our school to a home immediately next door to our current location, which we purchased and moved into in 2008. Located on Interlake Avenue North in south Wallingford, FCS has a close relationship with Tara's Tots, Inc., the school located directly next door. We are two separate, independent schools that collaborate to share curriculum, ideas, and host joint events. Together, we form one community, but maintain *separate registration, finances, and administration*.

COVID-19

As the world and our community adjusts to the COVID-19 pandemic, FCS adapted its program so that we may coexist with the virus and continue to provide the safe, imaginative, and play based environment for which we are known. We must approach the school year with the presumption that the COVID-19 virus will remain a threat to our community. Until the pandemic is officially over, we will maintain safety protocols recommended by the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) for childcare providers and preschools.

This year's Family Handbook reflects the changes we made to ensure the safest environment for our children, our staff, your family, and our community. With our ability to teach outside, we feel strongly that we can make our school as safe as humanly possible. We want you to know we are going to do everything to make preschool fun and "normal." Together, we can make this experience safe for everyone and let the children be carefree again. We will remain outside unless there is extreme weather. To meet this goal, we bought rainproof canopies and we eat outside. We may come inside to do arts and crafts in small, masked groups.

During this year, when mask wearing is required, it will be mandatory for everyone. No exceptions.

Who We Are

Mission, Vision, and Values

Mission:

Our mission is to provide an inclusive community for children which nurtures friendships and kindness, builds confidence and independence, and cultivates curiosity and wonder through play and exploration of the natural world in a joy-filled home away from home.

Vision:

Our vision is to partner with our families to cultivate communities where children can collaborate, create, and care for one another.

Values:

- **Hearts**
By introducing children to the marvelous diversity of people, nature, and art, we foster empathy and an appreciation of beauty which promotes the emergence of the whole child.
- **Hands**
By empowering children to discover their physical selves in the outdoors, learning about the natural world, and the value of caring for our earth, whether it is building a fort or holding a worm, free play allows the natural capacities of the child to flourish.
- **Minds**
By giving children the freedom to explore the complexity and beauty of life around them, we inspire a deeper sense of knowledge. Children learn about the world by actively engaging in their environment.

Philosophy

FCS philosophy is Waldorf-inspired and play based and believes that children of all abilities benefit from an inclusive environment, emphasizing acceptance of individual differences and ability levels. For children with special needs, we evaluate whether our program will successfully meet their needs. Inclusion of children with special needs can facilitate developmental progress by exposure to role modeling of social, language, and physical skills through interactions with typically developing peers.

We believe that children at our school gain solid interpersonal skills, including self-confidence, acceptance, empathy, and communication and “successful” inclusion of children with special needs allows all children to relate and interact with peers in play and daily routines. By engaging in experiences that promote the development of self-help skills, self-control, and advocacy the children develop tolerance and understanding of those who have different backgrounds and perspectives than themselves.

Board of Directors

Since FCS' founding in 1986, Fremont Community School has been guided by a Board of Directors composed of volunteers. Board members are willing to give their time, talents, and enthusiasm to ensure FCS is fiscally sound and maintains the industry's highest standards. Board members may serve up to three, two-year terms each.

The FCS board is led by the President, selected by the Board, to serve a two-year term. Multiple terms are permitted. The FCS board is organized by Standing Committees which meet routinely: Development Committee; Executive and Financial Aid Committee, and Finance Committee. The board also activates Ad-Hoc committees, as needed: Building and Grounds Committee, Health Advisory Committee, and Strategic Planning Committee.

Requests to address the board may be submitted to the Director or School Administrator.

The FCS Board is made up of both current and former FCS parents and community members who maintain a balance between the short term and long-term interests in FCS' success and presence in the community. The Board is always welcome to join in on various special events, parent meetings, and festivals throughout the year. The Board works in conjunction with the Director and the School Administrator to ensure the foundation of the school is strong.

Staff

The quality of the program is due to the quality of the staff. It is vital to attract staff that is experienced and knowledgeable in the field of early childhood.

A current outline of FCS Orchard staff is available on [our website](#). This includes a photograph and brief bio of each employee at FCS' Orchard Preschool. You may also learn more about them [here](#).

Curriculum and Rhythms

Fremont Community School is a warm, loving home-like environment that is a bridge between home and a larger world. Inspired by the principles of Waldorf Education and guided by a reverence for life and natural rhythms, teachers guide the children, as individuals, to learn about the world and their relationship to it. Through imagination, creativity, outdoor play, and movement, children develop their own natural joy, compassion, appreciation for beauty, and love of learning.

FCS leanings are compassionate and inclusive. The school works with its families to understand the nature of the young child and to nurture that quality, seeking to bring forth a well-balanced, happy, and secure child. Through this working together of parents and teachers there develops a harmonious relationship that embraces the child.

At FCS, rhythm and repetition play a central role. As with the seasons of the year, the rhythms of each day and week carry us through life in a pattern on which we can rely. From waking in the morning until bedtime at night we follow a certain order, and when that order is disrupted, we quite often feel out of sorts.

Repetition of actions and events establish a sense of well-being within children while fostering a feeling of trust in the world around them. Children love to know that after breakfast they will get dressed and then go to school. So too at school, it is best when

each day has a rhythm on which the children can rely. It carries them through the morning as if it were their own breath. After the "in breath" of arrival and greetings comes the "out breath" of free play. We create this rhythm by ascribing specific activities to the same day, week after week.

It is often difficult to establish these rhythms at home with the pace of modern life, but the more families can, the greater sense of peace they may achieve. Perhaps take the time to light a candle at dinner time and thank Mother Earth for her bounty. You will notice a marked difference to the following day by setting a rhythm at bedtime for your children, not just in your children, but also in yourself! Each of us has our own struggles establishing a rhythm, but once in place, it gives great peace to the mind and body alike. Please feel free to talk to a teacher if you need some ideas to help your family in this process.

Our class is made up of a natural mix of ages giving our students more years together than traditional preschools. This means that the class can take on some aspects of a "family" supporting one another's growth and development. The developmental diversity of our students in this family style learning environment is a valuable and integral feature of our classroom practice.

Where other schools encourage children to learn academics at an early age, we approach early childhood education from a very different angle. Outdoor play is at the heart of our curriculum. Playing with minimal adult interruption allows children to play out life's roles and develop faculties such as concentration and creativity. Natural materials, wooden structures, boards, stumps, and more all create an environment that feeds their imagination. We honor this age of fantasy and movement in the child. The teacher's role is that of a guide in the moments when children need help, be it with conflict, learning self-help skills, or impulse control. The need to adapt our curriculum to the ongoing pandemic forces us to remain outside. Considering this and taking into account external forces such as extreme weather, we will only go inside if the teachers feel it is for the health and safety of the children.

More than ever, in a world that is all too hurried and filled with activity and worries about COVID, Fremont Community School provides an oasis, a respite, where young minds and bodies can do what they need to do at their own pace, and thus gain the confidence they will need to meet the destiny that lies ahead.

Truth, Beauty, and Goodness: the cornerstone and our strength.

Behavior Guideline Philosophy

Our foundational goal at FCS Orchard is to help our students develop strong social and emotional skills. Instead of discipline, we use guidance, or, as it is also known, positive discipline. Guidance is about building an encouraging setting for every person in the group. Research indicates that children with strong social-emotional skills tend to be happier, show greater motivation to learn, have a more positive attitude toward school, more eagerly participate in class activities, and demonstrate higher academic performance than students who exhibit social and emotional difficulties.¹

¹ *Hyson, M. 2004. *The Emotional Development of Young Children: Building an Emotion-Centered Curriculum*, 2nd ed. New York: Teachers College Press

*Kostelnik, M.J., A.K. Soderman, A.P. Whiren, M.L. Rupiper, & K.M. Gregory. 2015. *Guiding Children's Social Development and Learning: Theory and Skills*, 8th ed. Stamford, CT: Cengage.

Additionally, socially-emotionally healthy children are better able to establish and maintain positive relationships with adults and peers. To support our students in developing these skills, we take a proactive and preventive approach to guidance that reinforces appropriate behaviors rather than focusing on inappropriate behaviors.

- **Our Environment:** We provide children with exciting materials and engage them in activities that are appropriate for their age to keep them focused and attentive. We develop schedules that meet the needs of young children by avoiding long periods of wait time without activity. Yet, our schedule is flexible enough to follow the children's interests as well as their cognitive, physical, and biological needs.
- **Our Teachers:** We work to develop a strong rapport with each child speaking to children calmly, especially during redirections. We help children put words to their emotions. We use social stories to help teach our students healthy social skills. We strive to serve the individual needs of each child while ensuring the safety of young children.
- **Our Families:** We communicate regularly with families to ensure consistency in guidance between home and the Preschool. We partner with families to offer support, guidance and, if necessary, connect them with experts to help give their children the best foundation for academic and life success.

Guidance Procedures

When any student at FCS Orchard presents with challenging behavior, teaching staff shall follow the standards:

- Observe the children to identify events, activities, interactions, and other factors that predict and may contribute to challenging behavior.
- Teaching staff shall focus on teaching the child social, communication, and emotional regulation skills, and using environmental modifications, activity modifications, adult or peer support, and other teaching strategies to support the child's appropriate behavior.
- Teaching staff shall respond to challenging behavior, including physical aggression, in a manner that provides for the child's safety and the safety of others in the classroom. Our response will be calm, respectful, and give the child information on what is acceptable behavior and what is not.
- We will document the challenging behaviors and the intervention methods that were attempted in a log. Documentation may include incident reports, ABC charts, or Behavior Plans.
- Teacher-parent discussions regarding a child's behavior shall be held in private. They shall focus on working as a team to develop and implement an individualized plan that supports the child's inclusion and success.
- FCS has a list of resources which we are happy to share with families.
- All discipline decisions will always be individualized, consistent, and appropriate to each child's understanding level.

- If a child continues to exhibit persistent, severe challenging behavior that is unsafe to themselves, other children, or the teachers, FCS Orchard may recommend and/or require alternative placement.

FCS Orchard Preschool does not condone or tolerate the use of physical punishment of any kind on FCS property. This policy restricts parents and staff from using physical punishment on their children while on FCS property. Also, FCS will not tolerate psychological abuse, coercion, threats, derogatory remarks, withholding, or threatening to withhold food as a form of discipline.

Despite these efforts, some children may continue to exhibit significant, challenging behaviors. The following steps will be completed if a child must be removed for challenging behaviors that constitute an imminent danger to the child or others:

- Maintain documentation on file of the incident's outcomes, subsequent parent conference, and the plan developed that includes appropriate intervention strategies. The parent conference's purpose is to create a plan jointly with the family to address the specific behaviors that constitute an imminent danger (recurring violence, behavior, or aggression).
- If a child continues to exhibit persistent, severe challenging behavior that is unsafe to themselves, other children, or the teachers, FCS may recommend and/or require alternative placement.

Biting

Biting is a normal part of child development. Young children bite for various reasons, such as teething or exploring a new toy or object with their mouth. Biting can also be a way for toddlers to get attention or express how they are feeling. Frustration, anger, and fear are strong emotions, and toddlers lack the language skills to deal with them. If they cannot find the words they need quickly enough or cannot articulate how they are feeling, they may resort to biting.

Biting tends to occur most often between 12-24 months of age. Biting past the age of two and a half to three is less common. For repeated biting instances with preschoolers, we may request a parent/teacher conference. The purpose of the parent-teacher conference is to discuss what may be causing the child to be upset, frustrated, confused, or afraid and therefore lead to biting. Additionally, we would develop a joint plan of action following our behavior guidance procedures listed in this handbook. If your child bites or is bitten, you and the family of the other child involved will receive an Incident/Accident Report that keeps the identity of both children confidential.

If a four- or five-year-old child bites another child or staff more than once they will immediately be sent home. The teacher will reach out to the parents to discuss the incident and the child will be welcome to return the following day. If the biting incidents continue, a meeting will be set up with the family to discuss strategies and a plan of action. On rare occasions we may identify that the program is not a good fit for the child and then the family will be asked to withdraw enrollment.

Enrollment

Admissions Process

Children are eligible for admission from 30 months through five years. The admission process begins with the submission of a Child Application to the Orchard Preschool accompanied by a non-refundable, non-transferable application fee. This is a one-time, per child fee payable online using a checking account, savings account, or a credit card. A processing fee will be added to your payment. If you prefer to not pay online, FCS will accept payment by check, cash, or money order. Once you have paid this for your child, you do not pay it again for any other FCS program in which your child might participate.

FCS Orchard enrolls a child depending on availability and according to the following priority system:

- FCS staff children
- Siblings of currently enrolled children
- FCS alumni families
- General Public

*Children are placed on a waitlist if there is no availability in the program.

FCS also encourages families to take a tour of the Orchard Preschool. Children must be able to benefit from participation in an inclusive group setting. If, after a tour and discussion of the child's needs, it is determined that FCS Orchard is not a good fit for the child, FCS will attempt to give resources and information about other programs that may benefit the child and family.

Registration & Requirements for Enrollment

After parents are notified of their child's acceptance and admission date, parents must complete the FCS Orchard Tuition Contract and pay the non-refundable, non-transferable deposit and registration fee.

Upon receipt of the tuition contract and payment of deposit and registration fee, the parent may access the Childcare Registration form, family handbook, emergency preparedness plan, permission forms (photo, sunscreen), calendars, and health and immunization forms.

On the first day a child attends the Orchard Preschool, the administrative office must have in each child's file:

- A completed FCS Application
- A signed Tuition Contract
- A completed Childcare Registration Form
- A completed set of enrollment paperwork which includes the Permission Authorization and Acknowledgment forms.
- Completed medical action plan (if applicable)
- A current Certificate of Immunization form
- Certificate of Immunization Exemption (if applicable)

PLEASE NOTE: We are required to have each of these forms in our files and may exclude any student whose files are incomplete until we have received their missing paperwork. We appreciate your cooperation.

General Information

To create a sense of security and wellbeing for the children, we ask your help in establishing rhythm and repetition from the first moment on the first day of school. **Please arrive on time.** Children arriving late to school have a more difficult time joining the play with their friends and often do not fully engage with others because of this. It can also disrupt magical moments such as birthday celebrations and festivals. We encourage you to see the importance of arriving on time and build that time into your drive and parking, or your walk, to ensure you are not rushed. Of course, everyone has days when they are running late, so please call School Administration to alert them to your late arrival.

Arrival

- ❖ Prior to leaving home, please have your child use the bathroom. We do not have the flexibility to allow your child to enter the school prior to drop-off if your child needs to use the bathroom prior to checking in.
- ❖ Encourage your child to walk to school independently by having them stand next to you as you wait your turn for check-in. Allowing them the independence of entering school on their own awakens their little bodies and prepares them to enter into play. Much of our work allows young children the time to walk on their own, building both muscle strength and self-confidence.
- ❖ Families will line up outside of school, social distancing, and wearing masks (when required), until it is their turn for check-in.
- ❖ A teacher will receive your child at the front gate of the school.
- ❖ Please let the teacher know of any relevant information they should know with regards to your child, i.e., did not sleep well, family dog is ill, etc.
- ❖ If you need to discuss something with the teacher that may take time, you may arrange a phone call or Zoom meeting with the Teachers. The School Administration will assist you with scheduling a meeting.
- ❖ Always remember to check your child in via the QR code on your phone or the school's attendance tablet. Teachers will receive children for the first 15 minutes of the drop-off time.
- ❖ Any families requiring drop-off times outside of the 15-minute window must call School Administration.
- ❖ The best goodbyes are kept short and sweet. If your child is struggling with your departure, the longer you stay, the greater their sadness. We know this through years of experience. Give them a big hug and kiss, tell them you know they are going to have a fun time, and then head off. We will take it from there.
- ❖ Do not linger at drop-off.

Morning Program 8:45am to 12:45pm (Half-Day) or 9:00am to 1:00pm (Full-Day)

This is a tuition-based program where Parents may enroll their children three to five days a week.

FCS has one morning group with two staggered drop-off and pick-up times. A daily rhythm is established from the outset, as listed below. Each day the children in our care will participate in loads of free play, interlaced with arts and crafts, circle time, stories, and seasonal festivals.

We welcome our half-day children at 8:45am and our full-day children arrive at 9am. Any families who require a drop-off time outside of the 15-minute window must call School Administration at 206-547-4054.

The only people allowed on the school property during school hours are children currently enrolled in our school and FCS staff. All guests must be invited (such as prospective parent tours) and are escorted by FCS staff while present.

Our school day ends 15 minutes before your child's pickup time: at 12:30pm for an 8:45am start, or 12:45pm for a 9:00am start. The same process occurs at pick-up as with drop-off. Children must be picked-up no later than the end of their child's program. As a licensed preschool, children may only be at the school for 4 hours.

*Any child not picked up by the end of their program will be charged **\$5** for every minute the parent/guardian is late past the required pick-up time.*

If you need your child to stay beyond their morning program, it may be possible to register with Tara's Tots or another school to attend an afternoon program. For children who attend Tara's Tots' Songbirds next door in the afternoon, staff will transfer those students from FCS to Tara's Tots for their afternoon program at 1pm.

Afternoon Program 1pm-5pm

FCS also offers an afternoon Preschool program. This is a tuition-based program that uses the same facilities and philosophies as the morning program. Parents may enroll their children three to five days a week. As with the morning program, the afternoon program is a four-hour program. We maintain a daily rhythm of scheduled periods of free play outdoors, arts and crafts, seasonal projects and festivals, and snack time. Due to licensing, children cannot attend both the morning and afternoon program at FCS. Only a maximum of 4 hours of care a day can be provided.

Napping

FCS will provide naps in the afternoon program for children whose parents request this. Nap time is typically from 1:15pm-2:30pm. As much as possible, we allow children to wake up naturally from a nap. Parents provide the bedding for their child which includes a napping mat, pillow, and a blanket. The child may also have one small stuffed toy. FCS provides a specific bin for holding these items at school. All napping items go home at the end of the week in their nap sack to be laundered and returned the following week. ([this is one example of something we would recommend](#)).

Please note that as children grow out of naps, they may just need a short period of quiet time. If a child is still awake after 20-30 minutes of quiet time, the child will leave the napping area and return to active play. We are aware that bedtime at home can sometimes be challenging, and we are happy to assist your family in coming up with possible solutions.

Signing In and Out

Upon arrival parents/guardians must sign their child in through our contactless administrative portal. To use the touchless feature, you must have a smart phone to scan the QR code. Additionally, we have tablets for those who do not have a smart phone. Children will only be released to authorized adults listed in the "Additional Contacts: Check-in/out" section of your child's profile on the administrative portal. Contact the School Administration if you need help with updating this information.

Absences and Late Arrivals

Please call or email the School Administration to notify the school of any planned or unplanned absences.

Authorized Pick up

Upon enrollment, you must complete your child's profile on the cloud-based administrative portal which includes a section titled "Additional Contacts: Check-in/out." This is where you give permission for other individuals who may pick up your child from school. We will release your child only to parents and those individuals you have listed. To add names to the list, you must personally add their names through the administrative site's portal. We cannot accept verbal or email permissions to add a name. Any person authorized to pick up your child must have proof of identification, the last four digits of the parent's phone number, and corresponding pin number. They must use the administrative portal to sign out.

Back-up Plan (if child is ill or you are late)

You must have a prepared back-up plan for unexpected situations whereby your child may have to be picked up early or you are unable to pick your child up on time. There are times when a child is sick, hurt, or may have to go home early. There are also times when you may be held up at work, miss your bus, or get caught in traffic. It is important that you designate another individual who can pick up your child and wait for you during these times. Their names must be listed in the section titled "Additional Contacts: Check-in/out" of your child's profile. **If you need assistance with meeting another parent who may be able to help you with this, please contact the School Administration.**

Extra Days

A child may attend school on a day for which they aren't normally registered provided there is space available. This extra day is an additional cost. Extra days are \$80, and the School Administration will bill you directly. You will be billed if you have made a reservation and don't cancel by 9:00am the day before.

If you know in advance of days your child will not be attending school, please let the School Administration know.

This helps us with letting a parent, who needs an extra day; know that there is room for their child.

Food

Families need to provide sufficient food for lunch and snacks in a lunchbox which the child can independently open. Although children will be appropriately spaced from each other, and sharing is prohibited, we do require that no food or snacks with peanuts are sent to school.

Each child's special needs are considered. If your child has allergies or dietary restrictions or there is a change with your child's allergies or dietary restrictions, you must ensure this is clearly stated in your child's profile under Medical Conditions. Please inform the School Administration if you have updated your child's status on the administrative portal since we are not alerted of this change.

Clothing

At FCS, the children are encouraged to explore play to the fullest. Children often encounter mud, sand, rough surfaces, and the elements. As a result, children will get messy, wear holes in their clothing, get wet, or become cold. It is no fun to keep playing if a child is distracted by discomfort. A warm, dry child is a happy child. As we reside in the Northwest, where weather is quick to change from sun to rain and from warm to cold, it is critical that children dress in layers. Please ensure your child has adequate raingear and boots in their backpack and that it is properly labeled for identification. FCS will also loan raingear and boots upon request. Please contact School Administration if you wish to borrow raingear and boots for the school year. Parents are responsible for replacing any loaned items which are damaged.

Winter Tips for dressing your child for school

- Dress in layers of warm clothes. Natural fibers insulate best. No cotton clothing during cold weather, wool is best in the winter.
- Wool or ski socks – no cotton socks
- A warm hat and mittens - Synthetic, waterproof gloves or mittens work best (no knit mittens -once they are wet, they become cold)
- Fleece jackets are excellent for layering with warm winter jackets.
- Winter Coat with a waterproof outer shell and warm inner shell. Please ensure your child's coat is waterproof, and if it is not, provide a raincoat that is big enough to be worn on top of their warm coat. Water-resistant coats and down jackets are NOT waterproof.
- Provide a variety of back up clothes which children may add or reduce depending upon the temperature and if their clothes become wet: 2 pairs of underwear and socks, 1 pair of pants or leggings, seasonal shirts.

Spring/Summer Tips for dressing your child for school:

- Provide a variety of back up clothes which children may add or reduce. Many spring/summer mornings the temperatures are chilly but can get very hot later in the day.
- A variety of SPF or UV rated clothing: long- and short-sleeved shirts plus shorts and pants are best.

- A sun hat helps provide added protection.
- Apply sunscreen to your child before dropping off. FCS will reapply sunscreen as needed only with permission. Please complete the Permissions Form to provide your authorization.

Shoes:

- Provide shoes which your child can put on and take off with minimal, or no help. Unless a child can tie their own shoes, please do not send your child in laced shoes.
- Children who want to climb trees must wear sneakers. Boots, crocs, and non-tread sandals or flip flops are not safe for tree-climbing.

Commercial television or movie images:

Through our work we have noted how commercial television or movie images printed on clothing and other personal items limit the imaginative play of the little children. We ask that you refrain from sending your child to school with items displaying these images.

We also discourage the wearing of jewelry, sunglasses, and other precious accessories as they will most likely get broken or lost.

Please provide:

- ❖ A large backpack containing several extra face masks, and raingear if weather looks iffy. A complete change of clothes should be left in their cubby: shirt, pants, two pairs of underwear, socks, (please avoid commercial characters, etc.). As these items become soiled, wet, or damaged over time, please maintain an awareness of them and check your child's backpack daily to clean, mend, or replace as necessary.
- ❖ A water bottle with their name clearly labeled. We will refill throughout the day with filtered water. In the winter an old fashioned hot-water bottle can be a wonderful lap warmer during lunch.

To be stored on site:

- ❖ A Comfort Kit for each child needs to be stored at school and is used only in the case of a facility or regional emergency. This kit is separate from your child's change of clothing bag. The comfort kit needs to fit into a **gallon size zip-lock bag** and should include essentials like a change of clothes, face mask, flashlight with batteries removed, non-perishable snacks, family picture, letter, medications, small book, or toy. For a complete list, please see the handout in the new school year mailing or talk to School Administration.

Please LABEL all of these items with your child's name.

Diapers

Parents provide diapers for their child. Parents of children in diapers and of children who are toilet training must provide an ongoing supply of diapers and additional necessary clothing. If your child is wearing pull-ups, it is helpful to send in the type with Velcro sides. This allows us to help your child

change without having to take off their pants and shoes. Items will be sent home daily to be laundered. NO cloth diapers allowed.

Rain and Muddy Buddies

The Pacific Northwest is a beautiful part of the country because of its rain. Therefore, we want our children to enjoy this gift of rain and celebrate dressing appropriately for it. Please speak positively of our weather and the benefits of wearing Muddy Buddies and boots and put all their gear on at home before you arrive at school. Make a game of getting into the rain gear and talk about the fun of jumping in puddles, building dams, and standing under downspouts (with the rain hood on, of course!).

FCS has a full assortment of raingear and boots that we are happy to lend your child. Please reach out to School Administration for further details.

NO Toys, Library Books, Umbrellas and Gifts from Home

Our school policy is that toys from home are not allowed. Do not send Library Books to school with your child. We love the rain so please, no umbrellas at school. In addition, please do not bring gifts for other children to school unless you bring enough for each member of the class AND have received permission from School Administration first. It is important to never introduce new things to our children without notice in case of allergic reaction or conflicting family preference. If your child has a special gift for another child at school, please have your child share this outside of school. If your child wants to share a special item at school, please bring the item directly to the Teacher and they will assist your child with sharing it with the class.

Lost and Found

There is a lost and found at the school. Please contact the School Administration if you are missing any items. Unclaimed items will be donated to charity at the end of each season, unless they have your child's name written on the inside. **Please write your child's name on all items that come to school.** Some parents find it useful to buy iron on labels with their child's name. Options are available on the internet for low prices.

Birthday Celebrations

During the school year, children turning 5 years old are honored with a special celebration. This consists of the telling of a birthday story, which, through the imagination, describes an understandable picture of the human birth experience. The story is followed by the lighting of candles and a special gift given by the teacher to the child. The unique birthday ceremony given by the teacher is a memorable occasion for your child. For all other children (not turning 5), the school will recognize their birthday with a smaller celebration at school among the teachers and students only (no parents).

Blessings

Prior to and at the end of each meal, the teacher leads the children in a special blessing. In this way we help the children to foster an attitude of gratitude for life and the food we are receiving.

Intro:

Hands together
Hands Apart
Hands over our Heart

For the golden corn and the apples from the tree
For the golden butter and the honey from the bee
For fruits and nuts and berries
We gather on the way
We praise our loving Mother Earth and thank her every day.

Following each song, this is spoken:

Blessings on our food
Peace be on the Earth
And harmony in our classroom

OR

Thank you for the sun
Thank you for the rain
Thank you for the flowers
And thank you for our food

Gracias por el sol
Gracias por la lluvia
Gracias por las flores
Y Gracias por la comida

OR

Give thanks to the Mother Gaia
Give thanks to the Father Sun
Give thanks to the flowers in the garden
Where the Mother and Father are one.

Storytelling

Storytelling is an important part of each meal during snack time and lunchtime. Children love repetition; this is why we tell the same story for a week. This gives them time to really live into the images and language of the story. By telling a story from the heart, children can create their own pictures and hence further their imagination. These stories will be shared with families in our bi-weekly "Beyond the Gate" e-Newsletter.

Parking

To ensure our children's safety, it is of utmost importance that we practice safety and courtesy while parking. Please watch out for others, drive slowly, and hold children's hands. FCS Orchard has one loading zone so please be mindful of your time while parked in the load zone.

Fremont Community School is located in a residential and commercial neighborhood. We like this about our school, and we want to be good neighbors. Drop off and pick up times can cause inconvenience to our neighbors. As a result, we ask you to park respectfully. Please do not park in front of the driveway of the construction site adjacent to our property or the "Boulder Project" across the street on Interlake. Please be aware of "No Parking" signs and "Zoned" parking areas where you will get ticketed. ***Parking Enforcement is intense in our neighborhood and cars parked in "no parking" zones will be ticketed by the City of Seattle.*** There is two-hour parking on 36th avenue heading east and on Interlake heading north.

Departure

Please pick up your child at the designated time according to their drop-off time. Inform all others picking up your child about the importance of being on time.

- ❖ Pick-up begins 15 minutes before the end time of your child's class. Parents wait outside following the same social distance procedure as outlined for drop-off and wait for the teacher to bring out their child. For example: If your child attends from 9am-1pm you should be at the school by 12:45pm. If your child attends from 1pm to 5pm, you should be at the school by 4:45pm.
- ❖ Check your child out via the QR code on your smart phone or the school's attendance tablet.
- ❖ Your child will only be released to someone authorized by you in the "Additional Contacts: Check-in/Out" section of your child's profile on the cloud-based administrative portal. ID will be required.
- ❖ Any families requiring an earlier pick up time must call School Administration.
- ❖ If you do not pick up your child by the designated time, you will be billed \$5.00 per MINUTE that you are late.

FCS has a very strict policy about end of the day pick-up. Please arrive on time: Children must be picked-up no later than the end of their child's program. As a licensed preschool, children may only be at the school for 4 hours.

Any child not picked up by the end of their program will be charged \$5 for every minute the parent/guardian is late past the required pick-up time.

Please have a backup plan in place for your child in the event you are not able to arrive on time. If requested, the School Administration will do their best to connect you with another parent who may be able to serve as an approved pick-up person.

Community Events and Festivals

We have a series of events to celebrate the seasons, give rhythm to the year, and bring us together as a community. Because of the COVID-19 Pandemic, FCS will continue to celebrate events in a variety of ways. Events include:

- ❖ **Parent Meetings** — Held via ZOOM, this is a time to learn about the school philosophy, discuss current theories in education, bring up questions about your children, and share with other parents.
- ❖ **Family Saturdays** – We brought back these wonderful monthly meetups and will continue to hold them, unless we are advised to suspend them. Held the third Saturday of each month, this is a Family Association sponsored event that gives parents and caregivers an opportunity to come to school with their children and meet other families.
- ❖ **Harvest Festival** – In late September or early October, we celebrate the harvest abundance all around us with a Harvest Festival. The children will celebrate this special event at school with their teachers.
- ❖ **Pumpkin Farm** – We hope we can arrange a farm outing and will let you know as we get closer to Halloween.
- ❖ **Lantern Walk** — In early November after the clocks have changed, we host a celebration of light. The Lantern Walk honors the changing of the light and the celebration of the last of the golden autumn glow.
- ❖ **Work Party** — In the fall and spring, unless we are advised to suspend it, families join the staff for a day of fun to help improve facilities and other yard projects. Children are welcome (always!). It is a great social event and opportunity to meet other families and our staff.
- ❖ **May Day Celebration** — On the 1st of May (or the closest weekday), we celebrate May Day, and the arrival of spring. Parents bring flowers and help assemble May crowns for the children. The children will delight in song and dance around the Maypole tree.
- ❖ **Jumping the Log** –Following the last day of the school year, the Jump The Log Ceremony is a very special day for all the children. It is particularly special for the children who are making the exciting transition to Kindergarten or First Grade next school year as they are the only ones Jumping the Log. For all of us, it is the magical exchange between the younger child, seeing where they are going, and the older child looking back from where they have journeyed. Families meet at Meridian Park for the Ceremony.
- ❖ **Summer Program** – Our school year ends with “Jumping the Log” on a Friday, and our Summer Program begins the following Monday. We send out information on the Summer Program by spring of each year.

A full account of all events and festivals along with their specific dates will be provided at the beginning of each school year in a School Year Calendar. You will be informed of any additional events added during the school year.

School Calendar, Holidays, and Closings

Our preschool calendar is designed to mimic the Seattle Public School **holiday** schedule as much as possible. We set the annual calendar in the spring/summer of each year. Parents will receive the new school calendar in August. Updates to the calendar will be provided through email or monthly newsletters. **We encourage families to add all school calendar dates to their personal calendar at the beginning of the school year.**

In the event of a regional outbreak of the COVID-19 virus, FCS will follow the Governor's mandates for preschool and childcare center closures. If preschools are allowed to remain open, FCS will follow the WA state Department of Health and adhere to all recommendations and guidelines for preschools and childcare centers. Please understand that we also take into consideration the safety of our community and teachers when deciding whether to remain open or closed. FCS will immediately notify families of closures or modifications to our services. In the event of school closures, FCS will follow its policy regarding tuition and deposits noted in the Handbook section on "Tuition."

Weather

In the event of extreme weather conditions, please tune into KING 5 television for school closure information — FCS will generally follow Seattle Public School closure decisions for their Preschool and Head start programs.

- If Seattle Public School's Preschool and Head start programs are closed due to extreme weather, FCS will be closed.
- If Seattle Public Schools are delayed 2 hours, their Preschool and Head start programs are closed; therefore, the FCS morning program will be closed.
- If the Public Schools are on a two-hour delay, the Afternoon program will run 1:00pm -5:00pm, unless evening conditions require us to close early.

Please understand that we also take into consideration the ability of our teachers to make it to school safely. So, although the roads may be clear at school, the roads where our teachers live may be unsafe for cars and buses.

In the event of other natural weather events such as wind and lightning, air quality and wildfire smoke event, or a heat wave, FCS will follow the guidelines outlined in our Emergency Preparedness Plan and inform parents of any closures

In the event of school closure due to extreme weather conditions, there will be no make-up days for the first 5 CANCELED school days.

Summers at FCS

We hold a Summer Program every year. The Summer Program begins the Monday following the last day of school and offers flexible morning and afternoon program options. This program is a great way for children new in the fall to get to know the school, other children, and teachers, while also providing quality care for all enrolled families. FCS will provide a Summer Program outline and the rates in the Spring. FCS is closed for the Juneteenth and July 4th holiday.

During the mornings, for a few weeks of the summer, FCS also offers week-long Art Camps for children (age requirements vary by camp). Non-FCS children are invited to attend.

Details on our Art Camps will be available in early Spring. Ask the School Administration if you want more information.

Accidents and Incidents

It is normal for children to get bumped or bruised in the course of a day of play. Although we will not report every bump, if a child has a minor accident or incident at school, staff will help the child. If they feel the injury warrants your attention, staff will notify the parent in person (if possible) and in writing by sending home a parent notification on the school's minor incident report form.

If a child has a serious accident or incident at school, the school will notify the parent as soon as possible by phone and a course of action will be taken. In the event of an emergency, the school will call 911. Teachers are certified in First Aid/CPR to assist a child in need.

If a parent is aware of an incident or accident involving their child that occurred at school and it was not reported to them, please contact the child's teacher and the School Administration to inform them of the incident.

Communication

As a school built on community, communication is critical. We are committed to clear, timely, and open communication regarding school business, but we can only be successful if families read what we email. We recognize the challenges presented by a busy life with kids, work, school, and other demands on a family's life and will try to keep our emails concise and informative.

To minimize meetings, mailings, and phone calls, preschool communication is directed mainly via email. **Parents are expected to read all email notices, as well as any other notes sent home.**

Please check your child's backpack daily as teachers often place a child's artwork in their backpack.

Information about school policies is found in this family handbook. Additionally, staff will communicate with parents personally about issues of individual concern to minimize potential conflicts. Please discuss with your child's teacher or the School Administration any changes in your child's routine, such as moving, changes in the family, major trips, family crises, etc. Communication between staff and parents is a vital part of the continuity we provide children.

If you are interested in talking with the staff about your child's activities at the school, please contact the School Administration who can arrange a time for a phone call with them. Due to the nature of the school day, it is best to minimize demand on the teacher's time during the school day.

The School Administration acts as the liaison between parents, staff, and the Board. Any questions or concerns should be sent to the School Administration who will either help you or direct you to the appropriate person.

Confidentiality

All information contained in your child's records, including your personal information, is confidential. Anyone who is not directly involved in the care of your child will not have access to your child's records without your written authorization or court order.

As a parent or guardian, you can request access to your child's records by emailing the Administration office. If you withdraw your child from the center, we will maintain your child's records for at least seven years. Lastly, out of respect for other children and families, please do not post photos or videos that contain images of children other than your own on the Internet.

Cellphones at School

To ensure that our staff's attention is always fully on the children in our care, we ask that you contact School Administration via email (orchadmin@fremontcommunityschool.org) or phone, (206) 547-4054. Please do not text the teachers regarding late drop-off or early pick-up. Teachers will occasionally send you photos from your child's day or ask a time sensitive question via text. Otherwise, the best way for parents or caregivers to communicate with teachers regarding their child, is in person at drop-off, pick-up, or during a scheduled meeting.

Teacher Office Hours

Teachers are available at pick up time to have a quick conversation with a parent. For lengthier conversations, teachers are available to meet via a phone call after session.

Parent Conferences

Parent/teacher conferences are held once a year with each family whose child is eligible to enter Kindergarten or First Grade in the fall. Conference days are scheduled on the school calendar and typically held the last week of November. During this school year, the teachers will hold the conferences via ZOOM. Of course, you are always free to arrange conferences with any staff member when you feel you have special questions or concerns. This is a great way for you to spend some time with your child's teacher.

Parent Involvement and Participation

Community Respect

All FCS Orchard employees are expected to treat all children and families with respect and dignity. In return, we expect the same from all our families. If difficulties arise, we encourage families to share their concerns with the Administration office verbally or in writing. Inappropriate language directed toward staff and/or in front of children will not be tolerated. Through communication, we will work to resolve the issue.

If you are not satisfied with the solution, we encourage you to contact the administration office. Please do not confront children or other parents in our program. When any member of the FCS Orchard community shows behavior that threatens the safety of others or shows repeated disrespect towards other members of our community, FCS

Orchard reserves the right to ask the family in question to leave the Preschool immediately and terminate that child's enrollment at FCS Orchard.

Family Involvement

FCS Orchard believes that children thrive when the relationship between the family and the center is a partnership. Due to Covid-19 our normal open-door policy to the Preschool is on hold and we strive to find ways to come together and keep everyone safe.

Fremont Community School, as implied by its name, is more than a place parents send their children for some length of time each day – it is a community — of parents, children, their teachers, and their other care providers. To make this school a community requires a commitment from all those involved, and we encourage parents to participate as fully as possible.

We are a family school and by giving yourself in some way, you help define our community and create a deeper bond with all its members. There are many ways to do this: some of you are able to give of your time, wisdom, and experience, while some of you are able to give additional financial support. Know that we welcome your contribution in areas where you feel you have a particular interest or expertise.

We understand that every family has a different gift of resources they are able to share with the school. We want you to feel comfortable with, and good about, what you are able to offer - be it serving on committees or our board, participating in our spring-cleaning effort, helping with maintenance or site improvements, or taking a leadership role with fund-raising or community outreach. We encourage you to partner with us in demonstrating to our children the value of service and giving back.

There are several ways we may request your involvement during the year. These include:

- ❖ Parent meetings — Held throughout the year via ZOOM to update parents of the goings on at the school or to provide educational information.
- ❖ FCS Board — Serve on the Board or a Board Committee. This is where we conduct the business of running the school.
- ❖ Parent/Staff Work Parties — once or twice a year.
- ❖ Family Association – This is a group serving the community of FCS. This group of parents organizes family social events, supports families with unexpected needs, and identifies areas where the school may build community.
- ❖ Teacher Appreciation Week - Typically the first week in May, parents coordinate daily expressions of appreciation for the staff.
- ❖ Fundraising - We offer opportunities to assist with fundraising events which fund our Financial Aid Program, to serve on the school's Development Committee (which oversees fundraising), or to help with creating a Development Plan.

Fundraising

Parents are critical to FCS' fundraising development efforts, and we encourage participation in our fundraising which focuses on raising money for Financial Aid. Though the school runs its operating budget primarily on tuition income, many other investments in the school, such as Financial Aid scholarships, the purchase of special equipment, and major improvements to our property, come from fundraising. Without this support, FCS

would be unable to provide our preschool experience to families at current tuition levels.

FCS attempts to keep fundraising meaningful and worthwhile. We try to avoid fundraising that requires you to sell things and all fundraising efforts are optional.

Financial Aid: Our Financial Aid Program for children is entirely dependent upon the generosity of our parents and community. We invite donors to help make our school affordable for families in our community. We joyfully accept any level of giving and strive for 100% family participation. We encourage parents (and grandparents!) to participate in making a direct and positive difference in the lives of our children. We raise most of these funds in December and in the Spring.

Amazon Purchases: If you enter the Amazon website through the FCS website, FCS will receive 4% of the total amount of purchases you make. If you prefer to order items before entering our website, after adding items to your cart, save, and then simply click on the Amazon button of our website home page www.fremontcommunityschool.org. This allows you to sign back into your account, go to your cart and move your items from "saved" and back into your cart for purchase. We ask that you encourage family and friends as well to make Amazon purchases through our website and increase the return to our school.

Tuition and Fees

Tuition – 2022-23

Morning Preschool Program

3 mornings per week: \$7,779

4 mornings per week: \$10,017

5 mornings per week: \$12,355

Afternoon Preschool Program – Four (4) Hours

3 afternoons per week: \$6,250

4 afternoons per week: \$8,333

5 afternoons per week: \$10,416

Cloud-based Administrative portal – FCS uses a cloud-based administrative site to manage payments, contracts, forms, and other documents. Once a child is accepted to a program, a family will be given access to their parent and student portal and are free to update information, download tax information, or review their payments to date.

Application Fee - A non-refundable \$75 fee is charged along with the submittal of your application for enrollment. This is a one-time, per child fee payable through the administrative portal. Once you have paid this for your child, you do not pay it again for any other FCS program in which they might participate.

Payments – All tuition payments may be made through the administrative portal (invoices emailed monthly), or by mailing a payment directly to our school.

Fremont Community School
3530 Interlake Ave N
Seattle, WA 98103

For questions about billing, contact Teresa Donovan, our School Administrator, at: admin@fremontcommunityschool.org

Deposit – A non-refundable, non-transferable deposit is required upon submission of the signed tuition contract. This is payable through the Administrative portal. A parent may

also pay by check, cash, or money-order. This deposit will apply to your last month's tuition if you remain the entire school year or if you provide proper notice as outlined in the contract.

Tuition — Monthly Payment on a nine-month installment payment schedule, starting September 1st and extending through May 1st. Other payment schedules may be available upon request.

Late Fee — A late fee penalty of \$25.00 for all payments received after the 10th of the month.

Bounced Check Fee — There is a \$40.00 fee for insufficient funds and if the same check bounces a second time, there will be an additional fee of \$20.00.

Registration Fee - A non-refundable \$110 fee is charged upon signing of the tuition contract. This is a one-time fee per child for new students only. This fee covers bookkeeping and administrative costs associated with enrollment. This fee is billed and is payable online through the administrative portal. A parent may also pay by check, cash, or money-order.

Financial Commitment for full school year - There is no reduction, refund, credit, day tradeoffs, or other allowance made for snow days, absence, illness, travel, school closures, or missed classes due to other programs.

Tuition Contract Policy in relation to COVID-19

- Government Authority closes School indefinitely due to outbreak of COVID-19

Payments - Parents have the option to:

1. Donate current month tuition and/or future tuition payments to the school
2. Request refund of paid tuition to the school – pro-rated to the number of days the child attended

Deposits:

1. Consideration of refunds will be decided at the end of the school year
2. Determination will take into consideration the amount of time the school is closed

- FCS closes due to a case/exposure of COVID-19 to the group; *all children and staff are quarantined for 5 days.*

Tuition Payments - Tuition for those 5 days will be refunded at 50% of pro-rated tuition paid for that time because:

1. The school continues to hold the spot for those children quarantined
2. The school continues to incur costs during the time the pod is quarantined

Deposits –Deposits are not refunded because:

1. The deposit is a parent's commitment to the school that their child will attend even if absent for periods of time (travel, illness, etc.)

Re-Enrollment

For families already enrolled at FCS, we ask that you inform us of your intention to re-enroll for the next school year by the first week in February. A deposit is required by May 2nd to secure your space.

Deposits: Changes/Withdrawal

If a family wishes to withdraw before the end of the school year, **notice must be given in writing to School Administration on/before the 15th of the month to withdraw at the end of the following month.** If notice is given on or before the 15th of the month to withdraw at the end of the following month, the family is only responsible for the following month's installment payment less the deposit paid. If notice is given between the 16th and the end of the month the full installment payment is also collected for the following month.

Example: If withdrawal notice is given prior to February 15th that the child will withdraw March 31st, the March 1st installment payment is due less the amount of the deposit paid at the signing of the contract; If withdrawal notice is given after February 15th, the full March 1st installment payment is due and the initial deposit is not refunded nor applied to the tuition due for the month of March.

If a family chooses to reduce the number of days their child attends, they will be charged a \$40 change fee.

If a family chooses to increase the number of days their child attends, they will be charged a pro-rated tuition for the additional day(s) if the child increases their days mid-month. The family will also be charged the new tuition rate beginning the next full month the child attends.

The Board reserves the right to consider alternative arrangements in the case of withdrawal or schedule change due to financial hardship.

Financial Aid

FCS offers limited tuition assistance, when possible, to families with demonstrated financial need. For more information about this program, contact the School Administrator at admin@fremontcommunityschool.org. You will need to complete a financial aid form and include your most recent year's tax return. Your request will be reviewed by the Board's Financial Aid Committee with consideration for the deepest need and availability of school funds. All financial aid applications are kept confidential.

Hardship Assistance

It is our commitment at Fremont Community School to help those in our school community who are facing unforeseen financial difficulties. If you find yourself in this situation, please contact our School Administrator and let them know what is going on. If we can help at all, we will. Some examples would be loss of job or severe health problems. While this isn't a guarantee of any kind, and final resolutions are at the sole discretion of the Board, we are committed to helping our students and families, so please talk to our School Administrator to see how we can help. All hardship information shared with the Board will be kept confidential.

Health

We all know that safety comes first! At FCS Orchard, our first goal is to keep children safe, which starts with paying attention to every detail - big and small. Every day at our Preschool, you can be confident that your child is in the very best hands.

Daily Health Checks

Each morning when your child arrives, we will conduct a daily health check. This is a quick physical observation where we check and observe a child's behavior/mood and physical condition, including breathing, skin, eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. Additionally, we ask that you please alert us of anything out of the ordinary we need to know regarding sleep, appetite, bowel movements and urination, mood, behavior at home, and/or unusual events.

Illness Policy

We realize that it is difficult for working parents to keep their children home, but exclusion from Preschool will help prevent contagion and promote the health and safety of your child. Children should be kept home from the school if they are feverish, have diarrhea and/or vomiting, have nasal mucous discharge that is not clear, or if they show signs of becoming sick (listlessness/drowsiness, productive cough, sore throat, ear pain, eyes that are pink, burning, itching, or producing discharge). **See exclusion criteria on the following pages for more specifics.** If a child cannot comfortably participate in the day's usual activities or a child needs to stay indoors and/or have additional rest, these signs are generally indicative that the child should not be at school.

FCS Orchard has established guidelines in accordance with Washington State's Department of Health and other best practices concerning sick children. In case of a communicable disease or condition, and at the discretion of the administration office, other parents will be notified to watch for symptoms in their children.

If your child becomes ill during the day, Administration will immediately call a parent and the child must be picked up within one hour of being called. Every effort will be made to make them comfortable, away from the other children, and with a familiar caregiver. FCS Orchard is not able to provide arrangements to care for sick children. Parents are required to respond within one hour concerning the sick child when contacted by FCS Orchard staff. If we cannot reach the parent within thirty minutes, we will reach out to the family's emergency contacts as stated on the Childcare Registration forms. If the illness warrants, the child's pediatrician will be contacted for consultation.

Children may attend with minor illnesses **if it is not contagious**, and it does not affect the child's ability to participate in the day's routine. Minor illnesses include:

- Mild respiratory infections
- Acute infections subsiding after treatment, such as pink eye, impetigo, ear infections
- Cold symptoms without a fever

If the child's health deteriorates at some point in the day, the parent will be contacted to come to pick them up.

It is always helpful if you can provide the Administration office with a doctor's note, when applicable.

Illness Exclusion Criteria

Disease/Condition:	If your child has been diagnosed with this disease, our program will:	When to allow your child to return:
<p style="text-align: center;">Chickenpox (or rash suggestive of chickenpox)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporarily exclude the sick child from childcare • Notify all parents regarding possible exposure and include a warning about aspirin use. • Contact administration if needed to find out other preventative measures to take • Unimmunized children must be excluded until they are permitted to return by their health care provider • Carefully follow handwashing and cleaning procedures 	<p>Approximately 5-7 days after the rash begins or when ALL blisters have scabbed over</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">COVID-19 or symptoms of COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporarily exclude the sick child from childcare • Contact administration if needed to find out other preventative measures to take • Carefully follow handwashing and cleaning procedures 	<p>Guidance from the state is updated frequently. Please contact administration for more info or see our guidelines posted on the administrative portal.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Diarrheal illness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporarily exclude a child that has had 2 or more diarrhea episodes in one day. • Carefully follow handwashing and cleaning procedures 	<p>When the child is diarrhea-free for at least 24 hours without the aid of medication.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Fifth Disease</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporarily exclude the sick child from childcare • The program will notify all parents • Carefully follow handwashing and cleaning procedures 	<p>When the child is fever-free for at least 24 hours without the aid of medication and has the energy to participate in center activities.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Fever</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporarily exclude the child from childcare if the child has a fever of 100.0 or greater. 	<p>When the child is fever-free for at least 48 hours without the aid of medication.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Hand Foot and Mouth Disease (Coxsackie)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exclude if the child has an open, draining lesion on hand or has lesions in the mouth and is drooling. • Carefully follow handwashing and cleaning procedures. 	<p>When lesions heal and/or drooling ceases, and the child can participate in center activities (including meals)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Hepatitis A</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporarily exclude the sick child from childcare • Contact the Communicable Disease Section of DHHS • Contact administration if needed to find out other preventative measures to take 	<p>At least one week after onset of illness or jaundice.</p> <p>Permission to return should be sought from the local health authorities first.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carefully follow handwashing and cleaning procedures 	
Impetigo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporarily exclude the child from childcare Carefully follow handwashing and cleaning procedures. 	After treatment has been started
Influenza	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporarily exclude the child from childcare The program will notify all parents Carefully follow handwashing and cleaning procedures. 	When the child is fever-free for at least 24 hours without the aid of medication and has the energy to participate in center activities.
Lice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporarily exclude the child from childcare 	24 hours after treatment and no signs of nits or lice
Pink Eye	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporarily exclude the child with yellow eye drainage and itching Carefully follow handwashing and cleaning procedures. 	24 hours after the first dose of medication and symptoms are mild
Pneumonia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporarily exclude the child from childcare if they present with fever or difficulty breathing. Carefully follow handwashing and cleaning procedures. 	When the child is fever-free for at least 48 hours without the aid of medication and has the energy to participate in center activities.
Ringworm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporarily exclude the child if lesions cannot be covered Carefully follow handwashing and cleaning procedures. 	If unable to cover the lesion(s), after treatment begins and the lesion starts to shrink.
RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporarily exclude the child from childcare if they present with fever or difficulty breathing. Carefully follow handwashing and cleaning procedures. 	When the child is fever-free for at least 48 hours without the aid of medication and has the energy to participate in center activities.
Scabies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporarily exclude the child until treatment is complete. Carefully follow handwashing and cleaning procedures. The program will notify all parents All clothing and blankets will be sent home to be laundered in hot water and dried in a hot dryer. 	Until treatment is completed.
Strep Throat/Scarlet Fever	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporarily exclude the child from childcare Carefully follow handwashing and cleaning procedures. 	24 hours after antibiotics are started when the child is fever-free for at least 48 hours without fever-reducing medication and has the energy to participate in center activities.
Tuberculosis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporarily exclude the child from childcare 	Exclude until a healthcare professional provides a written statement that the

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact local health department and administration Carefully follow handwashing and cleaning procedures. 	child is not infectious.
Vomiting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporarily exclude the child from childcare Carefully follow handwashing and cleaning procedures. 	When the child is vomit-free for at least 24 hours without the aid of medication.
Whooping Cough/Pertussis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporarily exclude the child from childcare Contact local health department and administration Unimmunized children must be excluded until they are permitted to return by their health care provider. Carefully follow handwashing and cleaning procedures. 	Exclude until five days after treatment has started. Exclude untreated cases for 21 days from the date cough began.

** This chart is not an exhaustive list of the communicable diseases and policies for exclusion from childcare. For more information, please contact the Administration office.**

COVID-19

If your child or a member of your family has been diagnosed with COVID-19, inform the school immediately. The school will notify the Health Department and the School Community (without revealing names) that our community was exposed to the virus. The school will also notify any families and staff who were in close contact with the person diagnosed with COVID-19 and follow the protocol below;

Potential exposure to COVID-19

Regardless of vaccination status, children, families, and staff who were potentially exposed to COVID-19 will:

- Monitor for symptoms, AND
- Wear a well-fitted mask for 10 days after the last date of exposure, AND
- Get tested 5 days after their last exposure. Molecular (PCR/NAAT), antigen, and at home tests are acceptable. If they test positive, they must isolate.
- Date of exposure is Day 0.
- Exposed children, and staff may continue to take part in all in-person instruction and care as long as they are not symptomatic.

Positive COVID-19 test

A child, family member, or staff who tests positive for COVID-19 is required to quarantine, regardless of vaccination status. The individual may return to school/care after 5 full days of isolation if:

- Their symptoms have improved, or they are asymptomatic, AND
- They are without a fever for the past 48 hours without use of fever-reducing medications.

If returning to school/care after day 5, the individual:

- Must wear a well-fitted mask during days 6-10 of their isolation period.
- Testing beyond day 10 is not necessary.
- The date of onset of symptoms is Day 0

Chronic Health Conditions

For any child with health care needs such as allergies, asthma, or other chronic conditions (ex: seizures, G-Tube, etc.) that require specialized health services, a medical action plan shall be provided by the parent and the child's health care professional. FCS Orchard staff and administration will review the medical action plan. The medical action plan must be updated annually and when changes to the plan are made by the child's parent or health care professional. The medical action plan shall be signed by both the parent and the child's health care professional and must include the following:

- A list of the child's diagnosis or diagnoses, including dietary, environmental, and applicable activity considerations
- Contact information for the child's health care professional(s)
- Medications to be administered on a scheduled basis; and
- Medications to be administered on an emergency basis with symptoms, and instructions.

Medications

Please administer medication to your child prior to bringing them to school. For medications to be administered at school, please provide a permission slip and instructions from your child's doctor. Epi-pens must have the child's name on them. All medicines must be in their original containers sealed inside a ziploc bag clearly labeled with your child's name on the outside.

General Medication Policies

- Prescription, over-the-counter medication, topical/non-medical ointment, repellent, lotion, cream, sunscreen and powder shall be administered to any child only:
 - with written authorization from the child's parent
 - with written instructions from the child's parent, physician, or another health professional
 - if authorized by the child's parent, physician, or another health professional
 - up to and never after its expiration date
- We will not use medications for:
 - non-medical reasons, such as to induce sleep
 - a known allergy to the medication.
- All medications will be given following the doctor's written instructions.
- Medication will be stored separately for each child.
- Do not store medication in diaper bags, backpacks, or any other personal belongings.
- We do not mix the medication with food or juice, nor will we dispense any medication in a bottle cup.
- Medications will be administered by regular classroom staff who have been trained in medication administration in the presence of another staff person. All staff follow the Six Rights of Safe Medication Administration: right child, right medicine, right date/time, right dose, right route & right documentation. Staff will document each dosage on the medication form, listing time, amount given, and initial. If any side effects are noticed, they will be noted on the form, and the child's parent will be notified.

- It is the responsibility of the parent to remove or dispose of any medication after the duration of the request has ended. The classroom staff will dispose of any medicine at school after the medication form has expired or after a child has left FCS Orchard.
- Alternative medications, such as herbal or homeopathic medications that are not tested by the US Food and Drug Administration for safety or effectiveness, lack safety information and cannot be administered at FCS Orchard.
- FCS Orchard reserves the right to refuse the administration of medications if we feel that it is in the best interest of the staff.

Prescription Medication

- For a staff member to administer any medication to your child, you must complete the Child Care Medication Authorization Form in its entirety.
- The medication must be brought to the school and stored in the original, tamper-resistant container in which they were dispensed with the pharmacy labels. The pharmacy label must specify:
 - The child's name
 - The names of the medication
 - The amount and frequency of dosage
 - The date the prescription was filled and the expiration date
- If the medication is provided via pharmaceutical samples; they must be stored in the manufacturer's original packaging, shall be labeled with the child's name, and shall be accompanied by written instructions specifying:
 - The child's name
 - The names of the medication
 - The amount and frequency of dosage
 - The signature of the prescribing physician or other health professional and the date the physician or other health professional signed the instructions
 - Medication expiration date
- The medication shall be administered only to the child for whom they were prescribed. It shall be administered according to the prescription, using the amount and frequency of dosage specified on the label.
- A parent's written authorization for administering a prescription medication shall be valid for the length of time the medication is prescribed to be taken or up to 6 months when needed for a chronic medical condition, whichever is less.

Emergency Medication

If your child requires the use of emergency medications (i.e., inhalers, Epi-pen, Diastat, etc.), you will need to provide a medical action plan completed by the child's health care professional and complete a Child Care Medication Authorization Form. The emergency medication must be brought to the school and stored in the manufacturer's original packaging with the child's name written or labeled on it. Emergency medicines will be kept unlocked and easily accessible to adults but out of children's reach (at least 5 feet off the ground). This is to ensure easy access in the case of an emergency. All staff members are trained on emergency medication administration annually.

Over-the-Counter Medication

In general, FCS Orchard staff will not administer over-the-counter medication except when a health professional prescribes over-the-counter medicines. This situation is most common for chronic health conditions (ex: Benadryl for students with allergy action plans

or fever-reducing medication for students with febrile seizure action plans). FCS Orchard will not administer over-the-counter medicines such as cough syrup, Tylenol, ibuprofen, antibiotic cream for abrasions, or medication for upset stomach in the cases of acute illness or pain. Children that have these symptoms may need to remain at home until they are symptom-free.

The over-the-counter medication must be brought to the school and stored in the manufacturer's original packaging with the child's name written or labeled on it. It shall be accompanied by a Child Care Medication Authorization Form that specifies:

- The child's name
- The medical conditions or allergic reactions
- The names of the authorized over-the-counter medication
- The amount and frequency of the dosages, which shall not exceed the amount and frequency of the dosages on the manufacturer's label
- In cases where the prescription says, "as needed" (i.e., allergy exposure, etc.), the instructions need to specify criteria for the administration of the medication (be specific with what symptoms or situations are criteria for administration)
- The route in which the medication shall be administered
- Possible reactions or side effects
- The signature of the parent AND physician, or another health professional
- The date the instructions were signed by the parent and physician or other health professional.

Topical Creams and Sunscreen

Parents and guardians may give FCS Orchard standing authorization for up to 12 months to apply over-the-counter topical ointments, topical teething ointment or gel, lotions, creams, and powders, such as sunscreen, diapering creams, baby lotion, and baby powder, to their child, when needed.

The Permission Authorization Form must be completed before we can administer these medications. You can find the necessary form on the administrative portal.

Families are asked to supply their own sunscreen. Please apply sunscreen to your child before arriving at school and dress them in hats/visors and SPF clothing, or other tightly woven clothing, to help prevent sunburn during outdoor play. FCS Orchard staff can reapply sunscreen in the afternoon before going outside if we have an up-to-date Permission Authorization Form on file.

Immunization Policy

Fremont Community School (FCS) follows the Seattle Public School's Immunization Policy which complies with Washington State's Vaccine Requirements. Washington State law requires that children must be immunized before attending school.

In order to safeguard the school community from the spread of certain communicable diseases and in recognition that prevention is a means of combating the spread of disease, the FCS Board requires a student to present evidence of his/her having been immunized against diseases as required by the Washington State Board of Health. For a child to attend FCS, parents and guardians must upload on the administrative portal a completed "Certificate of Immunization Status:"

1. By September 7th for children entering the beginning of the new school year

2. By the beginning of the 2nd week of attendance for children entering mid-year

Parents must update forms on the administrative portal prior to the beginning of each new school year. Children whose forms are not uploaded on the administrative portal by the required timeline noted above will be sent home.

*Immunization Requirements for Students to Attend FCS**

1. Hepatitis B – 3 doses
2. DTaP (Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis) – 4 doses
3. Hib (Haemophilus influenza type B) – 4 doses
4. IPV (Polio) – 3 doses
5. PCV (Pneumococcal Conjugate) – 4 doses
6. MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella) – 1 dose
7. Varicella (Chickenpox) – 1 dose or verification child had disease

*This list is subject to change based upon directives from the Washington State Dept. of Health regarding Covid-19 vaccines for young children.

Exemptions from Immunization

If parents or guardians choose to exempt their child from one or more required vaccines, they must upload on the administrative portal a completed “Certificate of Exemption.” FCS will allow for exemptions from immunization requirements only as allowed for by Washington State Law:

1. FCS does not allow Personal/Philosophical exemptions for the MMR vaccine.
2. FCS requires that a licensed health care provider sign the “Certificate of Exemption” for a parent or guardian to exempt their child from school and childcare immunization requirements. The signature verifies that the provider gave the parent or guardian information about the benefits and risks of immunization.
3. A parent or guardian can also turn in a signed letter from a health care provider stating the same information.
4. A health care provider does not need to sign the form for parents or guardians who demonstrate membership in a church or religious group that does not allow a health care provider to provide medical treatment to a child.

Children with exemptions on file may be sent home during an outbreak. They can only return to school once the outbreak is over or get vaccinated. FCS will notify all parents of an outbreak. Immunizations save lives and diseases can spread quickly in schools. Unimmunized children are more likely to get a disease that vaccines can prevent and spread it in their communities. This particularly compromises children who are not vaccinated because of confirmed medical reasons.

Having fewer philosophical or convenience-based exemptions will reduce the burden on our schools and the risk to medically compromised children and to infants not yet old enough to receive routine immunizations.

Toileting

High collaboration between you, your child, and your child’s teachers makes for more successful toilet learning. Children learn toileting skills through consistent, positive encouragement from all the adults who care for them.

When your child shows an interest, you and your child's teachers will discuss how to work together to encourage toilet learning. We are committed to working with your child consistently so that toilet learning can be accomplished in a developmentally appropriate manner with minimum stress for you and your child.

Every child begins toilet learning at a different age and progresses at a different rate. We are always available as a resource to answer any questions about your child's progress. Several complete changes of clothes and an extra pair of shoes should be kept at the center during toilet learning.

Cleaning & Sanitation

Cleaning and disinfecting are part of our broad approach to preventing infectious diseases at FCS Orchard. Orchard has a "yucky bucket" for toys that have been contaminated with bodily fluids. Contaminated toys are specifically washed, sanitized, and air-dried. All surfaces and toys are sanitized and air-dried daily upon arrival and departure.

Hand Washing

Handwashing has long been established as one of the most important things to prevent the spread of illness.

In our school, hand washing requirements for staff are as follows:

- Upon arrival at Childcare Center/center
- Before and after setting up snacks/food for student consumption
- Before and after helping students use the bathroom
- After handling items soiled with body fluids such as blood, drool, urine, stool, or discharge from nose or eyes
- After handling an ill child
- After using the bathroom or taking care of other personal needs (i.e., nose-wiping) and eating

In our school, hand-washing requirements for students are as follows:

- Upon arrival in the morning
- After using the bathroom
- Before and after eating food
- Before and after sensory play
- After they have touched a child who may be sick or who has handled soiled items
- After blowing/wiping their nose

The required method for handwashing is as follows:

- Rub hands vigorously for at least 20 seconds using warm water and soap.
- Wash between fingers and back of hands and wrists.
- Rinse hands well under running water and dry thoroughly with a clean paper towel.
- Turn off water using a paper towel instead of bare hands. This helps prevent acquiring new germs on already clean hands.

Universal Precautions

FCS Orchard follows universal precautions to prevent the transmission of HIV/Aids, Hepatitis B, and other bloodborne pathogens. Universal precautions refer to infection control measures that all healthcare workers and childcare providers follow to protect themselves and the children in their care from disease-producing microorganisms. The concept requires workers to treat all blood and various other bodily fluids as infected with HIV, hepatitis B virus, and other bloodborne pathogens. FCS Orchard staff follow the following universal precautions when encountering blood or bodily fluids:

- Gloves are worn for contact with blood, body fluids, mucous membranes, open wounds, and handling items or surfaces soiled with blood or body fluids. Only approved latex or vinyl gloves are worn. Gloves are never to be washed and reused.
- Hands and other skin areas are washed thoroughly if they contact blood or body fluids. Hands should be washed immediately after gloves are removed.
- Saliva is not considered by the Center for Disease Control to transmit HIV. Still, it is a body fluid, and mouth-to-mask ventilation devices will be available for resuscitation and shall be used by trained personnel.
- Staff must review information and procedures about universal precautions, HIV/HBV infections/transmissions, and handling of infectious waste annually.

Safety

Supervision

FCS Orchard staff assume responsibility for enrolled children when they enter the school property. Children are supervised primarily by sight, but supervision for short intervals by sound is permissible, as long as teachers frequently check on children who are out of sight.

All teachers monitor attendance by conducting headcounts throughout the day, particularly when moving about the school and play yard.

Emergency Procedures

We make every effort to be prepared for potential emergencies. FCS Orchard has an Emergency/Disaster Plan which outlines the School's response to site-specific emergencies or regional disasters. This plan addresses and is not limited to the school's response to fire, inclement weather, earthquakes, or a lockdown if it becomes necessary. This plan is updated annually and is available on the administrative portal. These plans are reviewed annually with the staff and during onboarding of new hires. Additional precautions we take in the event of an emergency are:

- Emergency phone numbers are posted by all phones.
- FCS Orchard keeps an emergency "Grab and Go" bag with first aid supplies and emergency contact information for all students and staff.
- Fire drills are practiced quarterly and shelter-in-place drills annually to prepare children in the case of an emergency.
- Earthquake drills are practiced twice per year.
- Emergency evacuation plans are posted in each room.

- Annual inspections are conducted by the Seattle Fire Department. If an emergency requires evacuation, we will notify you as soon as the children have been relocated to a safe area.

FCS Orchard Preschool Policies

Mandated reporting requirements

It is our mission to ensure all children in our center are safe and well cared for, not only while they are at our center, but always.

Abuse:

Washington law requires everyone who works directly with children to report suspicions or evidence of child neglect or abuse to local law enforcement. Those who fail to report can be held accountable under the law. The law prohibits interference with an individual's attempt to report child abuse or neglect. Our school will offer full cooperation during the investigation of the reported incident.

- Should a staff member have reason to suspect abuse, they will contact FCS administration and follow up with an immediate phone call to King County Human Services 1-800-422-7880 or 1-866-ENDHARM (1-866-363-4276). If an administrative staff member is unavailable, staff members have the authority to make the call and to prepare a written report of the account.
- FCS Orchard will not hire a person who has been convicted of abuse of any type, and all staff undergo a Criminal Background Check before employment begins.
- All staff members are responsible for protecting all children from abuse from any child or staff member.
- All staff members are required to report any suspected cases of abuse, whether it is suspected at FCS Orchard or away from FCS Orchard.
- All FCS Orchard staff receive training in recognizing and responding to child maltreatment, including abuse and neglect.
- FCS Orchard strictly prohibits the mistreatment, neglect, or abuse of any child in the program by any staff member. Any employee found in violation of the abuse and neglect policies shall be immediately terminated. If the charges are not upheld, the Director and School Administrator will determine eligibility for reinstatement.

Smoke-Free, Substance-free, and Weapon-Free Environment

FCS Orchard buildings and playgrounds are smoke-free and tobacco-free environments. Smoking and the use of any product containing, made, or derived from tobacco, including e-cigarettes, cigars, little cigars, smokeless tobacco, and hookah, shall not be permitted on the premises of the school or during any off-premises activities.

FCS Orchard also prohibits any person from consuming or being under the influence of alcohol on licensed space during business hours. It is also prohibited for any person within the licensed space from consuming or being under the influence of illegal drugs or prescription drugs to the extent that it interferes with the care for children.

Additionally, firearms and ammunition are prohibited unless carried by a law enforcement officer.

Transportation

FCS Orchard does not transport children to and from the school or for any off-premises activities. Parents are expected to provide transportation for their children.

Babysitting

FCS Orchard strongly discourages families from entering employment arrangements with staff. However, we recognize that our staff members are highly trained, wonderful people and are often the people that know your child best, next to you. Any arrangement between a family and an FCS Orchard employee, for employment or services outside the program and services of FCS orchard, is an individual endeavor and private matter, not connected or sanctioned by FCS Orchard.

Commitment to Diversity

Tolerance and understanding are fostered by positive exposure to various ages, genders, lifestyles, family structures, races, cultures, religions, and physical abilities. Therefore, we emphasize an environment that welcomes diversity and challenges bias and discrimination.

Legal Information

Nondiscrimination Policy

FCS Orchard admits children of any race, color, religion, and national or ethnic origin. Acceptance to our program may be made with consideration of gender and age-balanced goals.

FCS Orchard does not and shall not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender identity or expression, age, national or ethnic origin (ancestry), disability, the presence of any physical, mental, or sensory handicap, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status in administration of its hiring policies, educational policies, admission policies, tuition assistance programs, or any other school administered activities or operations. These activities include, but are not limited to, hiring, and firing of staff, selection of volunteers and vendors, and provision of services. We are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all staff members, clients, volunteers, subcontractors, vendors, and clients.

FCS Orchard is an equal opportunity employer. We will not discriminate and will take affirmative action measures to ensure against discrimination in employment, recruitment, advertisements for employment, compensation, termination, upgrading, promotions, and other conditions of employment against any employee or job applicant on the basis of race, color, gender, national origin, age, religion, creed, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

Americans with Disabilities Act

Our policy is to do our best to accept children with disabilities in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), its regulations, and any other applicable local, state, or federal laws pertaining to providing services to individuals with disabilities. Exceptions to this are if we cannot assure the safety and well-being of the child, other children in the program, and/or the staff.

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