



2023/2024 Fiddlehead Family Handbook

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Fiddlehead Philosophy

Mission Statement

At Fiddlehead Montessori Elementary, we are committed to the development of the whole child, providing an enriching environment for each individual to grow to their full potential academically, emotionally, socially, and globally, while cultivating independent learners through the teachings and curriculum of Maria Montessori.

Vision

Our vision is for each child to graduate with the ability to be a self-directed learner and creative problem solver with an increased curiosity about the world.

Our Values

Independence

Self-esteem is built by increasing independence. The Montessori environment provides freedom within limits and independence with responsibility. Children learn at their own pace and level, as appropriate to their developmental stage. Children explore their own interests through independent projects several times a year.

Community

Fiddlehead values and encourages community among our families and local organizations. We provide opportunities for family members to volunteer, gather for social school events, and congregate on campus weekly during pick-up.

Diversity

Multi-age classrooms build the expectation that differences between children are normal and celebrated. We embrace, value, and celebrate our differences and encourage diversity in our student, staff, and parent community. We do not discriminate based on race; national or ethnic origin; religion; or sexual orientation, identification, or gender expression in our hiring practices and acceptance of students.

Conflict Resolution

Fiddlehead staff teaches and models peaceful problem-solving skills. We assist children with language to resolve conflicts in the classroom and on the playground. Children consider the impact of their words and actions on others, frequently collaborate or help one another, and take care of the classroom environment.

Nature Connection

Outdoor programs provide children with unique nature connections in Anacortes's local forestlands. We provide children with wild experiences through educational activities, which deepens their relationship with nature and guides them to a greater understanding of what is present in the woods.

Global Perspective

We look beyond our classroom to better understand the needs of others around the world. We value cultural differences by studying cultures. We emphasize respect for nature and humanity as we share our planet's resources. We value the importance of service and strive to participate in public service projects. Our school seeks to reduce its environmental impact by learning about and discussing our planet's needs, recycling, reusing materials, and cleaning with green products.

Diversity of Student Community

Fiddlehead welcomes and celebrates diversity and equity. Working and playing with children from various religious, ethnic and heritage backgrounds, gender identification and gender expression, and lifestyles and life circumstances fosters communication, acceptance, and appreciation of differences. Fiddlehead Montessori does not discriminate on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin, religion, gender or gender expression, or sexual orientation.

Fiddlehead celebrates families, recognizing all the unique forms they take. All kinds of families are included: children who live with their grandparents, children with two moms or two dads, children with stepsiblings or stepparents, children who are adopted, children with single parents, and children who live in two houses. The goal is to make each child feel accepted and valued.

Board of Directors

Our Board members support the vision of the school and approve policies consistent with our mission statement and core values. They plan fundraising events, oversee the budget, and set long term goals for the school. The Board consists of four parent members. The Director and Administrator are advisory members of the Board. For a list of this year's Board members, please visit our website at www.TheFiddlehead.org

Montessori Philosophy

Our pedagogy is based upon the work of Italian physician and educator Maria Montessori, who believed education should be student-based and student-inspired. The teacher's role is not to impart information for the student to memorize and recite; it is to follow the student's academic interests and guide them through their unique way of learning and integrating knowledge. This philosophy has been handed down through teacher education and certification programs such as the American Montessori Society (AMS). All our lead teachers are AMS or AMI trained and/or certified (AMI is the Association Montessori Internationale, the training program established by Maria Montessori.)

Montessori teachers believe that children naturally love to learn and are, for the most part, internally motivated. Fiddlehead Montessori teachers provide a rich educational environment with lots of opportunities to "try on" experiences inside and outside of the classroom. Since children learn through their senses, Montessori materials are multisensory. After many concrete experiences, children are ready to form abstract concepts. They learn best by exploring a topic in depth, rather than skimming many topics in 45-minute increments. We give each child the skills to pursue their individual interests and passions, and Fiddlehead students are allowed as much time as they require to pursue a given academic topic or skill.

The teacher is a facilitator or guide, rather than an authority in the classroom. The deepest and most rewarding learning experiences take place in the absence of the teacher, oftentimes with only an initial introduction to get them started. Multi-age classrooms build diversity. They offer younger children the chance to learn from older students, and older students the opportunity to nurture and help younger children, which reinforces their own learning. Children learn to understand and get along with others who are different from themselves.

Welcome

By enrolling your child at Fiddlehead Montessori, you and your family have joined a caring, dedicated community of students, families, teachers, and staff. In the following pages, you will find the answers to many of your questions about the school. Our school calendar and more helpful information can be found at www.TheFiddlehead.org

Before Your Child's First Day of Class

1. Submit all forms, nonrefundable fees, and the first month's tuition payment.
2. Parents or guardians attend a school orientation.
3. New students attend a school orientation/meet and greet.

Immunizations and Communicable Diseases

Each family must complete the required immunization and information forms on the required document.

What Montessori education looks like at the Early Childhood level:

Teachers meet children where they are at and guide them toward materials and activities appropriate to their current level of learning.

- Children learn at a pace unique to their own needs, age, and developmental level.
- Children may choose their own lessons and materials once they have had a teacher introduction to the material.
- You will see a mixed age group of predominantly 3-5 year old children, with children as old as 6.
- We do not have preschool, pre-Kindergarten or Kindergarten, but instead approach each individual or small group of children based on their abilities and needs.
- Many children at this level value working alone, but some may be seen working on small group lessons and activities together.
- Competition is not a component of our learning climate. Teachers and children instead focus on comparing their own work to ensure their individual growth and progress.
- Cooperation, collaboration, and connection are skills each child learns in their early childhood journey, before embarking upon the Lower Elementary level.
- Curiosity, exploration, independence, self-confidence, critical thinking, and social-emotional well-being are proponents of the Montessori philosophy at this level.

What Montessori education looks like at the Elementary level:

1. Each child navigates his/her classroom work either independently or with some guidance from teachers. Children work on different activities involving language arts, mathematics, and cultural lessons. During work cycles, some children work in small groups (with or without a teacher) and others work independently. Meanwhile, the assistant teacher helps students with checking work in progress and/or work completed.
2. Children can be grouped by ability as assessed at the beginning of each year and informally throughout the year. Teachers follow a Montessori scope and sequence plan throughout the three year cycle.
3. Enrichment classes are provided by qualified instructors or classroom teachers and may include music, art, or foreign language. Physical education includes a bimonthly Wilderness Awareness class.
4. Students can go on outings (field trips) for physical education, cultural events, and academic studies. Wilderness Awareness occurs twice a month at Washington Park with a trained Wilderness teacher(s).
5. There is a happy, industrious, friendly, busy atmosphere in the classroom. School is a welcoming place for students, teachers, staff, and families.

Communication

Parent-teacher communication is a high priority at Fiddlehead. You will receive regular updates via Seesaw that explains the day-to-day happenings of your child's classroom. We also email our newsletter and updated policies. We also invite you to visit our website at www.TheFiddlehead.org

Phone - School Office Phone: **(360) 588-4699**

Please call the school for time sensitive and emergent matters. Our administrative office is open between 8am and 4pm. Please leave a message if needed. Please respect the privacy of our teachers and staff. Personal numbers are not given.

Mail - For all correspondence, please use the following address:

Fiddlehead Montessori, 2702 R Ave. Anacortes, WA 98221

Email -For the most up-to-date information on email addresses, please reference the current school year's staff directory. Email will be used for important announcements and planned school events.

Seesaw - We will use an online app Seesaw to send you updates and pictures. This platform is also used for any last-minute reminders or announcements. You can download the app on your smartphone. This platform is for parents or immediate family members and is used for daily communication. When in doubt, use Seesaw!

Monthly Folders - These folders include a monthly calendar, newsletter, and schoolwork. Monthly folders will be passed out on the first week of the month. Please sign the sheet in the folder and send it back with your child the following day so that we know you've received the information.

Newsletter - These will be sent out monthly and have detailed information about what your child is learning in their classroom, volunteer opportunities, and announcements.

Face-to-Face Communication - We do everything we can to make ourselves available for quick, face-to-face check-ins. We are also available via email and invite parents to reach out with questions or concerns or to schedule a meeting. Together we can solve little problems, before they become big ones.

Non-emergency Situations - If you would like to communicate with the director or teachers during school hours, please email or send a message through Seesaw, so we can continue to nurture and educate your child without interruption. Teachers will check their email and Seesaw messages after school hours.

Emergency Situations - Please call the school or send a message to the school admin for time sensitive matters.

Parent Orientation - We strongly encourage parents to attend this annual event as we will discuss Montessori philosophy, explain the classroom curriculum and procedures, and allow parents to meet.

Parent Conferences - Parent conferences are held twice a year, in fall and mid-winter. While conferences in person are preferred, we are open to using Zoom for a video conference. See the school calendar for these dates. Sign-ups will be available online two weeks before conferences. Please choose a day and time that matches your schedule. Conferences are scheduled for every half-hour. If you feel you need more time after thirty minutes, we will be happy to schedule additional conference time for you on a different day. You may wish to write up a list of discussion topics beforehand. If you have any concerns about your child, please don't wait until your conference date to bring them up. A quick phone call or email can help us collaborate on solutions to any problems that may pop up. You will receive your child's written progress report at the conference in the spring.

Family/Student Events

Throughout the school year, we create opportunities for Fiddlehead families to get together. Your participation in all of these is strongly encouraged. See our school calendar for scheduled dates.

- Parent Orientation - We ask returning and new parents to attend our parent orientation. This is held prior to the start of the school year.
- Meet and Greet - This is a special time set aside for new and returning students/families to gather. Students can bring their needed school supplies at this time.
- School Picnics - At the beginning and end of the school year there are school "picnics." We ask that each family bring their own food, drinks, utensils, and fixings to these types of events. These events build important connections within our community and are often used for significant announcements. You don't want to miss it!
- Student Teaching Night - This is a time for the students to show you what they have been working on in class and for them to give you a lesson!
- Parent Education Nights - We have two evenings a school year which provides families an opportunity to learn about a variety of topics relating to education or parenting. Elementary families plan to attend on Zoom, while EC Families will meet in person. These nights are designated to adults only. Childcare is not provided but can be arranged if needed. All sessions will be recorded for those that are unable to attend.
- Winter Celebration – Winter event which includes a lantern walk, a fire, some singing and warm treats.
- Moving Up Ceremony – Come on out and help us congratulate our graduates and celebrate the end the school year.

- Park and Play - Every Thursday after school until 4:30pm, students and families are welcome to come onto the campus playground and converse with other Fiddlehead families while the children play under parent supervision. Please park along the street.

School Procedures

Parking

Parking spots on the school property are reserved for staff, volunteers, and families with a scheduled meeting. If the parking lot is full, please use street parking.

Slow Start Procedure and First Day of School for Early Childhood Students

New Early Childhood children who are accepted into the program will begin their time with a slow start transition into our school. This allows the child to acclimate to their new environment and get used to their new routines. Each family will be given their child's start date before the school year starts. On the child's first day of school, they will attend the program for a half day from 9:00 to 12:00pm. On the following day of school, 4 and 5 year olds will attend the program for a full day from 9:00 to 3:30 pm and continue with their regular full-day schedule.

It is highly recommended to all families that they attend Meet and Greet with their children. When the children see their families in their new classroom with them, it gives them a sense of comfort and safety. They see you making connections with their new teachers, other parents and children who will be part of their classroom community.

Beginning on your child's first day of school, we will start picking up and dropping off children via the carline and escort them into the school. This gives your child a clear delineation of the classroom as "my classroom" and helps both parents and children with separation anxiety.

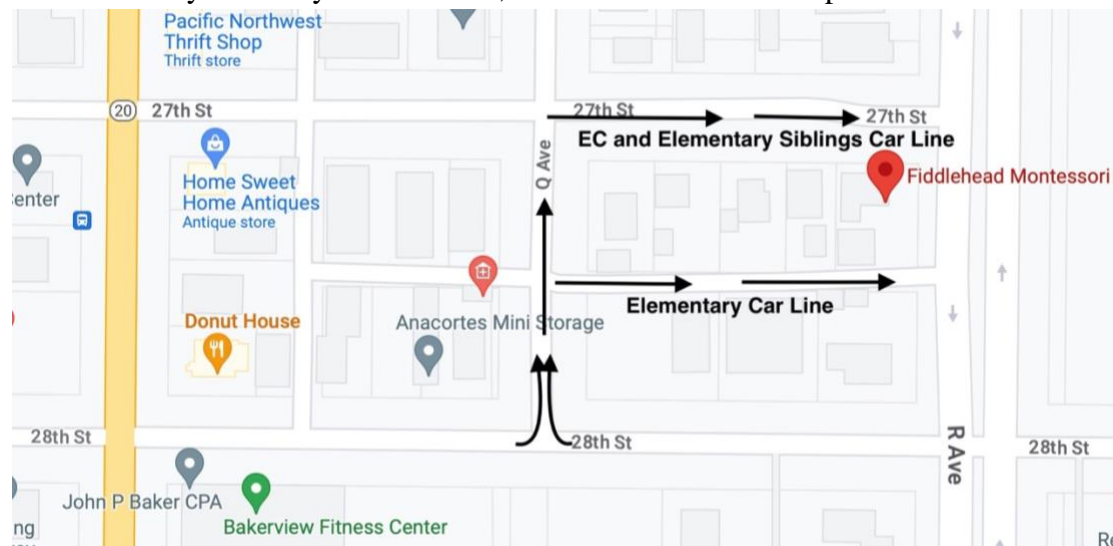
Early Childhood Sign In/Sign Out

Early Childhood families must sign the student in at the time of arrival and sign students out when they are picked up for early dismissal or to leave at the end of the day. New sign in sheets will be used each day to keep track of student attendance.

Arrival and Dismissal

EC drop-off and pick-up is conducted along 27th street, while Elementary drop-off and pick-up is conducted in the alleyway (between 27th and 28th street) behind the school. Please enter the line from Q Ave (Commercial) and exit onto R Ave. If the line reaches the end of 27th and Q, line up along Q Ave. Please arrive on time and pick up on time. We ask that you stay in your vehicle and

pull forward as cars move in front of you. Drivers do not need to get out of the vehicle to assist their student(s) unless it is easier for you to buckle them in the seat properly. If your child brings more than they can carry on their own, the staff member that is present can assist them.



Morning Arrival:

Students can be dropped off between 8:45am and 8:55am. Class begins promptly at 9:00am. Please wait for a Fiddlehead staff member to be present for your child's exit from the vehicle. We encourage Elementary students to exit their vehicle independently (alley side) on the passenger-driver side while carrying their own items. Fiddlehead staff members will assist Early Childhood students and Elementary students, on 27th street, with unbuckling and getting out of the car safely with their school belongings, while the driver signs them "in" for the day. You may assist your own child with unbuckling their car seat or booster, if needed. Please stay in your seat as you say your goodbyes to your child.

While Elementary students can walk in on their own through the gate, Early Childhood students will be walked in and escorted to their classroom. We encourage all students to carry their own items.

Afternoon Dismissal:

Our school day ends at 3:30pm. Pick up window is 3:30-3:40. At dismissal, please stay in your car if possible. Try to maintain communication with your child's teacher via Seesaw, email or calling the school. We are happy to talk with you, but please remember to save questions, concerns, and conversations for another time. Elementary students will walk to their car independently (alley side) while a Fiddlehead staff member is present. A Fiddlehead staff member will walk Early Childhood students and Elementary siblings to their vehicle off 27th. We ask that the person picking up buckles their own child into their car or booster seat and signs the time "out" on the attendance sheet. We understand you may need to get out of your vehicle to assist your child.

Tardiness:

- Please do your best to arrive before or by 8:55am. This allows students a 5-minute window to prepare for the day.
 - If you arrive *past* 8:55am, please watch your Elementary student walk through the gate and go to the classroom where the teacher will greet them. Early Childhood students will need be walked to their classroom and be signed in by the parent. Students will be marked tardy after 9am.
 - When school is dismissed, our staff start preparing for the next day and are not available to supervise children. If your child is here past 3:40pm, a \$1/minute fee will be added to your invoice.

If you need someone on your pick-up list to pick up your child

When you are unable to pick up your child and you send someone on your pick-up list to do so, please let us know. The names listed on the pick-up list will be allowed to pick up your child. As you make friends with other families throughout the year and make after-school play dates, you may consider adding those individuals to your list.

If you need someone to pick up your child who is NOT on your list

In the case of an emergency when neither you nor the people on your list can pick up your child, please call the school. We will **not** release them to that person without written consent from you. We require identification for anyone who picks up your child.

Lunch, Snacks, and Bringing Food to School Events

When bringing food to school, please keep in mind that organic, homemade/grown foods are strongly preferred and highly valued at Fiddlehead. If possible, snacks and lunches, as well as any other food brought to events, should follow these guidelines.

- Should not include chocolate, sugar, soda, juice, or cookies
- Sugary foods need to be saved for after school
- All families will be notified of food allergies of any student
- Candy and gum need to be kept at home
- Food will be eaten at a table or on a mat

If your child has allergies to food or other things, please let us know so we can make arrangements around what would be safest for them.

You may notice, especially during the first few weeks of school, that your child does not eat much lunch. Sometimes socializing is more exciting than eating. Rest assured, however, that your child does sit with their lunch for twenty to thirty minutes every day. If your child needs

more time, they are welcome to bring lunch out to eat during afternoon recess. If you notice that your child is coming home with a lunch box that looks untouched and you are concerned that they are not eating enough, please let us know.

Please emphasize that it is your child's responsibility to remember to bring a snack and lunch every day. However, if your child forgets their snack or lunch, we will call you at home or work and you may bring one. We ask that you place it on a hook (on the inside of the south gate, near the blue building). Please do this quietly, without coming inside and disrupting the class.

Sharing food during snack and lunch is not allowed, with the goal of eliminating trading food and the increased risk of exposing a student to an unknown allergen. We explain that parents or guardians packed that snack and lunch just for their child, and they expect their child to be the only one to eat that food. Since we cannot check all ingredients, Fiddlehead's policy is to allow each child to eat only the snack and lunch brought from their home.

Field Trips

Off-campus field trips for all students will be made with advanced notification via email in classroom updates and will include chaperones. Teachers and staff members will work directly with parent and caregiver chaperones interested in joining. We have a universal permission slip for Elementary parents on our Permission Form. By signing it, you give the school permission to take your Elementary child on any school field trips. Early Childhood parents will need to sign a permission slip before each EC field trip. You can contact the teachers at any time during a field trip through Seesaw or by calling the school phone. Please note our children are covered by school insurance wherever they are during school hours. There will be impromptu field trips involving walking to the nearby park off 28th Street (EC) or to Storvik Park (Elementary).

If you choose to chaperone on a field trip, please stay together with the group and follow the events of the day. We ask that chaperones silence their phones and remain present with the group as we enjoy our time together. Chaperones must remain in the presence of the lead teacher, assistant teacher or director. Parents, caregivers, or approved pick up people may take their *own* child to the bathroom. Teachers and Fiddlehead staff members will take students to the bathroom if a chaperone is not present.

We prefer and will do our best to have Fiddlehead staff members, hired professional drivers (bus) and only the child's parents/caregivers will be responsible for driving. If needed, volunteer field trip drivers are ONLY permitted to drive other students if appropriate school paperwork is completed along with written permission from parent of student(s) or if the parent shares a ride and is present. The school's insurance does not cover field trip volunteers and vehicle.

Please avoid buying any items or bringing items from home aside from necessary belongings. If we plan a special treat or activity together, we will indicate this ahead of time and have people sign up, if they are interested in contributing.

Visitors and Volunteers

Often in lieu of taking field trips, teachers strive to provide in class experiences that relate to children's interest and our topic of learning. Parents, caregivers, relatives, friends, and community members have wonderful knowledge and expertise in various subjects. Whether it relates to their career path, hobbies, or other special interests, we would love to schedule your visit.

Occasional visitors and volunteers are allowed in the classroom under the continuous oversight and supervision of the center director, lead teacher, or assistant teacher. Children will never be left unattended with a visitor or volunteer. Our parent volunteer coordinator will reach out to you to schedule volunteer opportunities and keep track of volunteer hours.

Special Days

Birthday Circles in Early Childhood

Birthdays are a meaningful time for children to celebrate their growth and tell their life story. We will celebrate children's birthdays during our circle time and will invite the child's parents or caregivers. You can prepare for this meaningful event by creating a photo timeline of your child's life, one photo for each year, and a small questionnaire to complete together and bring to school. Your child's teacher will coordinate your visit directly with you.

During the birthday circle, we will set up a globe and flashlight to represent the movement of the earth moving around the sun to make a year. After we sing each verse of the song, the parents and child can read the questionnaire, sharing special milestones and personality traits of their child.

At the end of the birthday circle, the child will turn off the flashlight and we will wish the child a happy birthday and give them well wishes for the year. We ask to refrain from bringing in any birthday food or treats to school. Please save this as something special to do with your child after school.

A special treat will be shared at the end of each month to celebrate monthly birthdays. Your teacher will be organizing this.

Birthday Circles in Lower Elementary

Birthdays are a special time for children in the classroom. Please contact the classroom teacher to organize their celebration in advance. We like to recognize the uniqueness of each child through a celebration at school. Your family is invited!

Children will create a timeline of life for their celebration. The day before the celebration, have your child pick out one picture for each year of their time on the planet as your child's teacher would like to assist them. You may wish to send color photocopies, rather than originals, to school. At school, your child will post the photos in chronological order to create a timeline. Or you may wish to make a poster of the timeline together at home. If your child is going to post these at school, please write a note or indicate on the back of the photo the approximate age or year the photo was taken. This will help your child arrange the photos in order. Please be assured that we will return any photos you send. If making a timeline with colored photos is difficult, a PowerPoint presentation might be a nice alternative. Family members who have created poster timelines with their children often save these and add a photo each year.

Kindly arrive a few minutes before 2:30 pm for your child's celebration. To start the celebration, we will light a candle, representing the sun. Next, you and your child will present the timeline of your child's life as the child holds the Earth in their hands and walks around the sun. (We will keep the timeline photos for the children to look at during the next week.) Each student has an

opportunity to give a compliment to the birthday child. The ceremony ends by blowing out the candle and singing our special Fiddlehead Birthday Song.

A special treat will be shared at the end of each month to celebrate monthly birthdays. Your teacher will be organizing this.

Birthday Circles in Upper Elementary

In upper elementary, birthday circles will look different. Students will be encouraged to run their own birthday circles. At this age, parents are welcome to attend, but students often find it easier to present to their peers on their own. If parents would like to attend, please communicate that to your child's teacher. Birthday circles will usually be held at the end of the day; however, we may move the time if our schedule requires.

In upper elementary, our birthday circles are seen as a chance to learn more about the student and their interests. Students will be invited to bring up to 10 objects that are important to them to share with the class. This may include, but is not limited to, pictures of their family, pictures of their pet(s), favorite stuffed animals, favorite books, collections, awards, and hobby/sports equipment. Please keep electronics at home. While unlikely, items do run the risk of getting damaged at school, so please help your child choose items with that in mind. All items need to fit in a brown paper bag, so they can be stored in their cubby.

A special treat will be shared at the end of each month to celebrate monthly birthdays. Your teacher will be organizing this.

Birthday Invitations

If you are hosting a birthday party, please mail the invitations. Anyone who has ever seen the sad face of a child who feels left out will understand the need for this policy. For this same reason, we ask children not to talk about their upcoming birthday parties at school unless everyone is invited. The children are usually heartwarming cooperative on this issue. If you are inviting everyone in the class, passing out invitations at school or in the parking lot is fine.

Cultural Celebrations

We use social studies units throughout the year to study cultures in depth. Looking at diverse cultures through the theme of common human needs promotes cultural understanding. In the Montessori curriculum, there is an emphasis on connecting the geography of the countries with their peoples' choices of food, shelter, clothing, and transportation.

At Fiddlehead, we value cultural and religious traditions. We encourage families to share their family heritages. We welcome your presentations of holidays, customs, stories, or foods typical of your family's culture or religion.

Respect for differences is a key part of the Montessori curriculum. Derogatory comments about race, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender expression, or sexual orientation are not tolerated. All families are honored. If negative comments do occur, we have a class meeting on the value of all people, how such comments might make others feel, how to restore harmony, and how we can handle an incident if it happens again. We may also contact the families of the children involved. Through personal interactions with others, stories, role playing, and recounting historical events, children learn to empathize with others different from themselves.

Holidays

There are as many perspectives on holidays in the Montessori classroom as there are holidays. At Fiddlehead, we learn how holidays bring joy to people around the globe as we celebrate the diversity of the families in our community and how learning about holidays fit into our current curriculum. We avoid focusing on our culture's many over-commercialized holidays and follow the childrens' lead on other occasions to explore. While we learn about a few holidays every year, we leave celebrating the customary ones to happen at home, as each family celebrates holidays in the ways that are right for them. We promote exposure to a variety of celebrations as we welcome families to visit the classroom and share traditions that are meaningful to them. As a result, we rarely celebrate traditional holidays at school. If you have questions about specific holiday observances or our curriculum, please ask the classroom teacher or director.

Early Childhood Classroom Supplies

Please purchase the corresponding supplies and bring them with you before or on the first day of school. It is helpful to **label items** with your child's name.

Fiddlehead Tote Bag

Tote bags can be purchased through our Fiddlehead store once it opens in August. Link for tote bag will be sent via email. **We ask that backpacks are left at home and ONLY brought to school if needed for after school activities.**

Photo of your family to be kept in your child's cubby (copy or duplicate, not original).

Reusable water bottle to be kept at school.

Sunscreen with sunscreen form (form to be completed at Parent Orientation/Meet and Greet).

1 zippered wet bag with the child's name on it for soiled clothing.

2 complete changes of clothes that adhere to dress code guidelines (please label items).

- 2 pairs of underwear and socks

Indoor shoes or slippers with closed toe, solid back, rubber tread with Velcro strap.

- See Kai Run Slippers
- Riptape Slippers
- Foamtreads Rocket Slippers
- Or other slippers similar to this example:



Rest time items for full time children:

- Blanket
- Small pillow
- Small, soft appropriate sleep object ("stuffy" or "lovie")

Potted Indoor Plant

To give our classroom beauty and the children some responsibility, please send a potted indoor plant with a saucer. Student name on the bottom of the pot is helpful. A “hardy” plant would be ideal! Plants will be returned in June.

Emergency Items

- Please place the following items inside a Ziploc bag labeled with your child’s name.
- 2 small, sealed bottles of water (8-12 oz.)
- 2 protein/power/granola bars
- 1 small package of moist wipes
- 1 small hand sanitizer
- 1 package of facial tissues in a travel-pack size (example Kleenex brand)
- 1 poncho (large garbage bag with 3 holes cut out – one for head and two for arms)
- 1 emergency blanket (available Fred Meyer or Target in the camping section)
- A small working flashlight which includes batteries

We will return any unused items at the end of the school year.

Please bring these items to school each day your child attends:

- Healthy lunch
- Sweater, jacket, coat, or other extra warm layer for outdoor play
- Close toed, water-resistant shoes for active outdoor play
- Outdoor rain suit “Muddy Buddy” zip up style
- Sun hat and sunscreen- during the warmer weather months
- Warm hat and mittens or gloves- during the cold weather months
- Replacements for clothing changes if sent home the day before

Elementary Classroom Supplies

Please purchase the corresponding supplies and bring them with you before or on the first day of school. It is helpful to label items with your child's name.

Lower and Upper Elementary Students (Grades 1-6) - Labeled with Name

- Pencil box or bag
- 8 1/2" by 11" plain paper sketch book
- 1 manual pencil sharpener

Fiddlehead Tote Bag

Tote bags can be purchased through our Fiddlehead store once it opens in August. Link for tote bag will be sent via email. We ask that backpacks are left at home and ONLY brought to school if needed for after school activities.

Lunch Box

Lunch box needs to be labeled with the child's name on it. No cartoon, movie, or TV characters please.

Potted Indoor Plant

To give our classroom beauty and the children some responsibility, please send a potted indoor plant with a saucer. Student name on the bottom of the pot is helpful. A "hardy" plant would be ideal! Plants will be returned in June.

Change of Clothes

Please send a change of clothes in a plastic gallon Ziploc bag labeled with your child's name on it.

- Complete change of school clothes – Shirt, Pants, Underwear, Socks
- Names on clothing, lunchboxes, sweatshirts, jackets, etc.

Indoor Shoes with Heel Closure or Strap

1 pair of plain colored indoor slip-on shoes with traction (plastic soles) and a heel strap labeled with name. Examples of styles are Crocs, Native brand, Old Navy, or Keen.

Emergency Items

Please place the following items inside a Ziploc bag labeled with your child's name.

- 2 small, sealed bottles of water (8-12 oz.)
- 2 protein/power/granola bars
- 1 small package of moist wipes
- 1 small hand sanitizer

- 1 package of facial tissues in a travel-pack size (example Kleenex brand)
- 1 poncho (large garbage bag with 3 holes cut out – one for head and two for arms)
- 1 emergency blanket (available Fred Meyer or Target in the camping section)
- A small working flashlight which includes batteries

We will return any unused items at the end of the school year.

Dress Code

We request you send your child to Fiddlehead in clothing and accessories (including lunch box, backpack, and school supplies) **free of media characters, commercial images, and logos**. We do not encourage or promote media play or discussion.

There is a simple, solid-color dress code at Fiddlehead Montessori.

- Mask (when applicable)
- Shirts: solid white or navy-blue collared, either long- or short-sleeved
- Bottoms: solid navy blue jeans (no holes or rips), pants, shorts, skirts, jumpers, leggings, athletic pants or sweats
- Dresses: solid navy blue with collar
- Sweaters/sweatshirts: solid white, heather gray, or navy short- or long-sleeved cardigans, pullovers, vests, or hoodies
- Tights: solid white, navy blue or heather gray
- Shoes: closed toe; no high heels

Every Wednesday and Friday are School Spirit Days. Children may choose to wear their Fiddlehead shirt. Our Fiddlehead Store is open in August (before school begins) and again in winter.

The last Wednesday of every month is free dress. Free dress is to follow our dress code guidelines - **free of media characters, commercial images, and logos**. We do not encourage or promote media play or discussion.

As your child outgrows these clothes, we encourage you to donate them to our clothes swap, where we collect an assortment of clothes for families to donate and take.

Each student removes their outdoor shoes at the doorway. As students enter, they replace their outside shoes with rubber-soled indoor shoes which are kept in their personal cubby. Adults spending time in the classroom should follow this guideline as well.

We suggest the following clothing items be left at school:

- Complete change of clothes
- Indoor slippers with rubber soles (Croc style shoe)
- Jacket or sweater

Items from Home and School

Lost and Found

Fiddlehead's Lost and Found bin is located near the entryway of each classroom. It is the responsibility of the student and parent to locate missing items. Please label all outerwear and personal items with your child's full name. Items not claimed by the end of the school year will be donated to a local charity.

Clothing and Shoes

Independence is the foundation of good self-esteem. For this reason, please send your children to school in clothing and shoes they can take off and put on by themselves. This means giving young children elastic waistbands and slip-on or velcro shoes, then moving on to clothing with snaps and zippers, and finally providing buttons and laced shoes for older children. Please practice tying shoelaces at home, and we will practice at school. When children can successfully tie their own shoes, they can wear them to school with a great feeling of accomplishment.

Allow young children to practice dressing and undressing themselves at home. We will provide dressing activities using frames and giving children ample time to get ready to transition in and outside.

Please send your child to school in sturdy, weather-appropriate, closed-toed shoes that are comfortable for walking and playing. Also, please send a sweater or jacket on all but the hottest days, as the weather changes quickly in our region. You are welcome to leave these items at school in your child's cubby.

We will be going outside every day. Therefore, if it is raining or forecast to rain, please have your child wear waterproof clothing and shoes. As the weather changes we may ask Early Childhood families to keep rain boots and a rain suit, Muddy Buddy, or other waterproof shell that can be worn over the child's body and is ideally left at school. This allows the child to be comfortable in their indoor clothing and have their outer layer dry between outside times.

In cold weather, we ask children to put on their jackets or sweatshirts before going outside. However, with all the running they do, they can quickly become overheated. We do not insist that your child wear their coat the entire recess. The exception is in rainy weather. We will not allow children to play outside without some second layer of clothing if it is raining. This is to prevent children from sitting in wet clothing for the remainder of the day.

If there is snow on the ground, we're going to want to play in it! Please remember to label gloves and hats ahead of time. A warm layer under a wind/water-protective shell is ideal.

In Montessori schools, we do a lot of work on the floor. We remove our shoes before entering to keep outdoor dirt and mud to a minimum. As stated above, please have your child bring a pair of rubber-soled indoor shoes. Indoor footwear will stay in their cubbies at school.

Toys from Home

Toys need to stay at home or in the car. Past experience has shown that the presence of toys from home disrupts the atmosphere of the classroom. Remind your child that school time is for schoolwork. Save that special toy in the car for a pick-up time treat. Our only exception to this rule is for EC rest time and share day. Electronic or battery-operated toys stay at home.

Money at School

Please do not send your child to school with money. If this is not possible, please give the money to a teacher for safekeeping.

Found Items

We have many small, appealing items on our shelves that may find their way home in your child's pockets. Often this is unintentional. If you find small items such as beads, cubes, play money, or unfamiliar objects, please call the school. The item may be a small but essential piece of very expensive Montessori equipment. Thank you!

Media and Electronics

Fiddlehead strives to use electronics as little as possible, and only for research. We ask teachers, family members, volunteers, and students to follow these guidelines when using electronics.

Cell phones: Please...

- Switch ringer to vibrate at school all times.
- Do not use a cell phone with children present. If making or accepting a call is urgent, please place the care of the children with another teacher or classroom helper before removing yourself from class.
- Take pictures only after asking permission from the classroom teacher. A parent or visitor may not use (or post) photos of children other than their own child. Please respect the privacy of our students and their families
- Always use discretion.

Share Day in Early Childhood

The early childhood students will get to participate in their share day on Fridays. A schedule will be sent out to highlight themes of the toys or special items to be brought from home. If we are studying Fall harvest, we may ask the children to bring in a small pumpkin or gourd. Occasionally, shared items will remain at school, such as a copy of a family picture shared on the first week of

school. A few times a year we will offer a “free share,” to give the children an opportunity to show something special of their choosing. Shared items should be labeled or placed into a bag that can be labeled with the child’s name. All shared items will be kept in a safe space by the teacher and taken out during our community circle time.

Please do not allow your child to bring in heirlooms or other prized items that would be missed if damaged. Parents are welcome to share such items that relate to our curriculum and unit studies by communicating with the teacher beforehand and scheduling a time to join us for our morning circle. This would be a great opportunity to come as a circle time volunteer or expert visitor.

Share Day in Lower Elementary

Lower elementary students will have the opportunity to share once a week. Share days will be every Thursday, alternating interested students. This is a time for your child to share a special book, object, project, or collection related to what we’re learning about in class. Dolls, toys, stuffed animals, movie or cartoon figures, and related merchandise are not appropriate objects to share. Better choices include craft projects, objects from nature, books on our current topic of study, artifacts from a country, photos from a trip, etc.

The exceptions to this policy are toys related to an area of study. For example, realistic toy dinosaurs would be appropriate to share while studying dinosaurs. Objects constructed from building materials, such as Legos, are also fine if the design shows creativity. If you have any doubts about appropriate sharing items, please contact a teacher the day before your child’s sharing day.

Each day, all children are welcome to orally share events or topics of interest to them at the closing circle. This is good speaking practice and often generates discussion among children who have had similar experiences.

Share Day in Upper Elementary

Students are encouraged to share important life events or things that may be relevant to what we are learning in school. In upper elementary, we do not have a specific time designated for sharing, but are happy to give time to children when they have something to share. The child should set up a sharing time with their teacher. If your child needs some encouragement, please email your child’s teacher, so they can approach the child about setting a day and time.

Topics for sharing might include:

Important life events, Getting a new pet, Participating in a competition, Completing an art piece

Relevant to school:

Finding a bird nest/bee hive, A book they loved, Artifacts from a trip they went on, A story they wrote at home

Lunch, Snacks, and Bringing Food to School

When bringing food to school, organic, homemade/grown foods are strongly preferred and highly valued at Fiddlehead. If possible, snacks and lunches, as well as any other food brought to events, should follow these guidelines.

If your child has allergies to food or other things, please let us know so we can make arrangements around what would be safest for them.

You may notice, especially during the first few weeks of school, that your child does not eat much lunch. Sometimes socializing is more exciting than eating. Rest assured, however, that your child does sit with their lunch for twenty to thirty minutes every day. If your child needs more time, they are welcome to bring lunch out to eat during afternoon recess. If you notice that your child is coming home with a lunch box that looks untouched and you are concerned that they are not eating enough, please let us know.

For children in the early childhood setting, this may be their first school experience. A quick “I love you” note or smiley face drawing can be an exciting surprise for children to see and feel connected to you in the middle of their day. You can also help children get more excited about their lunch by incorporating them in packing their lunch with you the night before and keeping it in the fridge. Give them a visual chart near the door to check that they have their lunch, jacket, shoes and any other school materials before leaving the house.

Early childhood students will be given healthy snack options that are provided by the school. Our snacks will always contain at least two food groups, offering a fruit or vegetable, a protein or healthy fat, or a whole grain carbohydrate option. We will always strive to include food that is minimally processed, organic, and seasonal. If your child has a food allergy, please indicate this in their file. If this is the case, your child may be provided a snack from home or provided with an alternative that meets the needs of the nutritional requirements for the snack of the day.

Elementary aged students will choose something from their lunch as a snack. Please pack enough food in your child’s lunch to accommodate two snacks and a full lunch.

Sharing food during snack and lunch is not allowed, with the goal of eliminating trading food and the increased risk of exposing a student to an unknown allergen. We explain that parents or guardians packed that snack and lunch just for their child, and they expect their child to be the only one to eat that food. Since we cannot check all ingredients, Fiddlehead’s policy is to allow each child to eat only the snack and lunch brought from their home.

- Snacks and lunches should not include chocolate, sugar, soda, juice, or cookies.
- Please save sugary foods for after school.
- All families will be notified of food allergies of any student.
- Candy and gum should not be brought to Fiddlehead.
- Food will be eaten at a table or designated eating area.

Financial Information

Income and Expenses

Fiddlehead Montessori is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit. Our school income comes from three sources: tuition, donations, and fundraising. Each winter, the Fiddlehead Board reviews the past budget and sets the new budget for the coming fiscal year (July 1 to June 30). The Board sets next year's tuition each year in February. Tuition is 95% of our total income.

Re-Enrollment (see also Enrollment policy)

Returning families pay an annual, non-refundable re-enrollment fee in order to reserve a spot for your child for the following year. This will allow us to calculate how many spots are available for families on our waiting list. Parents who sign an enrollment agreement in March will be financially responsible for the year's tuition.

Tuition and Fees (see also Tuition policy)

Tuition and additional fees will be invoiced and paid through our online platform – Tuio.

Families pay an enrollment or re-enrollment fee and annual fee (for extra-curricular and consumable materials) per child in August. These fees are non-refundable. Our current tuition and fees can be found on our website: www.TheFiddlehead.org. Tuition discounts are available for enrolled siblings at the elementary level and for paying the full year's tuition in September.

Tuition is due the first calendar day of each month and considered late on the 10th after 3:30pm. If paid after the 10th a \$25.00 late fee will be invoiced.

Monthly tuition cost does not represent the number of hours that your child is at school, but represents the costs of your child's education divided among 10 months. Therefore there are months (e.g. November, December, February, April and June) where children have breaks, but full tuition is due. Tuition is not discounted for school or family vacation, illnesses, or holidays.

Payment Options

Paid electronically through Tuio by use of your bank account, debit card or credit card. All credit card transactions are subject to a 3.5% increase.

If you are unable to pay online, please ensure that all payments include a memo with the name of your family and place tuition payment in the mailbox located in our locked mailbox on 27th street or send your check in the mail. Cash not accepted.

Withdrawing a Student (also see Student Withdrawal Policy)

Enrollment may be canceled by a parent or guardian with thirty days written notice. In addition to tuition for the current month, the family will be responsible for the payment of a transition fee equal to one month's tuition. If the teacher believes that addressing the student's needs will be detrimental to the class as a whole, or if the student poses a threat to others or themselves, the Director may request the family to withdraw the student immediately. In this case, tuition will be refunded only for days not attended, with no fee.

Donations

Fiddlehead Montessori School is a state and federal non-profit organization. This means that any profits are channeled back into the school. Any time you make a donation to Fiddlehead, you can request a receipt and deduct this amount on your taxes. Our non-profit tax number, as granted under section 501 (c) (3) of the federal tax code, is 81-3371428. The school can write a receipt or letter of acknowledgement for your tax records.

As a non-profit organization, we are eligible for grants and matching funds from employers with these types of programs. Please let us know if your employer has such a program when you make a donation or contribute financially to a fundraiser.

Fundraising

The entire cost of teaching your children cannot be met through tuition alone. Our need for fundraising is generated by a \$15,000 deficit between our revenue and expenses. Historically, our board has voted to stand behind their value to keep tuition costs low, which means that there is a need for fundraising. The question for years to come is whether to make tuition more accurately reflect our expenses (which would increase tuition and decrease the need for annual fundraising) or increase our fundraising efforts.

We have the following annual fundraisers and your volunteer time for these events is much appreciated:

Fall Pledge Drive

Winter Wreaths

Spring Jog-a-thon

Annual giving and/or fundraising are necessary to maintain the high standards of Fiddlehead Montessori and 100% participation is expected. While tuition covers much of the yearly operating budget, your annual giving contributions, whether through the Fall Pledge Drive or through your donations of time or money with fundraisers, support Fiddlehead Montessori School's scholarship fund and general operating budget not covered by tuition. Your taxdeductible gift immediately benefits each student and past fundraising has allowed us to keep our wilderness and art programs, update our front play yard, purchase new books for our

classroom libraries, and support our ongoing scholarship program. Please remember to double check whether your employer matches donations. Your monetary contributions to any fundraising event are tax deductible.

Scholarship Opportunities

Fiddlehead Montessori has an annual goal of \$15,000 towards our scholarship program, with the hope we can raise more and offer assistance to more families. A request for an Scholarship Application Form can be indicated on your Student Application and will be emailed to interested families in April. The awarded families will be notified in May. If you are awarded a scholarship, in exchange, we ask that you help with our fundraising program. We respect the privacy of all applicants and keep all applications confidential.

Family Involvement

Fiddlehead Montessori seeks to construct a generous and supportive parent community. Volunteering at Fiddlehead is an important component in building these types of relationships.

Parent Volunteer Hours

Fiddlehead Montessori seeks to provide a partnership between home and school as a means of creating optimal opportunities for developing each individual's talents, skills, and resources. Families are asked to commit 10 hours of volunteer time. Volunteering ensures the fullest benefits of a Montessori education for your child and provides a tangible means for each family to contribute to that goal.

Parent Volunteer Jobs

Parent participation is encouraged at Fiddlehead and fosters a feeling of community. You, the parent, get to meet your child's friends and see the classroom in action. The following are several opportunities for parents (or grandparents!) to be involved.

Monthly Opportunities

Reading Volunteers

Helping children with reading in the afternoon after recess and lunch. If you have a spare half hour once a week in the afternoon and would like to volunteer, please let us know.

Art Class Volunteers

Are you curious about our art classes? Come and see our art curriculum firsthand. Come once a week for 2 hours to help prepare the classroom before and tidy up the classroom after art class. We will announce specific days and times at the beginning of the school year.

Spelling Volunteers – Lower and Upper Elementary ONLY

In order to maintain an individualized spelling program, we could use parent's help each Thursday or Friday morning to give spelling tests. This job involves administering and correcting the spelling and recording each child's number correct for the teacher and on the worklist.

Math Facts Volunteer - Lower Elementary ONLY

Children always need extra practice at school and at home to memorize math facts. As a math facts volunteer, you use flashcards, games, and worksheets to help students with memorizing their addition, subtraction, and multiplication facts.

Other Volunteer Opportunities

Yearbook Volunteer

This person would start in the spring uploading pictures and designing our yearbook.

Handyperson

To help with the small jobs that routinely pop up at the school.

Family Traditions and Talents

The Montessori curriculum supports multiculturalism and diversity. If you have a religious holiday, family tradition, ethnic food, or project you'd like to share with the children, we would love to have you come in! Similarly, if you have a special hobby or talent you'd like to share, let us know. In the past, parents have shared crafts, cooking, knitting, construction with shop tools, amateur astronomy, outdoor games, and fitness activities. Children this age especially benefit from a hands-on approach. You might invite them to handle objects used in the hobby or invite them to do a project related to your presentation. Please arrange your visit at least a week in advance with the teachers.

Wilderness Friday Volunteers

Come on out and enjoy a day in the woods with our students. Parent volunteers will need to commit between 3-6 hours at a time. Wilderness classes are held monthly and we will be looking for up to two parent volunteers per session. Your job will be to follow the lead teacher's directions and be an extra pair of hands and eyes where needed.

Field Trip Volunteers

We also need drivers for our field trips. Transportation to and from field trips may include: teacher drivers, Skagit Transit Authority buses, or walking. We always attempt to walk or use public transportation if at all possible. We take into consideration the routes and schedules when we plan field trips and work diligently to avoid disrupting and inconveniencing the Fiddlehead parents' busy schedules. We use parent drivers as a last resort after evaluating and exhausting all other options. When we take public transportation or walk, we still need extra adults for supervision. If you would like to drive on a field trip, please let us know. You must have a seat belt for each child. School policy requires families to provide booster seats or car seats for children under 4' 9". You must also furnish the school with a copy of your driver's license and current car insurance, required by our insurance company.

Classroom Observation

We welcome you to visit your child's classroom. In January/February, we invite you to come into the classroom to observe before parent-teacher conferences. At Fiddlehead, we feel that observation is an opportunity for you to get a glimpse of what life is like in a Montessori classroom. Please see the school calendar for specific dates. Family members are also welcome to come in and observe by appointment, starting in October. In order to find out more about your child's day, we ask that you observe the following procedure.

When you enter the classroom, you will be directed to an adult-sized chair. When you sit down, children may come up to you. Please try not to engage them in conversation. A polite "Hello" and a direct response as to who you are is fine; then quietly ask the child to return to work. The children understand that observers come to watch them working and they will understand your response in that context. Please do not move around the classroom.

Don't be surprised if your child doesn't respond to having you there in the way that you might expect. Children sometimes respond differently to having their parents in the classroom than they do in the normal course of the school day or at home.

The teacher may not be able to take time from their classroom duties to converse with you during or immediately after your observation. If questions occur to you while you are watching, please write them down on the paper provided. We will be glad to answer these questions by telephone or in-person at conferences.

Observations are usually undertaken for half an hour. When you have finished your observation, please exit the classroom quietly and leave your question sheet on your chair if you wish to discuss any areas of the classroom environment or the activities you observed your own child undertaking.

Some hints on observing:

Visual Perspective: There is more to the Montessori classroom than the activities of one particular child. Naturally, the first tendency of the parent is to focus and follow their own child's activities. Try to view both the entire classroom, and a focus on a particular child.

Auditory Perspective: Listen to the noise level as it rises and falls. Try to see which groups or individual children are generating the sound. You will hear the normal hum of children working together; the quiet of concentration and at times there may be a special peak of excitement of discovery. See if you can differentiate.

Learning: Notice that children learn in different ways. With some types of materials you will see groups of children working cooperatively, and with others you will find an individual child working alone intensely. Still other children are walking through the classroom seemingly not engaged in any direct activity. Very often, this last type of child is engaged in actively absorbing information through observation of the children and the materials in the classroom. It will help if you alternate your focus on these three learning patterns.

Child-child Interaction: Listen to the way in which children talk to each other. Listen for the level of respect as well as for the normal pushes and pulls of childhood. Observers may find it interesting to see the help children provide each other.

Teacher-child Interaction: Notice the way in which a teacher corrects a child, and look at the instances when they do not. Listen to the teacher's tone of voice with the child. The teacher (or guide) is a facilitator of the child's autonomous learning process. They prepare the environment, give the child the tools to utilize the materials, and then do whatever else is necessary to help the child interact with the environment without assistance. Sometimes this involves direct encouragement, at other times indirect appreciation, and even judicious absence. There is a basic respect for each individual child's particular style of learning in the Montessori classroom. See if you can pick this up.

Sociability: Watch the ways in which the children offer assistance to one another – with the materials and with everyday tasks – and the ways that they are directly sociable with one another. There are always pockets of social activity occurring in any Montessori classroom as the child's natural desire to form relationships and be part of an ongoing community is ever present.

Observe the independence of the children as they do for themselves in the classroom environment. Watch as a child chooses a piece of work, takes it from the shelf, completes the work, and returns it to its place so that the next child can use it.

The generation of autonomy is a function of the prepared environment of the Montessori classroom. What this means is that the child will have available all needed materials, in good working order, to complete a task that has usually been self-chosen. The structure of Montessori provides the child with as much time as they need to complete the task to their satisfaction, and success is the primary reward. As you look around the classroom, notice the materials, how attractive they are in placement, color, cleanliness, quality, etc. The child is attracted to learning in this environment.

We understand that you will not be able to sort out and see all the dimensions of the classroom that are outlined above in the time you have with us. We know that learning how to “read” the Montessori classroom is difficult at first, but we know that with each successive observation your skills will become increasingly honed. We look forward to your next visit to the classroom and are eager to share with you the excitement that we feel in being a part of your child's growing years.

Health and Safety

COVID/Flu Policy

Our up-to-date and complete COVID-19 Safety Policy and Procedures are on our website at www.thefiddlehead.org/forms

Communicable Disease

To ensure a safe environment for our children and families, if your child has been exposed to a communicable disease, please keep him/her/them at home at the first sign of any illness. Our school community asks you to immediately inform the Director of any virus or disease you or your child may have encountered. Fiddlehead will do its best to ensure confidentiality in this situation.

Emergencies

Fiddlehead Montessori has an Emergency Handbook available to review for anyone who would like to learn more about our classroom and staff procedures in emergency situations.

Emergency Items

We ask that families bring the emergency items listed in the supply list, in September, so that we can better care for your children for up to 24-48 hours in the event of any major disaster.

Safety Drills

We practice three kinds of safety drills: earthquake, fire, and lockdown. We also address personal and physical safety, safety at home, and calling 911 in emergencies.

School Closures/Delays

You and your child's safety is our highest priority. The decision about whether your child will attend school always rests in your hands. We follow the Anacortes Public School District's decision to close school in the case of weather. They post their decision to close school on their website: <http://asd103.org/>. We will send a notification to all families by 6:30am to report a school closure. When Anacortes Public Schools have a delayed start due to severe weather, as long as the roads are clear and safe to drive, Fiddlehead will start on time and have a regularly scheduled day.

- We close school if we believe that the weather presents considerable safety challenges for the majority of our families. We determine this by getting road conditions from different locations around Anacortes and Skagit County.

- We close school if there is enough snow/ice at school to make it dangerous for people to drive, drop off, and/or walk to school.
- We close school if the weather has caused power outages for a period of time that prevents us from heating our school buildings.
- We close school if there are predictions of snowfall during the day that might pose a danger for pickup.
- We close school if there are 3 or more COVID cases in one classroom or if a teacher tested positive and a substitute is not available.

In case of a power outage, we have flashlights and lots of windows for natural light. If loss of electricity prevents us from keeping your children warm, or if snow falls so rapidly during the school day that we suspect cars will not be able to get to school by dismissal time, school will be closed early. Staff will stay with students until each one is picked up. We will use the emergency contact list to call people to pick up children if needed. Please make sure your emergency contacts sheet is up to date.

Student Illnesses

A fever, runny nose, diarrhea, vomiting, coughing, loss of smell, shortness of breath, muscle pain, sore throat, or skipped meals are all indications that a child is sick and needs to stay home. Kindly call or email us to report an absence and illness. If your child's fever or symptoms last 12 hours or longer, we suggest that they take a COVID antigen test. **Your child can return to school once they have been fever and symptom-free (without the use of fever-reducing medication) for 24 hours.** This will prevent the spread of germs to other children and staff. If your child becomes sick at school and needs to go home, we will first attempt to contact parents or guardians at the phone numbers that you have provided in your student information packet. If there is no answer, we will call the emergency contacts.

If your child contracts Covid, chicken pox, lice, H1N1 influenza, pink eye, strep throat, measles, or any other communicable disease, please call the school so we can alert other families. In case of illnesses, we will send your child home and send a confidential email alerting everyone in the class. If your child has lice, please comb out nits daily before school for two weeks. The school may send your child home if more nits are identified, or may ask for a doctor's note stating your child is free from nits and lice.

We have all children wash their hands with soap before lunch and snack, as well as sanitize throughout the day and between lessons. We do not have anti-bacterial soap at school, as it irritates many young children's skin. According to the health department, antibacterial soap may contribute to increased resistance to antibacterial drugs. If you would like to send a small bottle of hand sanitizer with your child's lunch, you are welcome to do so. Please explain to your child how to use it and that we will still ask your child to wash his/her/their hands.

Medications

If your child needs to take any prescription or over the counter medication at school, please provide us with your child's medication *in its original container* and fill out the required paperwork. The State of Washington requires all schools to have this information on file before we can administer medication. Please provide completed forms and the medication so it can be properly administered. Find the two-page document on our website at www.TheFiddlehead.org

Bulk Medication in Early Childhood

As a licensed childcare facility, skin protecting products including sunscreen and hand sanitizer, are treated like medications. Parents of an Early Childhood student will need to sign two separate forms so their child can have sunscreen and hand sanitizer administered. We will send parents the brand name and ingredients list of the products to ensure it is safe for the individual child and adheres to the families personal lifestyle choices.

If your child needs to use another type of sunscreen or hand sanitizer, please fill out an individual medication form. Children in the early childhood class may self-administer hand sanitizer or sunscreen, but will need to have their sunscreen and hand sanitizer kept in the locked area designated for medication in the classroom. We may also keep smaller sizes of hand sanitizer stored in the go-bag that is kept with the teacher so the children cannot access it unattended.

Student Accidents

The school staff strive to maintain a safe environment for students, families, and staff. If you see anything unsafe, please report it immediately to a staff member for correction.

The school has purchased student accident insurance. Students are covered during school hours, on or off campus during field trips, while engaged in school activities, and while traveling to and from school during field trips. The school has additional information on insurance available upon request.

Traumatic Experiences

Please let us know if your child experiences trauma, such as the death of a family member, relative, friend, or beloved pet. Separation, divorce, or the move of a live-in partner, friend, or relative can be traumatic for children as well. Exposure to physical or sexual abuse and other violent acts can create strong reactions in children.

Children who have undergone traumatic experiences may act in unexpected ways. The parents or guardians, teachers, and child can put together a plan for when the child feels overwhelmed at school. We will handle any behavior issues differently if we know the child has experienced emotional or physical trauma. Therefore, communication with the school is very important in these circumstances.

Documented Special Needs & Suspected Learning Differences

During a child's education, evidence of possible learning differences or special needs may arise. The child's teacher will meet with the parents to determine a course of action. Actions might include special accommodations at school and at home, testing to determine how to address the child's needs, in-class or at-home tutoring, and/or pull-out classes with special education at the local public school. If families are not willing to pursue actions recommended by the Director, the family may be asked to find another school for the child.

None of the teachers at Fiddlehead are trained as special education teachers and cannot fully address the needs of all special needs students, beyond simple accommodations. Children deserve to know why they are not able to do the things other children do with ease. Without a reason, children often begin to label themselves negatively. Learning how the brain works and what the positive attributes of a particular learning disability or difference is empowers children to learn work arounds, celebrate their brains, and assist teachers in adjusting work to fit each particular diagnosis.

Children with mild physical, mental, or educational difficulties are considered for admission and with both the administrator's and teacher's approval.

Consideration will be given to:

1. The child's probable success in a Montessori classroom
2. The teacher's ability and training to provide accommodations suited to the needs of the child
3. The amount of time teachers need to spend with the child for them to be successful

Reasonable accommodations will be made, provided that no changes to the overall program are required and that the child does not pose a risk to themselves or others. A recent diagnostic assessment by qualified professionals which identifies the child's needs within a mainstream environment is required. Periodic assessment may also be required during the school year and prior to re-enrollment.

If the program is not meeting the needs of the child, the teacher, the program, or the other students in the classroom, the Director may require parents to find additional resources or support as a condition of the child's continuing attendance. If need be, the school reserves the right to ask the family to find another school that better meets the needs of the child and will often make recommendations for their placement. See the section under enrollment and reenrollment for additional information.

In Closing...

We hope to make your years here at Fiddlehead Montessori educational and joyful. If you have any remaining questions or concerns at any time of the year, please call or talk in person with the teachers. Together we will make school an exciting, rich experience for our children and develop a life-long passion for learning in them.

Useful Information

Our website: www.TheFiddlehead.org

School phone: (360) 588-4699

General email: fiddleheadmontessori@gmail.com

Heidi's email: heidi@thefiddlehead.org

School Admin's email: admin@thefiddlehead.org

Fiddlehead Board email: board@thefiddlehead.org