

Seasons Path

An In the World Program



PARENT HANDBOOK
2022-2023

Welcome to a New Year of Seasons!

To those of you who are new, we extend a warm and heartfelt welcome! To those of you returning, welcome back! We feel that Seasons is a special place for all of us and we are looking forward to working with you. We want to invite you to take some time to read this handbook completely and orient yourself to the many details involved in making Seasons Path the community that it is. In the interest of clarity and smooth operation, we have set forth many basic policies that we think you will find easy to understand. By carefully reading this handbook, you will have a more complete understanding of our needs and expectations, which will enable us to better meet your needs. We appreciate your attention to the information contained in these pages and are excited to begin another beautiful year dancing through the seasons with you. Blessings to all.

~Annie and Erin



Communication



It won't be long before you notice the busy buzz of our joyful days and we want to take a moment to introduce you to the systems we have set up to facilitate transition times and communication between us all.

Your Child's Status If you have something you need to communicate to the mentors regarding your child's day, please take a moment during drop-off to pass the information on. Examples of important information to share might be a change in routine, a different person picking up your child, etc.

A Concern or Question If you have any concerns or questions that do not need immediate attention, please text Erin or Annie. We will respond as soon as possible.

Changes At Home If something has occurred at home that you feel will affect your child, drop-off is the best time for a quick check-in with the program mentor. We ask that you remain mindful of the mentors' need to be attentive to all parents and children present.

Please keep these conversations brief and plan for them by arriving well before your drop off time. If you would like to meet at length with your child's mentors, an appointment can be arranged. Parent/Lead Mentor conferences are also scheduled by the staff twice a year.

Contacting Annie or Erin the best way to reach Annie and Erin is via phone:

Annie 805-252-9075. Erin 805-448-2051.

Notes for Annie or Erin as well as tuition checks need to be given to the staff person at drop off or pick up, to put in our files. Please be patient when sending email messages!

Attendance Messages Please text Annie or Erin as soon as you know if your child will not be attending. This way we can be sure to let families who need to add a day know that their child can take your place.

GENERAL POLICIES



Program Hours

Seasons offers the following schedules. Upon enrollment, we will come to an agreement on a regular schedule that best meets your needs. However, should you need to make any changes, either temporarily or permanently, the following hours are available: **9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. or 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Monday- Friday**

Schedule Changes

If you desire to change your schedule during the year, please send an email or text to Annie or Erin. Within a day or two you will get a reply with approval or denial, depending on available space. If you receive a denial, you may request to be placed on a waitlist in the case that a space opens up. Please make note that tuition will change with schedule changes. *Unfortunately, verbal schedule change agreements can be unclear or forgotten.* Using text or email helps ensure clarity.

Overtime Sometimes, due to absences, we have extra space in our program. In the event that you add an extra day, or part of a day, we ask that you keep track of this time and add to the next month's tuition. Overtime rates are \$15 per hour.

Late Pick-Up *Because of our staff's schedules, it is very important that all parents arrive on time to pick up their children. All our staff have obligations beyond school hours.* In the event that you are late to pick up your child, you will be assessed a late fee. This fee is payable directly to the mentor present and due immediately. You have a five-minute grace period before your late fee will be charged. Late fees are: **\$5.00 per minute and can be paid by Venmo.** We ask for your special understanding in the payment of late fees.

Tuition Payment

Tuition payments are due by the 25th day of every month prior to service. If your tuition payment is not received by the 25th school day of the month prior to service, you will be assessed a \$75 late fee.

Sick Days & Vacation

*This year is much more flexible due to Covid. We will all need to be able to give each other grace as we walk through this novel illness. Please see our Covid Policy. * Because of the economic reality of running our program, we must enforce a strict policy regarding time missed due to illness and vacation. We cannot offer refunds for time missed. In the event of an emergency, special arrangements may be made at the discretion of Seasons staff.

Trial Period

There is a two-week trial period upon enrollment. If during this time, for any reason, you (or we) determine that the needs of the child and/or the program are not being met, continuation of care may be cancelled, and the remaining tuition refunded. Fees paid will not be refunded.

Cancellation of Enrollment

All enrollees are enrolled for the entire 12-month school year. If there is a special circumstance such as illness or unemployment that results in a desire to relinquish your

child's space at Seasons Path, it is imperative that you speak with Erin or Annie at the earliest opportunity. It may be necessary for you to pay the remainder of the tuition due for the school year. Seasons Path is often unable to replace a child mid-year because our year is planned, and our rhythm set. At Seasons sole discretion, replacements may be found by our staff on a case-by-case basis.

Holidays & Tuition Payments

We acknowledge several holidays each year, as well as staff days. Seasons will be closed on these days. Please see the complete calendar on our website. Tuition will remain the same every month of the twelve-month program regardless of the number of days school is open. Please see our Covid policy for contingencies. **This includes December and April, which are half-months. Please note there is a 4% cost of living increase in tuition each year.**

Monthly/Annual Rates '22- '23

5 Day ½ day \$1,092/\$13,109, ¾ day \$1,606/\$19,274

4 Day ½ day \$909/\$10,902, ¾ day \$1,369/\$16,418

3 Day ½ day \$725/\$8,696, ¾ day \$1,092/ \$13,109

2 Day. ½ day \$557/\$6,684, ¾ day \$822/ \$9,864

Insurance and Supplies fee \$450 for the school year. Optional schedules are available upon request and availability at a rate of \$15 per hour.

*10% Discount for the year paid in full by September tuition due August 25th.

There is a \$75 late fee for tuition paid after the 25th of the month!

Please make checks payable to: Seasons

SHOULD I KEEP HIM/HER HOME TODAY?



To help stop the spread of illness, all children who have symptoms of illness need to be kept at home. It is often difficult, however, to determine if your child is sick or perhaps just a bit tired, growing or out of sorts. We hope that the following guidelines will help you to determine whether to keep your child home.

Typical Symptoms of Contagious Illness

These symptoms are not always contagious, but we do ask you to be careful if any are present.

- Fever
- Runny nose with cloudy, yellow, or green mucus - or - excessive/constant running nose of any kind
- Coughing/sneezing
- Congestion
- Excessive crankiness/irritability
- Mysterious rashes
- Diarrhea

If your child has any of the above symptoms, he or she needs to be kept home for at least 24 hours for observation. If you think your child may be contagious, please be sure they stay home for a full 24 hours **after** the symptoms disappear.

Due to Covid, we must ask that parents are particularly vigilant and cautious. Please check your child's temperature before coming to school. If a family member has a fever, please keep your child home.



There are some situations where it is best that your child stays home when he or she may not be sick. The basic guideline for this is to keep your child home any time he or she has had serious emotional distress or is out of sorts and you don't know why. Often a day at home is needed after an extended vacation to give the child a chance to center before returning to Seasons.

It is crucial that one parent, or a friend/relative is available AT ALL TIMES to pick up your child in the event that he or she becomes ill at school. If you are going to be at a different phone number than usual, or if you will be unreachable that day, please be sure to leave us an alternate number or person to contact.

Parents are expected to pick up their child within 30 minutes of receiving a call that the staff have determined that your child needs to go home sick. Not adhering to this policy not only results in the other children at school not having adequate staff to run the programs and activities that are scheduled for that day, but can also result in a termination of care if it becomes an issue.

Additionally, when children are vaccinated, Seasons policy is that the children stay home and are monitored for 48 hours to go through any common adverse effects. Some symptoms can include fever, nausea, discomfort, and fatigue which leave a child needing extra family love. We recommend scheduling vaccinations on a Friday afternoon so that your child can get the comfort and support that they may need over the weekend without having to miss any school.

Covid policy effective until further notice:

During these times of uncertainty, we will experience heightened concern about protecting ourselves and those we love most- our children. Several articles have been released which illustrate the way in which outdoor programs naturally allow for the best possible educational experience in a group setting without compromising safety. Abundant space, fresh air and sunshine, small class sizes, and limited materials— all hallmarks of a forest school environment— minimize the risks of transmission and exist without any modification to a typical day.

(Read [here](#) and [here](#) for some input on the idea.)

Here are some other ways we will be responding to the pandemic:

- Teacher Responsibilities
 - Teachers will practice social distancing with adults at drop off and pick up. ▪ Teachers will take their temperature daily before beginning care.
 - Teachers will be mindful in planning outdoor activities with a focus on those which naturally lend themselves to social distancing.

- Children will be sent home without exception if they exhibit any of the following: persistent cough, fatigue, or fever.
- Parent Responsibilities
 - Parents will agree to our sick policy as outlined in our parent handbook. Families will be asked to report if anyone in their household has had a fever in the last 24 hours and to keep their child home, if so. Fever policy is always in place for children actively in our care but will extend to family members for the foreseeable future.
 - Parents are asked to socially distance during drop off and pick up.
- School Responsibilities
 - Hand washing will be increased and practiced before all activities involving shared materials.
 - Our travel potty will be sanitized between uses.
 - Our community snack program is suspended until further notice. Families will need to provide a lunch and personal water bottle daily. Please continue to adhere to our food policy during this time.
 - Individual lunches will remain in backpacks and children will carry their own packs as often as possible to minimize cross contamination.
 - Tours and play dates during school hours will be suspended until further notice .
- Additional Info
 - The majority of learning children are doing in their early year's centers around socio-emotional development with most of that learning occurring through nonverbal communication. While we understand the extra level of safety that comes from wearing masks, we believe the important learning that comes from visualizing the faces and expressions of teachers and peers outweighs the safety benefits of masks. Therefore, we will not ever require children or staff to wear masks. If it is city/ state mandated to do so, we will close.
 - While we will create many invitations for socially distanced play, we will not admonish children for holding hands, touching, comforting one another, or playing in close contact. Children are coming through a time of isolation and stress and physical touch is essential for their comfort and well-being.
 - Children will be physically comforted by staff when appropriate.
 - In the event that Californians are asked to shelter-in-place during a scheduled session, tuition will be applied to the next re-opening date.

We will continue to monitor information released by the government and the state of California and adapt our protocols as necessary. Our goal as always, is a safe community.



DAILY RHYTHMS



Our day is full of games, art, learning and fun! Children are given the time to choose, to create, to imagine, to rest, to focus and to be free. We enjoy many activities during the day, most of which are messy, so we ask that children come to Seasons in washable, changeable clothing. Our rhythms are guided by observing the children and we keep to these rhythms by observing the clock. We ask that you help us by respecting our schedule and arriving on time for drop off and pick up. This will help us to keep our sweet rhythm uninterrupted. Please let the staff know no later than 7:15am if your child will not be attending Seasons, as we need to prepare for the correct number of carseats and boosters each day.

Morning Drop Off

Timeliness is extremely important to our morning schedule. We request that the children arrive no later than 9:30am, as we will be leaving on our daily adventure as quickly as possible. During the first part of the year, drop off and pick up times will be staggered 8:30-9:00 drop off, 12:30-1:00 pick up. If you are running late, please contact the staff so that you can plan to meet us later in the day.

Parent volunteer staff will be welcome in the rhythm of our day as the Covid situation eases. It's wonderful to let your child share their community and their experiences with you and it's nice for you to be able to get a peek into their day. Please be aware that your child may have more feelings to express during a parent volunteer staff day and that the process we work through is valuable to the family as a whole.



FOOD



Until further notice, children will need a personal lunch and water bottle. we will return to community snack as our community feels safe. Please be mindful of the ingredient requirements.

Children are required to bring a water bottle, and a share snack daily. Please provide enough to last the day, we are moving our bodies and working hard! Please pack enough to share for the day.

Ingredient Requirements

- **No Added Sugar** (look for fruit juice sweetened items)
- **No Artificial Colors, Sweeteners, Flavors**
- Organic Whenever Possible**
- Non-GMO**
- **NO wheat**

It is helpful to carefully read labels. If you do bring in items that are determined to be not what we prefer to use (i.e., contains sugar, corn syrup, etc.), we will just ask you to return it for another item. Thank you for your careful lunch selection. We have some favorite snack recipes at www.Seasonspath.org

Share snack ideas

<u>Bread / Crackers</u>	<u>Fruit / Veggies</u>	<u>Protein</u>
Muffins	Anything In Season	Lentils
Corn Tortillas	Fruit Sauces	Cheese
Pasta	Artichokes	Beans
Rice Treats	Peas in the Pod	Tofu
	Corn on the Cob	Nut Butters

We also encourage reusable containers such as stainless steel, metal, and glass when metal is not available rather than plastic bags. This helps us keep our trash down and helps reduce the amount of packaging that gets purchased. And, as always, label your containers, please!



Family Potlucks

We have potlucks four times during the year. Potlucks are short and sweet, from 12:00-1:00pm. Please see the calendar for our schedule.

Clothing



Weather We need to be mindful of freedom of movement while also enjoying warmth in our outdoor classroom. For this purpose, sending your child with layered clothing. We can then add or subtract as weather permits. Please bring a wet bag for messy clothes so that the rest of the things in the pack stay (relatively) clean.

Rainy Days Snowsuits are the Best rainy-day clothes! These are essential as we will undoubtedly be playing in the rain. Please be sure that on rainy days your child has rainproof shoes and a snowsuit as well as a change of clothes as we spend most of our time outdoors. Our rainy-day policy is as follows: **We play in the rain.** Rainy days require lots of towels and extra clothes.

-REMINDER-Always dress your child in layers for the weather.

Diapers

While we encourage cloth diapers, paper diapers are perfectly acceptable. If you do use cloth, please bring in extra pins or wraps (whatever accessories are needed) as well as a wet bag for dirty diapers.

Please make sure that your child always has diapers and wipes available in their pack.



Parent/Community Education

Seasons Certification

Seasons Path trains and certifies teachers and parents in the Seasons Philosophy. Program runs September through July every year. Training includes curriculum, practical application, observations and critiquing, private support, and career support upon completion. Some teachers want to get certified to take this philosophy into preschool centers, others are looking to open their own programs using the Seasons Philosophy and some are parents who want to have a deeper education in how to raise healthy children. Whatever the reason, we are grateful for our ability to offer this resource to the public.

Non-Violent, Non-Commercial Environment

Our unique Seasons Path environment of non-violent communication and unhindered imagination is easily influenced by outside forces. Some of the things that can negatively affect our program include television and marketing, cell phone games and apps, tablets with games and apps, laptops, etc. It is hard to miss all the children's items that are actually advertisements for certain apps, programs or movies – they are everywhere! We see them on lunch boxes, clothing, shoes, purses, backpacks, books and toys. In order to keep our school media free, historically we have asked families to not bring those items to school. This year we are taking a different approach: while we are willing to have these items brought to school, we now have an agreement with the children to not bring these IDEAS or SHOWS to our play. Our request to the children is they use their own imagination in our play during school hours. The images are everywhere, and our work is evolving to where we will chose to leave those ideas out of school. Additionally, we do not allow the use of violent toys or games. We strongly believe that guns specifically are weapons of destruction and killing, not appropriate playthings. So, we encourage you to monitor and limit the use of violent toys at your home as an extension of your child's Seasons Path experience.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Emergencies

In case of an emergency, you may need to reach us during the day. Due to the nature of our busy day, we usually don't answer the phone. The best way to reach us is by text. However, we will make every effort to get to it if you call back repeatedly. As soon as the phone transfers to voicemail, hang right up and call us back. That will signal us that there is an emergency. *Please refrain from using this signal unless there is a true emergency.* Evacuation and survival in the event of a major disaster will be made possible with your help. The children's EMERGENCY PREPPED BACKPACKS will be very important. Please be sure to include the Information Sheet in the diaper bag at all times (a Ziploc bag works well).

Emergency Prepared Backpack

In the event of an emergency, Seasons has all the supplies needed for food, shelter and first-aid. What we don't provide is personal safety items for the children, such as a note from Mommy or Daddy to explain that she or he will be there as soon as possible or to relay a special story, or specific emergency information that would be needed during a disaster. Therefore, it is required that every child's backpack doubles as a special emergency pack, child sized and fully equipped. *Children without packs will not be allowed to attend Seasons. All items must be in plastic bags that zip closed (i.e., Ziplock Bag or wet bag).*

Emergency Backpacks Must Include:

Complete change of clothing, warm and cool weather provided for. ESPECIALLY SHOES, SOCKS (AND UNDERWEAR IF POTTY TRAINED)

- A picture of your family (parents/siblings)
- A letter, to be read to your child
- Emergency Evacuation Information Sheet
- Three granola or protein bars
- Water bottle
- Optional comfort item, such as a small stuffed toy or book

Please pack all items and practice with your child to determine if it is too heavy. **Your child may need to carry their pack for several blocks, as the staff will be carrying our other supplies and children needing assistance.** Please be sure to label everything clearly. Infant families- please pack your diaper bag with the intent to use this as your child's emergency pack. Store the Information Sheet in a Ziploc bag. You can download and print the Emergency Survival Pack Information (ESPI) form on the website under the "forms" tab.

Seasons Calendar 2022-2023



Monday, August 15

Monday, September 5

Friday, September 23

Monday, October 10

Tuesday-Friday, October 11-14

October 24-28

Tuesday, November 1

Friday, November 11

November 21-25

December 5-9

Friday, December 16

Monday-Monday,

December 19-Jan 2

Monday, January 15

February 13-17

Friday-Monday, February 17-20

March 6-10

Monday-Thursday, March 27-31

Monday-Sunday, April 3-16

Friday, May 12

Monday, May 29

Friday, June 16

Monday, June 19

Monday-Friday July 3-7

Friday, July 28

Friday, July 28

First day of our new year!

Labor Day, Closed

Early dismissal, Fall Equinox Potluck 12:00pm

Indigenous people day & Columbus Day, Closed

Parent/Director Meetings, early dismissal 12:00pm

Pumpkin and Apple week

Dia De Los Muertos day, Closed

Veterans Day, Closed

Thanksgiving Holiday Week, Closed

Bird Feeding Week

Early Dismissal, Winter Solstice Potluck 12:00 p.m.

Winter Break, Closed

Martin Luther King Day, Closed

Love Letters Week

Presidents Weekend, Closed

Native Planting Week

Parent/Director Meetings, early dismissal 12:00pm

Spring Break, Closed

Mother and Child Lunch 12 p.m.

Memorial Day, Closed

Father and child lunch 12pm

Juneteenth, closed

Independence Day & Teacher

wellness week, Closed

Last Day of Seasons, early dismissal

12pm

Passage Ceremony 3pm or 4:30pm

PARENT REMINDER: ALL days that are marked "Closed" are *PAID* days.