



Kingston Forest & Nature School

KFNS Winter 2021 Session Update

Kingston Forest & Nature School – Winter 2021 – Update published November 22, 2020

This update has been prepared for our currently enrolled families, those on the waitlist, and folks in the general community with an interest in what is happening at Kingston Forest & Nature School.

We have been receiving a lot of questions about what our Winter Session will look like, whether or not we will be accepting new participants, whether or not we can safely use the yurt, whether or not kids will need to wear face coverings, whether or not the programs are already full, and so on. And while there are still a few unknowns and things could still change, we hope that you'll find answers to all of your questions below.

Please note: this update is based on our projected numbers, our staffing availability, the current COVID-19 situation in Kingston, information we currently have available RE guidelines and data, what we've learned through our Summer and Fall sessions, and what we are capable of as a small and growing program. This update does not account for how the COVID-19 situation, and subsequently the government imposed regulations, might change between now and January, so everything you read below is subject to change.

Please find below:

- Winter Session Dates
- Registration Timeline
- Current COVID-19 Policies & Procedures Document
- COVID-19 Related FAQ
- Seedlings Program
- Saplings Program (Pilot)
- Acorns & Oaks Program
- Drop-In Events
- Website Update
- Personal Update

Winter 2021 Session Dates

Our Winter 2021 Session will run from Monday, January 4, 2021 until Friday, March 26, 2021 (12 weeks).

There will be no programming on Monday, February 15th (Family Day).



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Our Registration Timeline

We will be opening registration in 3 stages:

Stage 1 – Returning Families – Monday, November 23, 2020

Stage 2 – Waitlist (in waves) – Monday, November 30, 2020

**We will likely not be opening registration to the general public at this time, so make sure you are on the waitlist before registration opens if you are interested.*

Returning families will be able to register first and will have 7 days to claim their spots. Any remaining spots will be released to folks on the waitlist, via email, in waves of 2-4 families (depending on availability). Those folks will have 24 hours to claim their spot before it is forfeit and offered to those next in line. Our waitlist is accepting names now, you can find it [here](#). Please like [our Facebook Page](#) and add yourself to [our mailing list](#) to ensure you don't miss out on any important announcements.

Fees & Fee Schedule:

- \$100 non-refundable deposit is due within 48 hours of registration confirmation (you will receive an email confirmation when your registration is processed).
- Remaining fees and all forms are due by December 14, 2020.
- 1 day/week of Seedlings totals \$550-\$600 for the session.
- 1 day/week of Saplings totals \$660 for the session.
- 1 day/week of Acorns & Oaks totals \$360 for the session (+\$180 for each additional program-age child).
- An additional one-time \$20 non-refundable processing fee will be charged for the registration of each new child.

Our Current COVID-19 Policies & Procedures Document

This living document is meant to outline the policies and procedures that Kingston Forest & Nature School (KFNS) has adopted, which we will endeavour to follow, to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 among participants, staff and community. The policies and procedures outlined in this document are based on guidelines provided by the Ontario Ministry of Health, Public Health Ontario, KFL&A Public Health Unit and SickKids.

The included memorandum of understanding must be signed by all families, staff, volunteers or visitors before participating in our programs.

Please note: This is a living document that will be updated as the COVID-19 situation changes. The most up-to-date version of this document can be found at <https://bit.ly/kfnscovid19>.



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COVID-19 Related FAQ

Please see below for the most frequently asked questions related to COVID-19 and our programming:

Q: Will participants be allowed to spend more than 15 minutes in the yurt?

A: Yes. We have set a time guideline of 15 minutes to ensure that participants who need access to the yurt can get in there, but if there is no one waiting to get in and warm up/dry off, then participants may stay longer.

Q: Will participants be allowed to eat in the yurt?

A: Yes. We will be scheduling a lunch hour for the winter session and will have participants eat in the yurt in cohorts of 6 + a facilitator for 30 minutes. Face coverings can be removed during this time.

Q: Can balaclavas and neck warmers be used as face coverings?

A: Yes. [KFL&A Public Health](#) defines a face covering as "a medical mask or a non-medical mask, such as a cloth mask that has been purchased or made, that covers the mouth, nose and chin ensuring a barrier that limits the transmission of infectious respiratory droplets." We do recommend that you make an informed choice about the type of face covering your family members wear at forest school, such as choosing one with at least 3 layers of fabric that your child can put on and take off themselves.

Have other questions? Please reach out at kingstonforestandnatureschool@gmail.com.

Seedlings Program

"Nurture your child's connection to the Earth through this weekly forest and nature school program. Your child will play, learn, grow, explore, and notice the weekly changes in nature around them. Through hands-on experiences driven by their own curiosity & interests, they will learn about the land & animals around us, themselves, and each other. This program is ideally suited for children aged 4-12, and offers a wide variety of child-led nature-rich experiences to your child."

- Full-day drop-off program for school-age children.
- Participants must be at least 4 years old and no more than 12 years old by December 31, 2020. (In school-age terms, Junior Kindergarten - Grade 7, however registration in a traditional school is not a requirement for participation.)
- Snacks & lunch are the responsibility of the parent.



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- Program runs from 8:30am-3:30pm.
- Registration required, space for 16 participants per program day.
- \$50/day, once a week, number of weeks varies per session.
- \$100 non-refundable deposit is required upon successful registration (within 48 hours of receipt of your confirmation email).
- Fees must be paid in full 3 weeks before the session start date (December 14, 2020).

Winter 2021 Program Considerations & Modifications:

- This program will run on Mondays and Fridays during the Winter 2021 Session, with the possibility of 6-12 spots being available on Wednesdays based on interest in our Saplings Program (see below).
- We will be offering a maximum of 12 spots per program day during the Winter 2021 Session.
- At this time, this program will have a 1:6 staff to participant ratio.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, all participants will be required to wear a face covering when in an enclosed shelter (i.e. the yurt). Please see COVID-19 Policies & Procedures Document above for more information.

Saplings Program (Pilot)

“Deepen your child’s connection to the Earth through this weekly skills-based forest and nature school program. Your child will not only play, learn, grow, explore, and notice the weekly changes in nature around them, they will also spend a large portion of the day engaged in the development of “hard skills” like fire-tending, cooking over the fire, shelter building, tracking, map & compass use, and tool use. Through hands-on experiences driven by their own curiosity & interests, and the needs of the KFNS community, they will learn about the fruits of labour, the power of perseverance, the land & animals around us, themselves, and each other. There will be a strong focus on safety and sustainability, with skills and tools being introduced based on season and interest. This program is ideally suited for children aged 8-12 (preferably who have participated in our Seedlings Program) and will offer a wide variety of adult-guided skill-building opportunities balanced with child-led nature-rich experiences to your child.”

- Full-day drop-off program for older school-age children.
- Participants must be at least 8 years old and no more than 12 years old by the time the session ends (March 26, 2021).
- Snacks & lunch are the responsibility of the parent.
- Program runs from 8:30am-3:30pm.
- Depending on interest, this program may run concurrently with our Seedlings Program (i.e. Saplings cohort with assigned facilitator(s) on-site at the same time as Seedlings cohort with assigned facilitator(s)).
- Registration required, space for 16 participants per program day.



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- \$55/day*, once a week, number of weeks varies per session. (**This fee is based on this being a pilot program, fees will increase in the future to ensure program sustainability.*)
- Fee includes loan of individual set of tools, and may include the purchase of pocket field guides & personalized mug.
- \$100 non-refundable deposit is required upon successful registration (within 48 hours of receipt of your confirmation email).
- Fees must be paid in full 3 weeks before the session start date (December 14, 2020).

Winter 2021 Program Considerations & Modifications:

- This program will run only on Wednesdays for the Winter 2021 Session.
- This is a pilot program and will only run with a minimum of 6 participants. An additional 6 spots can be made available with enough interest. We will be offering a maximum of 12 spots during the Winter 2021 Session.
- At this time we are opening the program to 7-year olds to accommodate more of the participants currently enrolled in Seedlings on Wednesdays.
- At this time, this program will have a 1:6 staff to participant ratio.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, all participants will be required to wear a face covering when in an enclosed shelter (i.e. the yurt). Please see COVID-19 Policies & Procedures Document above for more information.

Acorns & Oaks Program

"Perhaps you don't want to miss out on the wonder, joy, curiosity, confidence, and adventure that your child experiences while at forest and nature school, so join them! Children and their parents/caregivers play, learn and grow in nature TOGETHER during the Acorns & Oaks program. This program is ideally suited for children aged 2-5, and offers a wide variety of child-led nature-rich experiences for you and your child."

- Parent/caregiver-assisted half-day program for younger children.
- Participants must be at least 2 years old and no more than 5 years old by the time the session ends (March 26, 2021).
- Siblings under two or over five* may accompany the registered participant and parent but are the sole responsibility of the parent. (**Fees will be charged for siblings over 5*).
- Snacks & lunch are the responsibility of the parent.
- Program runs from 9:00am-1:00pm.
- Registration required, space for 10-12 families per session.
- \$30/day, once a week, number of weeks varies per session.
- \$15/additional program-age child/day.
- \$100 non-refundable deposit is required upon successful registration (within 48 hours of receipt of your confirmation email).



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- Fees must be paid in full 3 weeks before the session start date (December 14, 2020).

Winter 2021 Program Considerations & Modifications:

- This program will run on Tuesdays and Thursdays during the Winter 2021 Session.
- We will be offering spots to a maximum of 12 families per program day during the Winter 2021 Session.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, all participants 2+ years of age will be required to wear a face covering when in an enclosed shelter (i.e. the yurt). Please see COVID-19 Policies & Procedures Document above for more information.
- Other COVID-19-related logistical changes include:
 - We may adjust the hours of the program to avoid needing to have lunch on-site.
 - Individual "Curiosity Kits" are available for purchase or loan to avoid shared tools (you have the option to purchase outright, borrow for the session or bring your own, your choice).
 - There will be a limited number of people allowed inside the yurt at one time, with a maximum time limit in place, and the loose parts inside the yurt will be put away.
 - There is now an additional shelter on-site that is not heated but can shelter participants from wind, rain and snow.

Drop-In Events

At this time, we have decided to press pause on our drop-in events. While we know that these events hold great value, we feel that the risks currently outweigh the benefits. When we feel it is safe to run them again, we will let you know.

Website Update

Please be advised that we are working very hard behind the scenes to completely overhaul our Parent Handbook and our website with information and photos that reflect our first year of programming and the direction we are going in with that experience under our belts. At this time, some of the information available in the Parent Handbook and on our website is outdated. The information provided above in this update reflects the most up-to-date information available, and if you need further clarification or have further questions, please reach out at kingstonforestandnatureschool@gmail.com. Thank you for your patience and understanding.