

Early Childhood Educator Job Description:

Are You an Educator Who Belongs Outdoors?

Do you feel happiest outside? Do you enjoy getting muddy, exploring forests, walking trails, watching children become completely absorbed in a discovery, and embracing whatever the weather brings? Are you the kind of person who brings energy, curiosity, creativity, and a genuine love of the outdoors to the children around you?

Fern Flower - Nature School is not your typical ECE setting. Our classroom has trees, trails, natural materials, mud, water, open-ended play, and the occasional adventure. We are looking for an ECE who wants to be part of that world—not someone who simply tolerates being outside.

This is a small, relationship-focused, multi-age Nature School where educators are active participants in children's learning. You will have the opportunity to explore, create, investigate, tell stories, share your own interests and hobbies, and help children discover what makes the natural world so fascinating.

About Us:

The Fern Flower - Nature School is conveniently situated at 3826 Charlton Drive, just next to Rose Park. It's about a 5-minute drive south of Bowser or a 20-minute drive north of Qualicum Beach. Established in 2024, Fern Flower - Nature School became a vibrant hub where young students settled into the site and surrounding forest.

Fern Flower - Nature School (FFNS) is a small, multi-age(licenced 0 to 12 years old) childcare center located in a serene natural setting. We provide care and early learning experiences for a maximum of 8 children aged 1 to 5 years (primarily), in both morning and afternoon sessions. We are passionate about fostering a love for nature and a sense of wonder in children through play-based learning, exploration, and creativity. We are currently seeking a dedicated Early Childhood Educator (ECE) to join our team. This position is part-time and may eventually lead to more hours.

Our mission is to use the Nature and Forest School model to bring children closer to nature in the early, primary, and secondary years. By cultivating rich learning experiences, children will make a connection with the diverse natural environment our locations have to offer.

Our vision is for your child to play and learn within our local forests with a knowledgeable and experienced educator who understands the importance of play and inquiry-based learning and how this can lead to a healthy child and a more sustainable world.

Our Educators, Certified British Columbia ECE and ECEA, with Outdoor Specialists (Forest School Level 1, 2 and 3), guide children to self-learning and discovery in a ratio of one teacher to eight students or less!

The Person We Are Looking For:

Most importantly, we are looking for the right person—not simply a list of qualifications. This role is a great fit for someone who is dependable, physically capable, positive, responsible, and genuinely excited to spend their workdays outdoors with children.

- You show up, follow through, and take responsibility for your role.
- You are comfortable with the professional responsibility that comes with supervising children, assessing outdoor risks, following licensing requirements, and making thoughtful safety decisions.
- You are energetic and physically capable of walking, exploring, carrying materials, getting down to children's level, and participating actively in outdoor play.
- You love nature and have interests, hobbies, skills, or experiences that you are excited to share with children.
- You can confidently take the lead when needed, while also being comfortable working as part of a team.
- You can work independently when appropriate without needing constant direction.
- You communicate clearly, respectfully, and directly.
- You are solution-oriented and flexible when plans change.
- You bring a calm, positive, drama-free presence to the workplace and contribute to a healthy team culture.
- You are open to feedback, learning, mentoring, and growing into greater responsibility over time.

This Is a Lead Educator Opportunity:

Although you will be joining a small team and will have support around you, we are looking for an ECE who is ready to take ownership of the classroom and grow into the lead educator role. You will be expected to build confidence in leading the daily program, making thoughtful decisions, communicating with families, supporting curriculum and planning, and helping create the rhythm and culture of the classroom.

You will not be left on your own to figure everything out. As the owner/manager and an ECE/Forest School Leader, I will be actively involved in training, onboarding, mentoring, shadowing, planning, and ongoing support. I want to help you become confident in the role while giving you the space to develop your own leadership style.

Team Structure, Collaboration & Backup Support:

Fern Flower is intentionally small, which means teamwork matters. You will work closely with another team member who is currently a Responsible Adult and transitioning toward ECEA certification. The goal is to build a dependable team where educators support one another, communicate well, and can step into different responsibilities when the day requires it.

I will also be an active part of the support and backup structure. I homeschool my own children and plan to complete my administrative work during operating hours whenever possible. This allows me to remain on site, supervise, mentor, assist with programming and operations, and step onto the floor whenever additional support is needed.

If someone is sick or unavailable, I can step in as the third person in our staffing support structure, including taking over the classroom when necessary. The goal is to create stability for the children and a team environment where staff know they have support rather than being left to manage unexpected situations alone.

At the same time, this is not a role where you are simply waiting for direction. We want an educator who can take initiative, make appropriate professional decisions, and eventually lead confidently while knowing when to ask for support.

Job Summary:

We are seeking a passionate and capable Early Childhood Educator who thrives in outdoor settings and wants to make nature a meaningful part of children's everyday learning. The successful candidate will support and eventually lead a small multi-age group in a safe, inclusive, playful, and inspiring environment.

Your days may include forest walks, beach exploration, loose-parts play, mud kitchens, storytelling, creative projects, practical life skills, nature observation, outdoor provocations, child-led investigations, and simply slowing down long enough to notice what the children are noticing.

This position is part-time, primarily Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from approximately 7:45 AM to 12:30 PM, plus approximately 1–2 hours of planning and preparation. Hours may increase based on enrollment, and any new arrangements will be agreed upon by both parties.

Key Responsibilities:

PROFESSIONALISM:

- Know and follow the mission, philosophy, policies, and procedures of Fern Flower - Nature School.
- Build positive relationships with children, families, team members, licensing officers, and the wider community.
- Demonstrate leadership, sound judgment, problem-solving, and initiative.
- Communicate with listening, empathy, confidence, respect, openness, and compassion.
- Protect the privacy and confidentiality of children, families, and team members.
- Model positive, professional behaviour for children, families, and colleagues.
- Be dependable and available as required to maintain appropriate staffing, ratios, safety, and best practices.
- Be flexible and solution-oriented when the needs of the children, team, or program change.
- Be open and receptive to feedback and professional growth.

CHILDREN, FAMILIES & TEAM:

- Create an inviting, secure, warm, and engaging environment for children, families, and employees.
- Interact with children and families respectfully and professionally.
- Follow Fern Flower - Nature School's positive guidance procedures and staff policies.
- Greet families at drop-off and pick-up and communicate relevant information appropriately.
- Work collaboratively with the other educators while also being capable of working independently.
- Help create newsletters, centre activities, and community experiences.
- Contribute to a positive, respectful, low-drama workplace culture.

ECE RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Implement and support Fern Flower - Nature School programming and curriculum.
- Take increasing ownership of the daily program as you grow into the lead educator role.
- Follow all applicable licensing regulations and Fern Flower - Nature School procedures.
- Follow Forest School standards and the program's outdoor learning philosophy.
- Supervise and ensure the safety and well-being of all children at all times, indoors and outdoors.
- Complete thoughtful outdoor risk assessment and respond appropriately to changing conditions.
- Assist with transitions, meals, toileting, rest periods, and other daily care needs as required.
- Observe children's interests, behaviour, and development and use those observations to inform programming.
- Help prepare and maintain outdoor classroom materials and keep the learning environment safe and inviting.
- Bring your own interests, hobbies, skills, and creativity into the children's learning experiences.

HEALTH, SAFETY & NATURE-BASED LEARNING:

- Follow allergy, health, emergency, and safety requirements for children and employees.
- Maintain a safe indoor and outdoor learning environment while allowing appropriate exploration and healthy risk-taking.
- Be comfortable working outdoors in changing weather conditions and across all seasons.

- Participate actively in walks, outdoor exploration, movement, and nature-based activities.
- Use professional judgment when balancing children's independence, exploration, and safety.
- Qualifications & Requirements
- Early Childhood Education (ECE) certification required.
- Current First Aid certification required and must be maintained.
- Forest School Level 3 certification preferred, or willingness to obtain it.
- Ability to provide required employment, licensing, and professional documentation.
- Strong communication skills and a genuine passion for working with young children.
- Ability to work well in a team and independently.
- Positive, patient, flexible, reliable, and responsible approach to work.
- Comfort working outdoors and participating physically in the program.
- Commitment to professional responsibility, active supervision, risk awareness, and child safety.

What We Offer:

- A genuinely unique outdoor-focused workplace where nature is part of the curriculum—not simply an occasional activity.
- A small, intimate group size of up to 8 children, allowing for meaningful relationships and individualized attention.
- A supportive team structure with direct access to the owner/manager for mentoring, training, and backup support.
- Opportunities to develop into a lead educator role and take meaningful ownership of the program.
- Professional development opportunities, including Forest School training.
- Flexible part-time morning hours, with the potential for additional hours as enrollment changes.
- Competitive pay based on experience and qualifications. Current starting range: \$21.00–\$24.00/hour plus \$6.00 WE per hour on top.
- Paid planning and preparation time.
- Paid breaks when applicable to the length of the workday.
- Vacation, personal time, and sick time in accordance with the employment arrangement.
- Three weeks of annual program closure: one week in winter, one week in spring, and one week at the end of summer.
- On-site childcare availability with a 50% parent-fee reduction for your own children.
- A workplace where educators are encouraged to bring their own interests, creativity, and personality into the program.

Before Applying — Please Get to Know Us:

Because Fern Flower is not a typical ECE workplace, we strongly encourage you to learn about us before you apply. Visit our website, look through our educators and program information, and spend some time watching our social media. We want applicants to have a genuine understanding of our outdoor philosophy and the kind of environment they would be joining.

- **Website:** <https://fernflowernaturechool.net/>
- **Facebook:** Fern Flower - Nature School
- **Instagram:** @fernflowernaturechool
- **TikTok:** @fernflowernaturechool

Take a look at our outdoor spaces, our educators, our activities, and the way we interact with children. If you watch our program and think, “This is exactly where I want to work,” we would love to hear from you.

How to Apply:

Please send your resume, a short cover letter introducing yourself and explaining why Fern Flower feels like a good fit for you, and professional references to fernflowernaturechool@gmail.com.

In your cover letter, tell us a little about your relationship with nature, your favourite outdoor activities or hobbies, and what you would be excited to bring to a group of young children.

We are looking for someone who wants to show up, get involved, build relationships, take responsibility, grow as an educator, and genuinely enjoy the adventure of working outdoors with children.