

A lush green forest stream with mossy rocks and ferns. The water is clear and reflects the surrounding greenery. The forest is dense with tall trees and a thick canopy of leaves. The overall scene is peaceful and natural.

Field School Program Teacher Planning Guide

CHEAKAMUS
CENTRE

nature is in session

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CHEAKAMUS CENTRE

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Dear Educators,

Thank you for providing your students the opportunity to experience the Field School Program at Cheakamus Centre. Our staff are excited to share their passion for outdoor environmental learning and at the same time, support your students in developing meaningful connections with the natural world. We are reminded daily of the long-term benefits that result from getting children back into nature and the powerful learning that occurs in an immersive, overnight setting.

We recognize that planning for a successful program begins at the school and we greatly appreciate your efforts in this regard! The purpose of this Teacher's Guide is to provide you with the planning support you need, and to better prepare you and your students for an enjoyable and memorable visit to Cheakamus Centre.

Within the Guide you will find information and links to assist in your pre-trip planning including information for parents and students, informed consent and medical forms, and answers to commonly asked questions. Please read through the material provided to give you a better understanding of the program and our site and facilities. Our Program staff will be working alongside you to provide guidance and support throughout the planning process.

We hope you find the Teacher's Guide helpful and informative and if you have any further questions please let us know. We look forward to your arrival and the opportunity to offer a quality overnight outdoor learning experience for you and your students.

Sincerely,



Conor McMullan
Director of Educational Programs

I | Program Overview

Field School offers students the chance to immerse themselves in educational experiences that are inspired by nature. Utilizing the Centre’s 165 ha (420 acre) ecological reserve, these experiences take place within an extensive network of trails, ancient forests, spawning channels, our teaching hatchery and working farm. Designed around [5 guiding principles](#), our curriculum-based Field School program seeks to connect students to themes of **Place**, **Inquiry**, **Community**, **Personal Connections** and **First Peoples’ Perspectives**. Most importantly, Field School is about engaging learners in fun and meaningful ways that foster understanding and care for our natural world. With input from visiting teachers, Cheakamus Centre staff will design a hands-on, nature-based program that creates a memorable outdoor learning experience for students and staff alike.



Sample Schedule

Below is a sample schedule for a three-day Field School Program. To plan and customize a schedule that best fits your group’s preferences, please read over and complete the [Planning Form](#). In this document, you will find descriptions of the Outdoor Environmental Learning and Outdoor Recreation activities we offer. Please organize your students into activity groups, (max 15 students/group) prior to your program.

Please note: If the Planning Form is not returned at least 3 weeks prior to your program start date, Cheakamus Centre will develop a schedule based on the season and grade level of your group.

Time	Day One	Day Two	Time	Day Three
8:00 AM		Breakfast	8:00 AM	Breakfast
9:30 AM				
10:00 AM	Arrival, Welcome & Teambuilding	Activity C	9:00 AM	Activity F
11:15 AM	Move into accommodation			
12:00 PM	Lunch	Lunch	11:15 AM	Lunch
1:00 PM	Activity A	Activity D	12:00 PM	Closing
3:00 PM	Snack	Snack	12:30 PM	Departure
3:30 PM	Activity B	Activity E	<i>Please Note:</i> All highlighted sections indicate times when Cheakamus Centre staff are facilitating programming and assisting with supervision. At all other times, visiting staff/adult volunteers are responsible for the supervision of students.	
5:30 PM	Self-directed Time	Self-directed Time		
6:00 PM	Dinner	Dinner		
7:00 PM	Evening Games	Campfire		
8:00 PM	Self-directed Time & Snack	Self-directed Time & Snack		
9:00 PM	Quiet Time	Quiet Time		

Accommodation

Our 9 heated rustic cabins can house up to 140 people in a beautiful forested setting. Each cabin can accommodate from 13 to 18 people with 2 shared washrooms. Cabins 1-6 can be divided into two separate spaces using a central locked door. Cheakamus Centre has 2 wheelchair accessible cabins (7, 8); providing a number of accessible beds for guests. Groups are required to bring their own bedding (sleeping bag and pillow). Please review our complete [packing list](#).

To see more images of our facilities, check out images in our [facilities photo gallery](#).



Meals and Dining

Chef Wade and his talented culinary team strive to prepare simple, sustainable meals and snacks that are kid-friendly and nutritious, and keep our students healthy, happy and energized. Our kitchen is able to cater to a variety of special dietary needs and restrictions. **Ensure parents are reminded to correctly complete the dietary portion of the medical/dietary form and the visiting teacher completes the summary to highlight any special diets.** This is essential for our ability to properly care for the visiting students. On occasion parents will be asked to provide food to supplement the daily school menu. Check out a sample of our [Daily School Menu](#).



During meal services, we require that visiting teachers/adults assist in portioning the food at the buffet. It is also the responsibility of each individual to take their used plates and cups to the clearing station, once they have finished their meals, where bins will be appropriately marked.

Nut-restricted policy: Cheakamus Centre is a nut restricted facility. We do not order, import or permit any products containing nut on site. We cannot, however, fully guarantee that private individuals are not bringing items containing nut products on site for personal consumption or use. Please do not bring any nuts or nut products. This also includes any skin care and hair products that may contain nuts.



Leadership and Supervision

A quality and safe outdoor education experience relies on the support of adult chaperones. Chaperones are responsible for the health, safety and conduct of participants and are expected to supervise at all times, including overnight, while at Cheakamus Centre. Most schools bring teachers, parents or school staff as chaperones. We require one adult chaperone per cabin group of approximately 10-12 students. Our maximum adult to student ratio is 1:10. Additional adults that may be required to support students with complex learning needs must first be approved by our Program Administration.

Expectations of a Chaperone

During programming: We require one teacher/chaperone to be assigned to each activity group. Chaperones stay with the group throughout the day and follow the instructors lead as to when to be an active participant and when to be an observer. Chaperones are also expected to manage challenging behaviors or conflict between participants. If a student is unable to participate in an activity due to illness or injury, it is the school's responsibility to provide care for the student.

At all other times: Outside of daily programming times, chaperones assume a more active role. Chaperones will supervise the students before, during, and after mealtimes, during any self-directed time, and overnight in cabins. Duties may include some or all of the following: organizing games during self-directed time; helping portion at the buffet and assisting with composting during meals; comforting children who are homesick throughout the night, etc. Try to rotate responsibilities throughout your program so that all adults have an opportunity for their own relaxation. We want everyone to enjoy his or her Field School experience!

Consumption of alcohol on-site is strictly prohibited for school groups and their chaperones.

Health, Wellness & First Aid

Visiting teachers and chaperones are responsible for administering all student medication while at Cheakamus Centre. Cheakamus program staff are first aid trained and will attend to first aid requirements during program periods. On-call staff are also available in the event of an emergency. During non-instructional periods, visiting teachers and chaperones are responsible for student care including basic first aid needs. **Groups are expected to bring basic first aid equipment and a vehicle to use in the event of emergency.** Medical care is available at the Squamish Hospital located 15 minutes from our site. Further information about emergency procedures will be provided upon arrival. **Please report all incidents and accidents to the Environmental Programs Coordinator.**

Complex Needs Planning

Everyone is welcome at Cheakamus Centre. The Field School Program has a profoundly positive and lasting effect on participants and we endeavor to provide opportunities for all students to attend and actively participate. Please consult with Cheakamus Centre Administrators if a student with complex needs or program adaptations will be attending to discuss our ability to meet the individual's needs. **Please provide a Medical Plan for students with medical conditions** such as diabetes, seizures, heart conditions, etc. Please note that this information is only to inform our team, your group is required to provide primary care for these students.



2 | Preparing for Your Field School

In order for Cheakamus Centre to prepare for and organize the best possible outdoor educational experience for your class, we require specific information prior to your program arrival date. Please note the recommended timelines below.

All of our forms can be found on the [Teacher Resources Page](#) on our website. Please use the “Field School Program” drop down menu.

Timeline

Stage	Task
Booking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm proposal details, dates, and estimated numbers Alert Cheakamus Centre of any extra space/facility needs that will be required Submit signed contract and 10% deposit to secure your booking
8 Weeks Before Visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cheakamus Centre will contact you to provide more information about you program, links to required forms (also below), and dates forms are due back Distribute forms and packing list to parents Confirm bus transportation for your program Complete and return the Planning Form as soon as possible to select your activities
3 Weeks Before Visit	<p>Please scan and email the following forms to office@cheakamuscentre.ca 3 weeks prior to your program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning Form Group Profile
2 Weeks Before Visit	<p>Once complete, please scan and email the following forms to office@cheakamuscentre.ca 2 weeks prior to your program. Include the name of your school and start date of program in the subject line. Ensure indicated forms are alphabetized when sent. You will be given your cabin assignments when all your forms are returned. Thank you!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Class List Informed Consents (for all students and adult participants) Medical Forms (for all students and adult participants) Group Medical Summary Activity Groups Form
1 Week Before Visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm the Final Number of students and staff participating Organize students into cabins Confirm your arrival/departure times and locations Ensure you have easily accessible copies of student Medical Forms to bring with you in case of an emergency. <p>Please Note: Cheakamus Centre requires the guaranteed number of teachers, staff and students participating in the program one week in advance of the program start date. Once this number is confirmed, you are responsible for payment of the guarantee or actual number served, whichever is higher.</p>

3 | Site Policies

All Cheakamus Centre policies can be found [here](#). Please review this document prior to your arrival and ensure your group is prepared to adhere to all policies. We are mindful that this is a comprehensive policy list. With such a large, magnificent site, there are a number of things we must bring to your attention for your safety and enjoyment throughout the duration of your visit. We thank you for taking the time to read this document.

4 | Frequently Asked Questions

Q: *My student has a vegetarian diet- will there be an alternative at meals?*

A: Yes, we are able to cater to many special dietary needs. Please ensure the student's parent has completed the medical form accurately so we are aware of the student's dietary needs in advance of your program.

Q: *A student is only able to attend 2 of 3 days of their Field School Program - will they have a discounted rate?*

A: Generally we do not provide partial rates for programs. Allowances for partial fees are provided for students with Ministry designations requiring program adaptations, on compassionate grounds (i.e. family funeral), and in coordination with the school-based administrator and the Director of Educational Programs at Cheakamus Centre. Please contact us for more details.

Q: *We have a group of 50 students with 5 teachers/adult volunteers attending. More parents would like to be chaperones - is this allowed?*

A: In general, more hands isn't always more helpful. Depending on the circumstances it is possible to bring additional adults with the approval of our Program Team. For guidelines on this including fees, please refer to your contract. Please contact office@cheakamuscentre.ca to discuss this further.

Q: *Can I run my own evening activities?*

A: Yes, if you would like to facilitate your own evening activity, please communicate that on your schedule planning form.

Q: *Is there an indoor space to facilitate my own activity?*

A: Yes, please send a specific request during your booking process to ensure a space is available for your use.

Q: *Does Cheakamus Centre provide overnight supervision in cabins?*

A: Visiting teachers and adults are responsible for overnight supervision. We recommend one supervisor in each cabin with students. It is your responsibility to provide a supervision model that works best for your group. Please contact us at office@cheakamuscentre.ca if you have any questions about supervisory roles and responsibilities.

Q: *Who is responsible for first aid and medication administration during a program?*

A: Cheakamus program staff are first aid trained and will attend to first aid requirements during program periods. On-call staff are also available in the event of an emergency. During non-instructional periods, visiting teachers and chaperones are responsible for student care including basic first aid needs, and therefore should come prepared with a stocked First Aid kit. Visiting teachers are responsible for any medication administered to a student/youth.

Q: *Where does our group arrive and depart from?*

A: Unless you have been provided different instructions, please plan to arrive and depart from **Cheakamus Centre South Entrance (1600 Paradise Valley Road), at the ELC Parking Lot.** You can find driving directions [here](#) on our website. *Please note: GPS applications such as Google Maps do not provide accurate directions to our site, please look for the large Cheakamus Centre South Entrance sign with our address on it.*

5 | Cheakamus Centre Contact Information

General Program Inquiries: Please email programs@cheakamuscentre.ca OR call 604-898-5422 ext 221

Website: www.cheakamuscentre.ca

Address:

Cheakamus Centre **South:**
1600 Paradise Valley Rd
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