



## Ferry Beach Ecology School

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# FBES Chaperone Booklet

### *Dear Classroom Teachers & Parent Chaperones:*

Welcome to Ferry Beach Ecology School! Thank you for volunteering to attend our residential ecology education program on the southern coast of Maine. We value the time and effort you are investing to help make the students' week of experiential education at our site a true success. The *FBES Chaperone Booklet* is designed to give you the information you will need to know in order to be an effective chaperone during your stay at Ferry Beach. The better you can help the students understand that this is an important school experience for them, the more success our naturalist teachers will have teaching their lessons.

This manual covers the various procedures and rules of Ferry Beach Ecology School and includes the roles and expectations for chaperones throughout the week. Please review this information thoroughly. All the information herein will be reviewed during the morning of your school's arrival, but having an understanding of the program and your role at FBES prior to your arrival will be helpful. Also, for those chaperones arriving midweek, reviewing this manual will be especially crucial as there is often no formal introductory meeting at Ferry Beach Ecology School after the first day. We ask that all chaperones please coordinate their arrival at Ferry Beach with the coordinating classroom teachers and, if possible, carpool with other chaperones.

If you have any questions regarding the rules, procedures, and your duties as an FBES chaperone, please feel free to contact the coordinating classroom teacher from your school or FBES for further information. Also, FBES staff are available throughout the week to answer any questions or concerns. Keeping the lines of communication open between the school's classroom teachers, parent chaperones and the FBES staff will ensure the program runs smoothly throughout the week.

### *See You at Ferry Beach!*

Drew Dumsch  
*Executive Director*

Alexandra Grindle  
*Residential Program Director*

# The Role of Chaperones at Ferry Beach

As a chaperone, you will be involved in helping to supervise four areas of our program-- in the dining hall, during free time (on the recreation field and in the dormitories), in the dormitories overnight, and out on the lessons. There is a brief description of each of these four supervision areas below, along with a list of expectations and responsibilities for chaperones.

## **Chaperones In the Dining Hall**

The meals at Ferry Beach Ecology School are eaten family style. Students are assigned a table for the week by the classroom teachers. Each table has one student set-up and one student clean-up who set the table, bring food, and clean after the meal. Students will rotate every 3 meals as set-ups and clean-ups. The dining hall will be organized and run by the Dining Hall Coordinator (DHC), an FBES naturalist in charge of the dining hall for the week.

The role of chaperones in the dining hall is to sit with the students (one adult to supervise every table), enforce the dining hall rules, and assist the students during the meals. Adults should rotate to different tables every meal. While the Dining Hall Coordinator is running the meal, it is very helpful for each adult to listen to the DHC and ensure that whatever the DHC requests during announcements is being followed at your table.

- When the DHC raises his/her hand, please raise your hand and quiet the students at your table.
- Encourage good manners at your table-- no talking table to table, pass politely, etc. Please also monitor and report kids not eating and stop kids overeating.
- Allow only one student up from the table at a time to reduce traffic in the dining hall.
- Listen to the DHC announcements on when the set-up should get seconds, when to start clean-up, and other meal time happenings.

## **Chaperones On Free Time**

Students have free time before and after every meal. The periods of free time range from 20 to 90 minutes. At Ferry Beach, all students are supervised by adults at all times, 24 hours a day. During their free time, students need to be in an area that is supervised, which includes the two main recreation areas (basketball court area or the volleyball court area), the beach, or the dormitories. You will be assigned to supervise one of these areas during each free time period and your responsibility during free time is to ensure that students are being safe. If you see any inappropriate behavior, please ask students to stop, be safe, and report the behavior to the coordinating classroom teacher. For safety reasons, do not allow tackle or contact sports, jumping from the swings, or other unsafe behavior. The dormitories are a quiet area during free time for students that wish to read, write, take a nap, shower, or play quiet games.

If the coordinating classroom teacher approves, the beach may also be open during free time. When supervising the beach, it is important to remember that all students must stay out of the water and keep their shoes on at all times. If any students get wet, ask them to leave the beach immediately. If students are getting wet consistently, the beach will be closed during free time. Also, please be sure to have the students stay within the marked areas so that they do not wander too far down the beach.

## Chaperones In the Dormitories

Students are allowed in the dormitories during their free times and at night after the evening lesson, with the exception of the free time between breakfast and morning lesson. Students need to come to breakfast prepared for their morning lessons as the bathrooms are cleaned by student volunteers in the time between breakfast and morning lesson. The dorms are a quiet area and chaperones are asked to enforce the dorm rules listed below.

FBES naturalists will be in the dorms after the evening lesson to quiet the students down and get them settled for the evening. At 9 pm, one or more of the adults need to return to the dorm to relieve the naturalists for the evening. Also at 9pm, the lights within the rooms are shut off and the students need to be quiet and go to sleep. This is done out of respect for those students that are tired while also ensuring that the students are well-rested for the following day's activities. Students should be in their room only. After hours visiting to other rooms is grounds for dismissing students from the program. Students should be quiet and only out of their rooms to go to the bathroom. In the morning, students need to remain quiet and in their rooms until 7am. At 7:30am, a chaperone can take the students outside to a recreation field (but not before then). The dorm is a quiet area and reminding the students of the dorm rules is always helpful.

### *Dorm Rules (students learn these rules at the Dorm Orientation during the first morning)*

- Obey the *Stop* and *Go* Signs at dorm entrances. Only enter buildings if a classroom teacher, parent chaperone or FBES staff is present. Chaperones flip the signs to direct students.
- Dorms are quiet areas; no running; nothing loud or overactive inside; no visiting room to room or to other dorms.
- Please keep rooms clean & tidy; classroom teachers/chaperones inspect rooms before breakfast.
- This is your home for the week; show respect for your roommates and their space; show respect for the room itself and the general facility; any vandalism will be charged to you and your parents.
- Be careful raising/lowering and opening/closing blinds. Ask teachers for help in operating.
- To keep heat in buildings, don't leave outside doors or windows open. Don't leave lights on in empty rooms! Only adults are allowed to handle the space heaters-- which are not to be used to dry clothes!
- Wet and muddy boots can be left on the porch or neatly against the wall in the hallway, but should not block the hallway.
- Wet clothes should be hung up to dry, not stuffed under the bed to rot!
- Keep doors ajar (open at least a fist width) to keep your room well-ventilated.
- Take quick showers (5 minutes or less), keep the shower curtain inside the shower, clean up after your shower (don't leave soap, shampoo, or towels behind).
- Share sinks; don't leave anything behind; knock first if it's a single bathroom; please don't lock doors.

## Chaperones Out On Lessons

Chaperones (both classroom teachers & parents) are highly encouraged to attend lessons. The specific role of a chaperone during a lesson is decided upon by talking to the individual naturalist whose lesson you will be attending. It is best to check with the naturalist at the meal prior to the lesson to let them know you'd like to join them. While on lesson, feel free to be an active participant or an observer, but please don't distract students and allow the students to answer questions and come to their own conclusions.

The first lesson, *ABCs of Ecology*, introduces the week and allows the naturalist to become acquainted with all the students so we do ask that you not attend this first lesson. The time during the lessons is your free time, but if you do decide to attend several lessons, we ask that you choose to visit with different groups throughout the week. As an additional adult on the lesson, it is helpful to focus the students' attention towards the naturalist while helping the naturalist deal with any disruptive behavior. Also, please refrain from receiving or placing any calls from cellular phones during the lesson or holding conversations with students or other adults.

# *FBES Rules, Policies, & Procedures*

## *Rules for Students to Follow*

### *Hand Signal*

When an FBES staff member or classroom teacher raises their hand, students are requested to stop talking and pay attention to an upcoming announcement. (For consistency, all adults are also asked to follow the hand signal rule.)

### *Respect*

Students are requested to show respect for:

- 1) Others – (including their peers, their naturalist and other adults) by not talking when others are talking, listening to others, following directions and participating in activities.
- 2) Themselves – by being prepared for lesson and being on their best behavior.
- 3) The environment – this includes avoiding injury to any plants or animals.

### *Contraband (items not to bring to FBES)*

Over many years of operation, FBES has learned the following items do not have a place during a program here.

- Students should not bring battery-operated electronic items (such as alarm clocks, handheld games, ipods, etc.).
- Students should not bring food, candy or gum (unless for medical/ dietary reasons noted on their health form *and* okayed by FBES nurse or director).
- Students shouldn't bring flashlights, knives, jewelry, cell phones, other expensive items, or money.

### *Cell Phones*

Students are not allowed to have cell phones at FBES. They are not conducive to learning and have proved to cause many more problems than they solve. In rare instances, classroom teachers, in collaboration with FBES directors, may make arrangements for phone calls home to be made.

### *Appropriate Clothing and Footwear*

On lessons at FBES, all students must wear close-toed shoes (no sandals) and long pants (no shorts). This helps protect students from injury (for instance, while hiking through brushy areas of the forest or climbing on rocks at the tide pools). In rare instances of extreme weather, a FBES director may alter the dress code.

### *School Rules*

FBES will do its best to abide by any school rules you feel need to be enforced while at Ferry Beach. This may include, but is not limited to dress codes, hats indoors rules and/ or behavior policies. (At the Monday morning teacher meeting, or earlier, please make us aware of any specific school rules that you would like enforced at Ferry Beach.)

## *Procedures for Classroom Teachers and FBES Staff*

### *Disruptive Students*

The Classroom Teachers (especially the Coordinating Teacher), FBES naturalists, and the FBES Directors work together as a team to effectively deal with disruptive students. Options for disciplining students include sitting them out of an activity, talking to them after a lesson and holding them back from part of a recreation time, supervised by classroom teachers. If the student continues to be disruptive during lessons then there is the option to leave the student behind during a lesson to be supervised by classroom teachers. In extreme cases of disruptive behavior, classroom teachers may decide to send the student home and they contact the parents to arrange this. It is important to keep FBES informed of discipline problems – even if they happen during rec time because of the nature of residential education.

### ***Homesickness***

FBES naturalists, classroom teachers, the FBES nurse and FBES directors all work together to deal with students experiencing homesickness. Classroom teachers, in consultation with the FBES nurse and directors, make the decision whether a student can call home (*warning* – this can make the situation worse!) and if the student can make it through the week or needs to be sent home.

### ***No Smoking***

Ferry Beach prohibits smoking in any building or in the presence of students.

### ***Phone Calls Home***

Students are not allowed to call home unless an arrangement has been made through the classroom teacher (and the FBES Directors and/or Nurse have been informed of this arrangement).

## ***FBES Policies of Operation***

### ***Background Checks***

All staff hired and employed by Ferry Beach Ecology School are required to undergo extensive background and reference checks. The arranging of chaperones (either classroom teachers or parent chaperones) is the express responsibility and liability of the client school. It is the recommendation of FBES that any adult attending the program has undergone a background check.

### ***Prevention of Child Abuse***

Ferry Beach Ecology School supports all school policies and state laws designed to prevent and report instances of child abuse.

### ***Sexual Harassment***

It is against the policies of Ferry Beach Ecology School, and illegal under state and federal law, for any participant in the FBES program (whether FBES staff, students, or classroom teachers and chaperones) to sexually harass other participants. (*Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.*)

### ***Substance Abuse***

The use of alcohol in any FBES program area (dorm, lobby, dining hall, rec. fields) is prohibited. The use of any illegal substance or illegal drugs on the Ferry Beach campus is prohibited and any violations will result in that person being asked to leave the program immediately.

### ***Supervision of Students***

All students participating in the Ferry Beach Ecology School program have 24 hour supervision: FBES staff are in charge of lessons, classroom teachers oversee the dormitories at night, and the FBES staff and classroom teachers share the supervision of students during recreation and meal times. *Without the express permission of custodial parents/guardians, students are not allowed to leave the Ferry Beach site.* Any visits and/or removal of students from the FBES program (due to appointments, illness, family emergency, etc.) must be arranged in advance with the classroom teachers and FBES.

### ***Water Safety***

As participants of the Ferry Beach Ecology School, students are not allowed in the water (be it ocean, pond, or river) during their stay at Ferry Beach. This includes both during lessons and recreation times and includes wading.