



Parent/Guardian Frequently Asked Questions

Where is Prince William Forest Park?

[Prince William Forest Park](#) is a National Park Service site in Prince William County, Virginia. It is 35 miles south of Washington, DC and is very close to Interstate 95. The NatureBridge campus is located at [Cabin Camp 1](#).

Food

How do we serve food on campus?

Revolving hot dishes are served buffet-style in our dining hall for breakfast and dinner. The hall is shared with all schools on campus and our kid-friendly wholesome meals are made by the experienced kitchen staff. Lunch is served on trail during the hiking day.

What if my child has dietary needs?

Most dietary restrictions, including vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free and dairy-free can be accommodated. Please consult our [Dietary restrictions](#) document ([spanish](#)). If you have additional questions talk to Jim Serfass, Operations Manager.

Lunch for the first day

Your student will need lunch the first day of programming unless otherwise specified by your group coordinator.

Can I send my child with snacks?

Unless your child has dietary restrictions, please do not send any additional food with them, only lunch for the first day.

Lodging

What are the sleeping arrangements for my school?

Our campus is one of five historic [cabin camps](#) in Prince William Forest Park. Each cabin has two bunk beds and two individual beds, with space for up to six students. Cabins are located in four different clusters, called Loops. Adults will be in separate cabins that are very close to student cabins. If needed for medical reasons or supervision, chaperones may share a cabin with students.

Where can my student use the restroom?

There is a bath house located in each Cabin Loop. The bath house will be a short (less than 50 yards) walk from the cabin. Each bath house has private shower and bathroom stalls. There are also gender neutral bathroom options if needed.

Are showers available?

Yes! In the bath house. Bath houses are separated by gender. No coins are needed. Be sure your student brings a towel and other toiletries in order to shower.

Safety & Supervision

How does NatureBridge respond to emergencies?

There is a NatureBridge administrative staff member available 24 hours a day. Emergency Medical Services, fire department and law enforcement are available at all times. For more details about our staff qualifications, see our [Safety & Risk Management Practices \(Spanish\)](#)

Will my child be supervised?

Students are supervised at all times. During the program day 9 a.m.-4 p.m., students are with their learning groups and will have at least one NatureBridge staff member and one to two school chaperones accompanying the group at all times. Outside of the program day, students will be supervised by school chaperones and teachers.

What should I do if my student takes medication?

Your school teachers are in charge of administering medication to your student. Please make a plan with your group coordinator.

Daily Schedule

Morning: Gather in the dining hall for breakfast, pack backpacks and prepare for the day.

Day on Trail: Spend the day in small learning groups led by a professional NatureBridge educator.

Afternoon/Early Evening: Return to campus to reflect, relax and unwind while school chaperones supervise. Dinner with other students gives everyone a chance to share their trail stories.

Evening: NatureBridge educators facilitate evening programs selected by group coordinators. Students then return to the cabins and get ready for bed.

How long are students typically outdoors?

Typically, students are outdoors for the entire trail day (up to 7 hours at a time). Students should prepare to be outside regardless of the weather (see packing list below).

How long are students expected to hike?

Even though students may be outdoors for a full day, they will not be hiking the entire time. Each group may take a different trail route, but most groups hike between two and five miles per day. Hiking is broken up with lessons, activities, breaks and lunch.

What to pack

See full packing list [here \(Spanish\)](#)

Instructor Qualifications

NatureBridge environmental science educators bring our programs to life. Our staff have a Bachelor's Degree or equivalent work and training experience, cleared background checks and are certified to manage risk in the field. NatureBridge educators are required to hold a Wilderness First Responder (WFR) or Wilderness First Aid (WFA) certification through nationally recognized curriculums such as NOLS Wilderness Medicine.

More about the NatureBridge program

The NatureBridge program is an extension of your student's regular academic school program and meant to deepen his/her learning experience. At NatureBridge students will:

- Engage in authentic science investigations and apply scientific principles first-hand.
- Build social and emotional skills through team building, reflection and group challenges.
- Connect to nature and feel empowered as environmental stewards.