

PARENT HANDBOOK Preschool

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Hello and welcome to North Shore Neighbourhood House Preschool. The North Shore Neighbourhood House has been meeting the child care needs of the community since 1939 and is currently the largest provider of childcare on the North Shore. The North Shore Neighbourhood House is a non-profit, United Way community agency that provides four areas of service; Childcare, Social and Community Services, Recreation, and Community Partners.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The North Shore Neighbourhood House is a not-for-profit registered charity serving the North Shore Community since 1939. We believe working together to meet the grassroots needs of our neighbours, especially our most vulnerable residents, is essential to building a safe, healthy and strong community. The House values and promotes cooperation, respect and empowerment through the provision of programs and services designed to meet the needs of individuals and the community as a whole.

OUR VISION

We are building a safe, healthy and strong community welcoming all ages, abilities and cultures. One where everyone has access to support, everyone is included and where everyone matters.

CHILDCARE PHILOSOPHY

Our childcare programs are committed to nurturing and guiding young children. We are providing an environment that fosters trust, security and comfort. We strive to provide a balance of activities that help children to progress in social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development.

The programs respect and value differences recognizing that children are individuals and that every child is unique.

The program provides a safe, secure and stimulating environment for all children. It provides time and opportunities for children to explore and investigate their world and to communicate with other children and adults. The environment fosters an accepting, tolerant and flexible attitude towards others and respect for the natural world.

During these formative years children must learn how to get along in a group, to share, to problem solve in their relationships with peers and to have a positive self image. By providing a play-based program, the children develop these skills in their creative play activities. Play is child's work. It is their way of trying out rules and experimenting with life.

As well, children attending an integrated program develop a better understanding and acceptance of differences.

STAFF

All of our staff have valid First Aid Certificates and are experienced in providing quality childcare. The staff attends monthly workshops and other courses sponsored by the NSNH.

The staff work rotating shifts, which ensures that proper staff/child ratios are maintained at all times.

The preschool welcomes the opportunity to participate in the practicum portion of training programs for Early Childhood Education students. The preschool supervisor coordinates with various teaching institutes (eg. Capilano University) the placement and orientation of practicum students into the centre and ensures adequate staff supervision for the students.

All staff, substitutes and students are screened upon application and undergo a Canada – wide criminal record search.

The childcare staff are unionized with C.U.P.E. and have a Collective Agreement describing their rights and benefits.

GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

The program is licensed and staffed according to the regulations of the Ministry of Health.

Our daily programs include a regular schedule of indoor activities, quiet and active play, washroom routines, snacks and group times. Play activities include a wide variety of toys and games, dramatic play and creative and physical activities. Stories, music and discussions of interest are also included regularly. Activities are presented in small groups so that the interests and abilities of individual children can be taken into account.

Parents are an important part of our team. We have an open door policy and welcome parents to observe anytime.

Consultative services are provided by North Shore Health and other Resource Personnel who may be working on a regular basis with the children within our program. Supported Childcare consultants will support the Child Care team when necessary.

Waitlist Enrolment

The North Shore Neighbourhood House maintains a waiting list for space, which generally operates on a first come first serve basis. However, priority will be given to children of families already enrolled in the centre.

Closure Days

Preschool follows the public school calendar. Families will be given notice for upcoming holidays.

In the event of **CLOSURES** due to circumstances or conditions beyond the control of North Shore Neighbourhood House Childcare, included but not limited to power failure, excessive snowfall, and flooding, the client will NOT be eligible for reimbursement. It is recommended that parents telephone the centre during such circumstances or conditions to determine status of service.

GRADUAL ENTRY

Starting at a new preschool centre is an important event in your child's life. For some children this will be their first large group experience. It is natural for children to have concerns, though they may not have the language to express their feelings. New situations can be a frightening change, which may confuse or disturb children, even those who have had previous daycare or preschool experience.

In order to assist families with the transition to a new childcare centre, gradual entry will be arranged by the program supervisor to meet the needs of that family.

Families should be prepared to spend some time with their child during the first few days of gradual entry until the child has established a comfortable, trusting relationship with the staff. If you are unable to do this personally, friends and families are welcome to substitute for you. If the child is having difficulty adjusting to their new environment, it may be necessary for the parent to extend the gradual entry.

COMPONENTS OF THE PROGRAM

Arrival and Departure

Please sign your child in upon arrival at the centre.

Please call the centre by 9:30 if for any reason your child will not be attending the program that day. If you are detained and will therefore be late picking up your child, phone the centre and advise the staff when to expect you; you will be required to pay a fine. If you or an authorized person cannot pick up your child, contact the centre to authorize a specific person who will be picking up your child. The person designated to pick up your child will be required to present identification upon arrival to ensure your child's safety.

Please ensure that staff have been informed and a copy of legal documentation specifying custody/guardianship or limited access to your child is provided to the staff.

Clothing and Possessions

If your child's name is visible on his/her belongings the chance of misplaced or lost items will be reduced dramatically. As we regularly do art work that can be messy, please ensure your child is dressed appropriately.

Nutrition

See Attached Section CCFL Regulations

Confidentiality

NSNH cannot release the address or phone numbers of children enrolled in our programs. This protects the confidentiality of personal information regarding your child.

GENERAL POLICIES

Guiding and Caring

'Care and Respect' describes the guidance or discipline techniques that we use at this centre; we will be available when needed by the children. We will listen and hear what the children are saying. When we look at your child, we will see a unique individual. When we communicate with your child, we will express that care by: smiling, talking, hugging, setting limits, allowing frustration, allowing exploration, and giving choices. We will give the child clear messages of how we feel and what we expect from the child, which will foster their sense of independence. Children need to know where they stand in all kinds of life situations and discipline or loving guidance is an integral part of the child's sense of security. Setting limits is an important part of the guiding and caring process. The best way to teach a child limits is to have a consistent and non-threatening approach. To this end, the staff will set reasonable limits and will support each child's growth toward self-control and social awareness.

We will respect each child's feelings and uniqueness to help them become a happy, healthy, autonomous individual.

Discipline Policy

To the staff at the NSNH discipline describes the teaching/learning process by which children develop socially and grow to maturity. Our goal is to assist children in developing self control, self confidence, and ultimately self-discipline and sensitivity to their interactions with others. Underlying our approach is the recognition that each child is a unique individual and that the child's experience, environment, developmental level and culture influences his/her behaviour.

Behavioral guidance

Section 51 (1) A licensee must

- (a) ensure that behavioral guidance is appropriate to the age and development of the child who is receiving the guidance, and

(b) provide to employees and parents a written statement of the licensee's policy on behavioral guidance.

(2) If the child has a care plan that includes instructions respecting behavioral guidance, the licensee must ensure that

(a) any behavioral guidance given to the child is consistent with those instructions, and

(b) if the behavioral guidance includes the use of restraints, that the restraints are administered only by a person who is trained in the use of, and alternatives to the use of, restraints.

Harmful actions not permitted

52 (1) A licensee must ensure that a child, while under the care or supervision of the licensee, is not subjected to any of the following:

(a) shoving, hitting or shaking by an employee or another child, or confinement or physical restraint by another child;

(b) confinement or physical restraint by an employee, except as authorized in a child's care plan if the care plan includes instructions respecting behavioral guidance;

(c) harsh, belittling or degrading treatment by an employee or another child, whether verbal, emotional or physical, that could humiliate the child or undermine the child's self respect;

(d) spanking or any other form of corporal punishment;

(e) separation, without supervision by a responsible adult, from other children;

(f) as a form of punishment, deprivation of meals, snacks, rest or necessary use of toilet.

(2) A licensee must ensure that a child is not, while under the care or supervision of the licensee, subjected to emotional abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse or neglect as those terms are defined in Schedule H.

Communication of Behaviour and Expectations

Realistic expectations based on:

- i) General information – age, sex
- ii) Individual differences – developmental level, activity level, health, personality, temperament and history

CLEAR Behaviour description (be specific)

WHO does it?

WHAT he/she does

WHEN it occurs

Guidance

STAFF/PARENT(S) Need to be a:

- i) Child's level
Make eye contact
Calm, firm voice – positive statements
Have child repeat you instructions
State your expectations clear and specific limits
- ii) Be consistent, follow through
- iii) Reinforce appropriate behaviour
- iv) Encourage children to use teacher as a resource, model problem solving
- v) Anticipate – be observant, be aware of difficult situations, this allows the opportunity to anticipate potential difficulties and strategies.

Intervention when Difficult Behaviour Occurs:

Techniques and strategies used:

1. Withholding attention or ignoring: using only in response to behaviors that are “attention seeking”
2. Redirect (to an appropriate activity): change circumstances or environment which cause unwanted behaviour; offer choice when appropriate.
3. Natural and Logical Consequences: Natural consequences result “naturally” from inappropriate behaviour choices. Adult does not intervene; SAFETY must be taken into account. Children must be protected from decisions that would have dangerous or overly serious consequences.

Logical consequences are related or are somehow fitting for the particular behaviour. Logical consequences are imposed by the adult i.e.: a child who is pushing other children off a climbing toy is not allowed to play on if for ___ minutes. Once child has experienced the consequence, do not lecture or sympathize.

When a child's loss of control and the ability to reason causes him or her to become a safety hazard to him/herself or others, a caregiver may assist the child to prevent injury. Parent(s) would be informed if this occurred in the program.

Outside the Community Assistance

If a child's behaviour is not appropriate and can not be controlled by using the above mentioned strategies, outside consultation and community support services may be called upon to give input and suggestions to assist parents and staff. This procedure is to help the child develop a sense of self-worth and success and should be ultimately for the child not the adults.

Illness

Children who are not well enough to participate in all program activities, both indoor and outdoor, should be at home.

If your child contracts a communicable disease, notify the centre at once so that other families can be alerted. A doctor's written health clearance will be required before a child returns following a communicable disease.

The following are definite indicators that a child should **NOT** be at preschool.

1. A developing or acute cold with fever, runny nose and/or eye, coughing, sore throat. Once temperature, energy and well-being are normal, coughing and runny nose may continue without the child being infectious.
2. Fever over 100 degrees Fahrenheit (38 degrees Centigrade).
3. Communicable disease, infected skin or undiagnosed result – whether or not a child is infectious requires verification by the child's doctor (i.e.: the rash could be measles, scabies, etc.) so other families can be informed and take precautions.
4. Vomiting or Diarrhea– Your child may return 24hrs after the last vomit and after a solid bowel movement. If your child experiences these symptoms at the centre you will be asked to pick up after one vomit and two cases of diarrhea. Because children often become ill rapidly, it's essential that families can be reached during childcare hours. If the parent cannot be available, and alternate emergency contact should be designated. In the event that a child becomes ill, the centre staff will isolate and care for the child until the parent arrives. While every effort will be taken to maintain a healthy environment, it's important for families to plan alternate arrangements in the event of their child's illness.

Emergency Situations

If your child is seriously injured or becomes ill while at daycare, you will be notified by telephone immediately. If necessary your alternative contact person will be called. In an emergency we will call a taxi or ambulance and a staff member will accompany your child to the hospital.

All staff maintains first-aid certification and fire/earthquake evacuation drills are held once a month at the centre. Evacuation plans are posted near the fire exits.

Medication

NSNH staff will administer prescription drugs to children. Families are required to provide:

- A written authorization, including the dosage and times any drug is to be given and;
- Medication in the original container, clearly labeled with child's name, name of drug, and the dosage, the date of the purchase, and instructions for storage and administration of the drug.

Non-Prescription Medication

NSNH staff will administer non-prescription drugs to children once a NSNH Non-prescription medication form has been filled out by your doctor.

Conflict Resolution

Families are encouraged to discuss any questions or concerns they have regarding their child or the program with the centre staff. If concerns arise between an individual staff and a family they are encouraged to confront the Supervisor or Program Manager of Childcare.

If a resolution cannot be reached the Director of Child Care Services will become part of the resolution process.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION AND POLICIES

Fees

Upon registration in a North Shore Neighbourhood House Childcare program you will be required to pay an annual membership fee of \$15.00. Membership in the agency entitles you to vote at the Annual General Meetings of the Board of Directors and to participate in programs offered by the agency.

Monthly fees are due on the first of the month to the accountant. Post dated cheques are encouraged, payable on the first of every month. Please retain your receipts for income tax purposes; otherwise there will be a \$25.00 charge for issuing a duplicate receipt.

North Shore Neighbourhood House daycares and out of school care programs are part of the Child Care Operating Funding Program by the Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services.

Subsidy

To be considered for childcare subsidy, refer to the Provincial Government Blue Pages of the BC Telephone Directory, and locate the nearest Ministry for Children & Families office to your home. You may be eligible for subsidy depending on the number of people in your family and the net family income. If your family is eligible for subsidy, an authorization form will be given to you by the MCF Financial Worker. This form needs to be given to the accountant to initiate the process. The accountant will then determine the balance of your fee payable. Families will be notified by the centre before authorization renewal is required.

Late Pick-up

Late fines apply to families when the child is picked up late. The child will not be taken out of the centre by at the end of the day. If a child is not picked up by 2 hours after closing, he/she is considered abandoned and, if a family member has not contact the centre, staff must carry out the following procedures:

- A staff member will phone your home or place of employment. If there is no answer the alternate person listed on your registration form will be contacted.
- If no one can be contacted, the Ministry of Children and Families will be called to come and pick up your child.
- Children will not be sent home in taxis, nor will they be driven home by staff.

If a child is picked up late the following procedures is as followed:

1. First late pick-up - a notice is sent home to parents to remind them of our closing time.
2. Second late pick-up – a notice is sent to parents stating that they were late picking up their child. **Late fee is \$1.00 per minute.**
3. Third late pick-up, services will be withdrawn.

Withdrawal of a Child

One month's written notice is required when withdrawing from childcare. Payment of one month's fees may be given in lieu of notice.

If a child is withdrawn for any period of time, their name may be placed on the waitlist for re-admission upon request. Spaces cannot be saved or reserved for returning children. If a family wishes to maintain a space for any absence, the family will be required to pay for their space.

Section 48 CCFL Regulations

Nutrition

- 48** (1) A licensee must
- (a) ensure that each child has healthy food and drink according to the Canada's Food Guide, and
 - (b) promote healthy eating and nutritional habits.
- (2) If a child's record includes, or the child has a care plan that includes, instructions respecting food and drink for the child,
- (a) the requirements of subsection (1) (a) do not apply to the extent that they are inconsistent with those instructions, and
 - (b) the licensee must comply with those instructions.
- (3) A licensee must ensure that the food and drink given to a child is sufficient in quantity and quality to meet the developmental needs of the child, having regard to
- (a) the child's age,
 - (b) the number of hours the child is under the care of the licensee, and
 - (c) the child's food preferences and cultural background.
- (4) A licensee must ensure that children are not
- (a) fed by means of a propped bottle,
 - (b) forced to consume any food or drink, or
 - (c) left unsupervised while consuming food or drink.
- (5) A licensee must ensure that safe drinking water is available to children.
- (6) A licensee must make available to parents information on the food and drink given to children.
- (7) A licensee must ensure that food and drink are not used as a form of reward or punishment for children.