

Explore to the Core Preschool
116 JUNE AVENUE (Lower Suite)

PHONE (250)729-1552

Or email: exploretothecore@shaw.ca

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

“The Explore to the Core Preschool is a place where children are encouraged to think and communicate, while respecting themselves and others, during play.”

Myra Hawker

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WELCOME	4
HISTORY	4
PHILOSOPHY	4
PROGRAM AND SCHEDULE	4/5
STAFF/MANAGER/SUPERVISION	5
COMMUNICATION	6
FILING A COMPLAINT	6
CARE ROUTINES/SELF HELP SKILLS	6
DEVELOPMENT THROUGH INDOOR & OUTDOOR PLAY	6/7
NUTRITION	7
HEALTH AND SAFETY	8/9
EMERGENCY PLAN AND PROCEDURES	9/10
NECESSARY FORMS	10
REPORTING CHILD ABUSE	10
GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE	10/11
REPORTABLE AND NON REPORTABLE INCIDENTS	12
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	12
FEE SCHEDULE AND REFUND POLICY	12/13/14
TOILETING	14
EMERGENCY CLOSURES	14/15
ORIENTATION	15
ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE/SAFE RELEASE OF CHILDREN	15
STATUTORY HOLIDAYS	16
SPECIAL OCCASIONS	16

ACTIVE PLAY	16/17
SCREEN TIME	17
FIELD TRIPS AND TRANSPORTATION	17
APPENDICES	18

WELCOME

Welcome to the Explore to the Core Preschool (Which will also be referred to as, the Centre, throughout this handbook). Please read this handbook carefully as it pertains to enrolment and the policies and procedures that are involved in the program. If the reader has any questions or concerns with the content in this book, they should make an appointment with, Myra Hawker, the program administrator in order to discuss it.

HISTORY

Over the years Myra Hawker has had the privilege of working in various educational settings. Therefore, she is well aware of the need to create environments that foster over all well being for the individual (life long learner) prior to entering Kindergarten.

PHILOSOPHY

The Explore to the Core Preschool is dedicated to enhancing the lives of children who attend the Centre. We believe that all children are capable given the right tools. Therefore, through inquiry, what's needed to support the learner becomes evident. Furthermore, helping the child feel safe, secure and comfortable in the learning environment is vital. Modeling caring and kindness during play promotes fun exploration where competent learning is naturally achieved.

PROGRAM AND SCHEDULE

At the Centre the teacher allows children time and space to move around. In addition, appropriate toys and materials are provided to encourage growth for each learner. Respecting and responding to the needs of each child is done daily. Consequently, a flexible, but still structured schedule is in place and is as follows:

SEPTEMBER –AUGUST (The Centre will be closed at various times not listed.)

SCHEDULE- (All Times are Approximate and May Change Without Notice)

6:30 a.m. – 8:00 a.m. Interest Centres (Breakfast/Snacks Available All Morning)

8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. Free Play/ Includes Physical Activity

9:00 a.m. – 9:15 a.m. Tidy Up Time / One on One Reading

9:15 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. Circle Time

9:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. Snack Time

PROGRAM AND SCHEDULE Cont'd

10:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. Get Dressed for Outside Time

10:15 a.m. – 11:15 a.m. Outside Time (Weather Dependant) Walk May be Included

11:15 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Transitioning to Inside/Prepare for Lunch

11:30 a.m. -12:00 p.m. Lunch Time

12: 00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. Quiet Time (Rest the Body, Sleep or Play Quietly

1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. Free Play (Preschool Children Arrive Pick up by 4:30pm)

2:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m. Circle Time

2:15 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. Snack Time (Earlier on Music/Dance or Gymnastic Days)

2:30 p.m. – 3:15 p.m. Music/Dance/Gymnastics or Free Indoor Play

3:15 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. Prepare to Go Outside (Weather Dependant)

3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. Outside Time (Parents must pick up by 4:30 pm)

4:30 p.m.- 5:00 p.m. Interviews/Cleaning/Etc.

THE STAFF/MANAGER/SUPERVISION

An education is very much a part of quality care. That is why the staff at the Centre must be familiar with the expectations involving health and safety, guidance/caring, and first aid. In addition, Staff members must complete a criminal record check. The staff is also expected to work as team and in a respectful manner at all times and are expected to be familiar with the VIHA rules and regulations that pertain to licensed childcare facilities. The Manager has had to complete an, 'Application for a Community Care Facility License.' As owner and Manager, Myra Hawker has already followed this procedure. Myra Hawker or another regular staff member will be supervising the children unless there is an emergency. In the event of an emergency an approved/qualified person, will step in.

COMMUNICATION

Communication is important when working with families. As a result, the Centre has decided to have an open door policy. What that means is, that parents are welcome to visit the Centre anytime (unless restrictions are announced due to unforeseen Health and Safety issues) during their child's scheduled hours. However, the Centre expects confidentiality from all families who have a child/student participating in the Centre's program. Respecting each other is something the Centre wants modeled for those attending. Therefore, if a parent or guardian would like to speak to a staff member regarding another staff member, or anyone else participating in the Centre's program, this should be done at an appropriate time for all involved. For that reason, the Centre expects meetings to be made with the manager and to be held in a context that promotes confidentiality. On the other hand, gossip and malice will not be tolerated in this Centre.

FILING A COMPLAINT

Communication is vital when filing a complaint. Therefore, the 'who, what, when, where, why and how' will be documented to ensure proper recall. Complaints and allegations will be reported to licensing in a timely manner. As mentioned earlier in this handbook, staff is expected to be familiar with the VIHA rules and regulations regarding such procedures.

CARE ROUTINES/SELF HELP SKILLS

As children grow and become ready for Kindergarten, respectfulness is key. Patience, kindness and dignity will be upheld in every situation, whenever possible, to help each child feel and know that they are capable and competent learners. This will help motivate them to succeed as they try to master each new thing.

DEVELOPMENT THROUGH INDOOR & OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

In order to facilitate an environment that supports confident, competent, life long learners, the Centre will spend time learning to, think, communicate and gain personal and social skills both indoors and out (as weather permits). A focus on early numeracy and literacy will be normal components of daily activity. The opportunities to learn this way will be delivered in a play based manner. When going outside on warmer days it is important that children are protected from the harmful rays of the sun. Unfortunately, some people have trouble with strong scents and perfumes. Therefore, on days that sunscreen should be used, the Centre will

DEVELOPMENT THROUGH INDOOR AND OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES Cont'd

provide the children with a scent free sunscreen and teach the children how to apply it for themselves. Until they learn how to apply the sunscreen themselves, fresh gloves will be used by staff for each child. This process helps avoid cross contamination.

NUTRITION

We no longer have a food program to opt into. Therefore, families are expected to send their child with a healthy lunch each day. Please don't send juice, or sugary treats. The center will always try to have healthy things like fruit and vegetables on site, incase any child is still hungry after eating their lunch. There is no extra fee for this. Try to include your child when planning to prepare their lunch, as they are more likely to eat the lunch at lunch time if their input has been considered.

Allergies: Please notify the Centre immediately if your child has any allergies or sensitivities, so we can take the proper precautions. For example, we will post an Allergy Alert in the Centre, place the information in the child's file and put a health and safety plan in place, whenever necessary. No peanuts or peanut products please.

EXPLORE TO THE CORE PRESCHOOL IS A PEANUT AWARE ZONE!!!!

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The manager must be made aware of any medical conditions or food allergies on the registration forms provided in the enrolment package. If medication needs to be administered to your child a permission form must be fully completed and signed by the parents or legal guardians before a staff member is able to administer medication. Furthermore, medications must be provided in the original container (do not put medication in your child's food or water bottles) with proper information including the child's name, expiry date, and proper storage information. If necessary, there will be a lock box (or other safety measure) for the refrigerator and one where refrigeration is not necessary in order to properly store medications.

In order to adhere to the rules and regulations set in place by the Health Authority, children are not permitted to attend the Centre during times of illness; this includes a contagious infection. In fact, the child should not attend the Centre if the child has vomited, had diarrhea or a fever within the last 24 hours. A fever is 38 degrees Celsius (100.4 degrees Fahrenheit). It is important that the child does not return to the Centre until they have been without a fever that requires fever medication for at least 24 hours. A child should not attend if the child has an undiagnosed rash or pain, if the child has little energy (is not acting their usual self), if the child has contracted a communicable disease, or if mucus is green. Green mucus could be a sign of infection and medical attention may be required. If a child is crying for more than 30 minutes, they may not be feeling well or may just be too tired to attend the Centre for the day. Unfortunately, if a child is crying for long periods of time, it can upset the other children. Therefore, parents/guardians will be contacted to pick up their child from the Centre for the rest of the day.

In the event of a pandemic the Centre will do it's best to adhere to the provincial guide lines that are put in place.

Head Lice is something that can spread easily. Therefore, when someone has head lice we will wash bedding daily and stuffed animals will be washed and put away until the problem is no longer an issue. If children have live lice on their heads we will ask their parents to deal with it at home.

Hand Foot and Mouth

If a child has hand foot and mouth disease, we will ask parents to make sure that their child is comfortable, has no open blisters, fever, rash or cough before returning to the Centre.

HEALTH AND SAFETY Cont'd

Hand washing is very important to reduce the spread of germs. Therefore, the Centre will remind children to wash their hands upon arrival and throughout the day at the appropriate times. Parents are expected to sanitize their hands upon entry.

The Centre encourages children not to hit or bite. Hitting and biting hurt and can be very serious. In fact, if a child has their skin broken as a result of a bite, while in the Centre, the child's parents or guardians or alternative contact will be notified immediately, so that they may seek medical attention for the wound.

Receiving Immunizations for children is recommended by the Ministry of Health. Therefore, the Health history form that is included in the enrolment package must be filled out prior to enrolment. If parents or guardians choose not to immunize their child the Centre needs to be made aware of it in writing on the appropriate form.

EMERGENCY PLAN AND PROCEDURES

According to, Emergency Preparedness, Get Ready "Preparedness is Everyone's Responsibility" A facility that is caring for the vulnerable must be prepared for such things as, cardiac arrest, fire, violence/aggression, a missing child, bomb threat, evacuation, air exclusion, hazardous spills, or a major disaster. Preparing for such things, requires communication between the Centre and the families, who have children in attendance. For instance, families need to know that in the event of an emergency that requires the Centre to evacuate, but is limited to the immediate environment, the children and staff will meet, close to, but off premise, at the end of Fuller St. (We will turn left at the end of June Ave and go left to the end of Fuller St.) This is a very short distance, but it will not impose on the neighbors. We will stay there until it is safe to return to the Centre. However, if the Centre needs to evacuate on a larger scale the staff and children will make their way to the field at the Ecole Quarterway School, (located at 1632 Bowen Rd) and wait for families to pick up their children. If for some reason we were unable to go left in order to get to the, Ecole Quarterway School, the staff and children would go right on Bowen Rd and wait at the Bowen Park Sports Field for families to pick up their children. If the phone lines are down, we will rely on local authorities such as local police and the fire department to come to our aid. The Centre's whereabouts, in an emergency, will be linked to a GPS system. In the event of an emergency, young children are considered a priority. With this being said, the Vancouver Island Health Authority has a copy of the Centre's evacuation procedure and will know where to find the

EMERGENCY PLAN AND PROCEDURES Cont'd

staff and children if necessary. In the case of such an emergency, it is important that children feel safe and secure. Therefore, it is important, but not mandatory to create a comfort kit for your child. Within the enrolment package there is a Ziploc freezer bag containing an information sheet regarding the comfort kit (Also see Appendix A). Comfort kits will be returned when the child finishes attending the Centre.

NECESSARY FORMS

In the enrolment package there is a 'Child Care Registration Form', a sheet with 4 Emergency Permission Cards on it. Families are required to fill out all four squares as they have four different locations that they must go. For instance, one card must go into 2 the first aid kits, one card needs to go in the comfort kit and one card is kept as a spare. This will help ensure that your child has the appropriate information to receive medical attention in the event of an emergency. These forms must be filled out and given to the Centre prior to leaving your child for any length of time.

In the event that your child becomes ill or an emergency arises, the Centre will do it's best to notify you. If the Centre is unable to reach you, it will notify your child's emergency contacts. It is important to keep the information in your child's file accurate and up to date to ensure that someone you trust can pick your child up in the event of illness or emergency. However, the Centre will do it's best to create an atmosphere that keeps your child comfortable while they wait for someone to pick them up.

REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

Early Childhood Educators are required by law, to report, to the proper authorities any suspected or disclosed information pertaining to child abuse or neglect that may involve children in our care.

GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE

According to the Ministry of Health Planning, website at www.healthplanning.gov.bc.ca/ccf/child each child is a unique individual that behaves in ways that reflect their level of development. The website claims that family culture influences children's behaviour patterns as well. Therefore, all these aspects of the environment such as, things, space, people and time, must be considered when guiding children in the Centre. Considering these facets helps establish guidance

GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE Cont'd

strategies and prevention methods recommended by the Ministry of Health. The Ministry of Health provides a list of guidance strategies that are used as prevention in the Centre that are as follows:

1. Establish clear consistent and simple limits.
2. Offer straightforward explanations for limits.
3. State limits in a positive way.
4. Focus on the behavior rather than the child.
5. State what is expected.
6. Provide choices.
7. Allow time for children to respond to expectations.
8. Reinforce appropriate behavior.
9. Ignore minor incidents.
10. Encourage children to use you as a resource.
11. Be alert.
12. Use proximity.

Challenging behaviors may be cause for use of strategies such as:

1. Redirection
2. Holding (This Centre only does this if is stated in an appropriate Care Plan)
3. Time away (Not to be confused with non effective time outs)

Guidance Strategies that are used for intervention are as follows:

1. Gain a child's attention in a respectful way.
2. Use proximity and touch.
3. Use reminders.
4. Acknowledge feelings before setting limits.
5. Redirect or divert when appropriate.
6. Model problem solving.
7. Offer appropriate choices.
8. Use natural and logical consequences.
9. Limit the use of equipment
10. Provide opportunities for children to make amends.

For more information, families are encouraged to visit the website mentioned above.

REPORTABLE AND NON REPORTABLE INCIDENTS

A reportable incident is one that requires notifying the Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA). According to, the VIHA examples of reportable incidents involving children are as follows: aggressive or unusual behaviour by a child that is not documented in a care plan, attempted suicide, death, disease or outbreak occurrence, emergency restraint, emotional abuse, a severe fall requiring medical attention, financial abuse, a medication error, missing or wandering children, a motor vehicle injury, physical abuse, poisoning, a service delivery problem, sexual abuse, and an unexpected illness. For further details, pertaining to reportable incidents, refer to Schedule H of the Child Care Licensing Regulations

Examples of non reportable incidents are as follows: minor accidents and illness that do not require medical attention. The non reportable incidents will still be documented at the Centre.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

As mentioned earlier the Centre's intent is to support life long learners. Children's interests and needs will become evident through play. The Centre staff will use an inquiry model to foster growth. Therefore, on going Professional Development is encouraged and supported. Professional Development days will not necessarily be in line with those of School District 68. If the district is closed for Professional Development Days, the Centre might be as well. We will always try to notify families of closures in advance.

FEE SCHEDULE

The Centre is currently enrolled in the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative. We must apply and be approved annually. We have been approved for the 2026-2027 year. This saves families up to \$900.00 per month for children under the age of 3 years and over 3 years \$545.00 per month for fulltime daycare and \$100.00 per month for fulltime Preschool.

FEE SCHEDULE Cont'd

Fee Chart: Child Care Fees for Daycare Under 3 years of Age
Fulltime Daycare Monday –Friday

Explore to the Core Preschool	Child Care Fees
CCFRI Funded	\$364.00
Unfunded	\$1264.00

Fee Chart: Child Care Fees for Daycare 3 years to School Age
Fulltime Daycare Monday – Friday

Explore to the Core Preschool	Child Care Fees
CCFRI Funded	\$507.00
Unfunded	\$1052.00

More Information:

For Part-Time attendees, whether daycare or preschool, the cost per day can be found by dividing the monthly amount by 20.

Fee Chart: Child Care Fees for Preschool Under 3 years of Age
Fulltime Preschool Monday –Friday (1:00pm-4:30pm)

Explore to the Core Preschool	Child Care Fees
CCFRI Funded	\$568.00
Unfunded	\$668.00

Fee Chart: Child Care Fees for Preschool 3 years to School Age
Fulltime Preschool Monday – Friday (1:00pm-4:30pm)

Explore to the Core Preschool	Child Care Fees
CCFRI Funded	\$568.00
Unfunded	\$668.00

FEE SCHEDULE Cont'd

There is a \$25.00 enrolment fee that is due at the time of registration.

As of April 1st, 2025 also due at the time of registration, is the Parent Fee Portion for the child's first month.

The daily cost of attending the Explore to the Core Preschool depends on the type of care your child will be receiving (Preschool or Daycare). These costs can be seen on the fee chart provided in this handbook and can be found on pages 13-14. Fees must be paid in advance for each month. For example, February fees must be paid by January 31st. It is important that the Centre is paid on time, otherwise, families can lose their daycare spots and still owe for that month.

Children must be picked up on time each day. Early pick ups are fine, but late pick ups can cost the family \$10.00 after 30 minutes. In fact, if there is no prior arrangement regarding late pick ups and a child is picked up more than an hour late the Ministry of Children and Family Development may be notified.

REFUND POLICY

There is no reimbursement for fees for any reason (unless Myra Hawker decides otherwise). In fact, even if the Centre closes for weather conditions, power outages, professional development days, holidays, illness, for any reason, there will not be any reimbursement. However, if a closure became permanent or a family was to withdraw a child by giving the Centre 30 days notice, any unused post dated cheques would be returned to those whose name appears on the cheques.

TOILETING

If a child has an accident due to toileting issues, the child will change their clothes in the washroom. If a change pad is required, it will be used on the floor of the washroom.

EMERGENCY CLOSURES

If School District 68 is closed as a result of weather conditions (For example, if it is snowing) or a natural disaster, the Centre will be closed as well. If it is snowing badly and you are unsure whether schools will be open or not, you can listen to

EMERGENCY CLOSURES Cont'd

either radio station 106.9 (the wolf) or 102.3 (the wave) for information. The information in such a matter, is usually announced just before 7 am that day. Even so, the Centre may choose to close due to weather or safety issues even if School District 68 does not. If so, parents/guardians will be notified of the closure. If parents/guardians have questions regarding emergency closures, please contact the Centre via telephone (250) 729-1552 or send an email to:

exploretothecore@shaw.ca

ORIENTATION

Gradual entry is an option at the Centre. Parents or guardians are encouraged to bring the child for a tour of the Centre in advance. If the child has not been left anywhere before or the child feels unsure, parents or guardians can stay and play with the child until they are ready to be left for a few hours.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE/SAFE RELEASE OF CHILDREN

Arrival

Out of respect for the neighbours, please turn your car off when dropping off a child or picking a child up. When the child arrives at the Centre they must be signed in by the grown up that drops them off.

Departure

The child must be signed out when they are picked up as well. If the person picking the child up is not on the registration form as an emergency contact, does not have identification (the first time picking the child up), is not over the age of 19, appears

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE/SAFE RELEASE OF CHILDREN Cont'd

in capable of caring for the child, or seems intoxicated, the child will not be released. The child will be kept safe until the parent/ guardian or someone else on the emergency contact list is able to pick the child up.

If a family separates while attending the program the child cannot be withheld from either parent who tries to pick the child up without a copy of the court order on file.

STATUTORY OTHER HOLIDAYS

The Centre will be closed for all Statutory Holidays. The Centre will be closed for one week during Spring Break, two weeks in the summer and one week at Christmas. Families who have children attending part-time will not be billed for Statutory Holidays.

The Centre will be closed on the following Statutory and other holidays:

Labour Day - September

Remembrance Day - November

Thanksgiving Day – October or November

Christmas Day – December

Boxing Day - December

New years Day - January

Family Day - February

Good Friday-Easter Monday

Victoria Day- May

Canada Day- July (The Centre will be closed for the last week of July)

BC Day - August (The Centre will be closed the first week of August)

SPECIAL OCCASIONS

If it is okay with the child's family, the Centre will celebrate the child's birthday. The Centre will sing Happy Birthday to the child and everyone will have a muffin with whip cream (if they want). The Centre will give each child a small gift on their birthday as well. We will also have fun with some themed art and music around specific holidays and celebrations, but open ended materials and regular songs will be available to children who do not want to participate.

ACTIVE PLAY

When children are participating in a program that lasts for a period of 3 hours or more; they are expected to be involved in physical activity for a minimum of 30 minutes and 60 minutes for all day care. Therefore, many opportunities for physical activity are

ACTIVE PLAY Cont'd

implemented throughout each day. Please make sure your child has a comfortable pair of shoes, onsite, so that they are able to safely run, jump, hop, etc. during the day.

SCREEN TIME

There will be limited screen time in this program for children attending more than 4 hours at a time.

FIELD TRIPS AND TRANSPORTATION

The Explore to the Core Preschool will be taking children enrolled in the Centre on regular field trips and may use vehicles to do so. If a vehicle is used, each Child will be properly placed in a, Centre or family supplied, booster or car seat that is appropriate for their height and weight. We will not use seats that have passed their expiration date and due to the age and size of the children attending the Centre, children will not ride in the front seat at any time. The Centre staff may use up to two vehicles to transport the children to each desired destination. If a staff member is not a fully qualified Early Childhood Educator an exemption may be in place, so the staff member can be alone with children during the ride to and from the desired destination. Once the desired destination is reached the Centre staff and children will reunite as a group. Whatever vehicle we use, that is owned or driven by Myra Hawker, will be properly insured for business use and will have liability insurance in place. However, this does not include vehicles driven by parents/guardians who intend to meet us at the desired location. Therefore, the Explore to the Core Preschool cannot be held accountable for those vehicles or their occupants. Even so, the Centre may not always use a vehicle when going on field trips. The Centre may choose to walk or take public transit instead. Regardless of the chosen mode of transportation, First Aid kits, Medical Permission Cards, pictures of the children and an attendance record will accompany staff members. If families would prefer not to have their child transported in a vehicle they can meet us at the desired location or keep their child home on the chosen field trip days.

APPENDICES

A-C

Appendix A- Comfort Kits

Appendix B- Policies and Procedures Agreement Form

Appendix C- Medical Permission Forms

Appendix A

Comfort Kits

In the event of an emergency it is imperative that care givers help children feel as comfortable as possible. Parents and or guardians can contribute in this area as well. The way parents and or guardians can help is by providing care givers with a comfort kit. Once a comfort kit is assembled it should be given to the Preschool in order to be kept in the Preschool's emergency kit. Unused comfort kits will be returned annually. A fresh one is expected each year that your child attends the Preschool. Annually replacing comfort kits will avoid spoilage and stay current with your child's interests and needs.

Recommended items for the Comfort Kit are as follows:

- Picture or pictures of family and friends.
- An intimate sealed letter to your child (This would only be opened and read in the event of a real emergency.
- Age appropriate toys.
- A stuffed animal.
- 1 Bottle of water.
- 1 Juice box.
- 1 can of vegetables. □ 2 Nutri grain bars.

All the items must be able to fit in the freezer bag that is provided by the Preschool. A current picture of the child must be slipped into the front of the bag so it can be seen visibly from the outside of the bag. A medical emergency permission card must be inserted into the bag as well.

APPENDIX B

Explore to the Core Preschool Policies and Procedures Agreement

I _____ am the parent/guardian of _____ . I have read the Explore to the Core Preschool's Policies and Procedures and I agree to abide by them. In addition, I give permission for my child to be photographed and recorded for the purpose of learning together.

Print Name: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Once this document is signed please return it the Preschool as soon as possible.

APPENDIX C

Medical Permission Form

(The Manager will provide a copy.)