

# Early Years

PRESCHOOL  
FAMILY HANDBOOK



**RECREATION SURREY**  
Healthy Communities. Active Together.





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## OUR EARLY YEARS PHILOSOPHY

The City of Surrey's play-based preschool programs are designed to reflect the image of the child: one who is curious, capable, creative and confident. We look to inspire our children to work and learn both collaboratively and independently according to their interests.

Our responsive programs align with the BC Ministry of Education Curriculum, and strive to set a foundation of success for the child, both in school and in life.

We recognize that with diversity comes different beliefs, values and learning styles. We aim to celebrate all children for their unique abilities and contributions.

We support children in the development of new skills and experiences that will facilitate their journey to becoming healthy, productive members of the community.

The City of Surrey is committed to providing preschool programs that are safe, nurturing, inclusive and that foster respect and compassion in all children. We provide a responsive approach to early learning that embraces all areas of child development, promotes positive self-image, and encourages these characteristics in all children through to adulthood.

## RESPONSIVE CURRICULUM

Our Early Years programs develop as the educator actively listens and observes children in play, creating a collaborative approach to learning. In this process, meaningful curriculum planning is created and the room is set up as an invitation to inquiry and wonder. Knowing that these key elements are cornerstones of true learning, children gain different perspectives, identify gaps in existing theories and create new knowledge.

The method of exploration through provocation meets each child's learning style, which builds a positive sense of self and of belonging. Through the responsive curriculum it is our hope to inspire exploration, critical thinking, creativity and community.



## LICENSED PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS

Preschool programs are based on a responsive curriculum where the educators offer an exciting, reflective program based on children's interests. Our approach focuses on the five areas of healthy child development: social, emotional, physical, creative and cognitive. Based on our responsive approach, programs include various learning opportunities, engagement in open ended activities, free play and exploration - all concepts align with the communication, thinking and social competencies that are the core of the new Provincial school curriculum.

### 3 Year Old Year Long Licensed Preschool Program

All children must be 3 years of age by December 31 of the current school year to enroll.

### 4 Year Old Year Long Licensed Preschool Program

All children must be 4 years of age by December 31 of the current school year to enroll.

### Pre-K Year Long Licensed (Extended Hours) Program

All children must be 4 years of age by December 31 of the current school year to enroll.

Register for the full year September to June – scheduled monthly payments are available.

For information on all other early learning programs that we offer, please refer to Surrey's Recreation Guide, [www.surrey.ca/preschool](http://www.surrey.ca/preschool), or contact your local recreation centre.

### Financial Support & Information

Financial Assistance is available through the Affordable Child Care Benefit program for licensed programs:

[www.gov.bc.ca/affordablechildcarebenefit](http://www.gov.bc.ca/affordablechildcarebenefit).

Our extended programs may be eligible for additional subsidy. Contact your local recreation centre for more details.

## REGISTRATION

At the time of registration, parents will receive a registration package. These forms provide us with the necessary information to ensure a safe and nurturing beginning to your child's preschool experience.

### Forms included in this package are:

- Child Profile
- Medical Disclosure and Consent Form
- Photo Release Form
- Emergency Consent Card with Photo
- Administration of Prescribed Medication Form (if required)

If you have questions about the above forms, please contact your local recreation centre. All forms must be completed in full prior to the start of the program.

## AUTHORIZED PERSON PICK-UP

As a safety measure, we ask that parents provide names of at least three people authorized to pick up their child on the Medical Disclosure and Consent Form. If an unfamiliar adult is picking up the child, the educator will cross reference the authorized persons list located on the Medical Disclosure and Consent Form. If educators are uncertain, as per City of Surrey policy, identification will be requested. If the individual is not on the authorized persons list, the child will remain in the classroom until an authorized person arrives. A parent/guardian can give permission to an alternate person. Permission must be given to the preschool educator by e-mail, fax or written notice.

## GRADUAL ENTRY

Gradual entry is the transition period that gently brings your child through the changes and adjustments associated with starting school. This is critical in developing a secure, predictable and trusting atmosphere, which will lead to an enjoyable, productive year for all.

Beginnings are very important. A gradual entry period is designed to ease the separation process for children and families and allows for successful integration into the preschool class. Every child enters the classroom through the gradual entry process regardless of their starting date.

The first few days of class will focus on establishing an atmosphere that is positive, comfortable and fun.

It is our goal to see that your child establishes feelings of security and acceptance, whether they have had previous social experiences or not. We advocate for a gradual entry process for all participants in our preschool programs. Fears and anxieties are greatly reduced when this special kind of attention is given.

During this time the instructors introduce children to the classroom and their classmates, and review the guidelines and limits. Your child will begin with a shorter day that will, over the first few days, increase toward the full class time frame. These short segments will be somewhat staggered to keep initial class sizes small. These shortened days enable staff to spend time bonding with each child.

To ensure your child's healthy attachment to their preschool instructor, your presence and assistance may be required during this gradual entry time.

You will receive your child's gradual entry schedule prior to the beginning of the program.

## HEALTH AND ILLNESS PRACTICES

As children are growing and developing, so are their bodies' immune systems. A child's ability to combat common illnesses can be impeded due to the immaturity of their immune systems. If your child is unable to participate due to illness, please notify your child's educator.

For the health and consideration of all, and to avoid the potential spread of illness, we ask that parents keep their children home if the following moderate to severe signs/symptoms are present:

- Fever (100 F or 38.3 C)
- Cold-like symptoms: coloured nasal discharge, coughing, runny nose and eyes
- Diarrhea
- Infected skin or eyes, or an unexplained rash
- Any unexplained or undiagnosed pain
- Difficulty in breathing
- Sore throat or trouble swallowing
- Headaches and stiff neck
- Nausea and vomiting
- Children with known or suspected communicable diseases

## SCREEN TIME AWARENESS

The City recognizes that reducing the time spent sitting in front of screens is important in establishing healthy habits for life. Early exposure to television is associated with an increased prevalence of attention problems and delayed language development. Excessive exposure has also been shown to be associated with cognitive and social delays. Children that have more than 2 hours of screen time per day are two times more likely to be overweight or obese than their peers that watch 1 hour or less per day.

While technology and screens are becoming an everyday part of our lives, there is so much more for children to explore and learn when they are engaged in hands-on activities.

Programs where children are in attendance for 3 hours or less should not include screen time activities into the daily routine.

For programs where children are in attendance for 3 hours or longer screen time is limited to 30 minutes or less per day.

The City recognizes the benefits of the (teacher/child) co-learning experience when engaged with technology. The documentation of children's learnings and the development of everyone's knowledge of an interest/project through research is part of our curriculum expectations for all.

## ACTIVE PLAY

Active play helps to promote healthy growth and development and supports body control and movement. Active play can help build strong bones and muscles, improve balance, coordination and assists with the development of gross motor and fine motor skills. Active play also helps to promote children's confidence, improves concentration and thinking and learning skills and provides opportunities to develop social skills and make friends.

Active play is physical activity which includes moderate to vigorous bursts of high energy, raising children's heart rate and may make them "huff and puff" such as running or jumping.

The following licensed child care programs must ensure the minimum outdoor active play corresponds to the length of time the program is offered. In extreme weather indoor active play is acceptable. Active play may be accumulated through 15 minute portions of time throughout the day or continuously.

- Preschool (30 months to school age)
- Group Child Care (30 months to School Age) - Extended Hours Pre-K

<b>Length of Program</b>	<b>Amount of Active Play</b>
1-2 hours	20 minutes
2-3 hours	30 minutes
3-4 hours	40 minutes
4-5 hours	60 minutes

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In the event of a fire drill or emergency evacuation, the educator will lead the class out of the building to a designated meeting place. Educators will have class medical forms in the event that parents need to be contacted. Please speak with your child's educator to ensure that you have a copy of the centre's emergency plan and emergency alternate location plan.

## COMFORT KIT

In the event of an earthquake or other emergency situations, we want to ensure that your child is cared for at all times. This specially designed kit will contain items that help soothe your child in the event of an emergency. These kits will be stored in the classroom and returned at the end of the year. A complete list of recommended items is included in your parent package. Please bring your child's comfort kit on the first day of preschool.

## ALLERGEN AWARE POLICY

For the health and safety of all children, we may require a program to be allergen aware by restricting some types of allergens (for example: nuts, dairy, etc.).

At the time of registration and on the Medical Disclosure and Consent Form, parents are asked to indicate any severe or life threatening allergies. When a program is designated as allergen aware, notices will be sent home with the children and posted within the program entrance, notifying parents of any snack restrictions.

# HEALTHY EATING GUIDELINES

Early Childhood Education services positively reinforce a culture of healthy eating and help children to develop healthy behaviours related to food choices. Children are born knowing when they feel hungry and when they feel full. Trusting and teaching children to listen to their bodies reinforces skills that they need for lifelong healthy eating.

## Open Snack

A nutritious between-meal snack helps to maintain energy levels throughout the day, and helps to prevent overeating.

## Choosing the best foods

- Is there a dark green or orange vegetable? Broccoli, pepper, spinach, carrots
- Is there a whole grain food item? Whole grain bread instead of white bread or bagel
- Is there milk or a lower-fat milk alternative? 1% milk or low-fat cottage cheese, soy milk
- Is there a low fat meat or alternative? Turkey, eggs or beans

## Examples of Healthy Snacks

### Vegetables & Fruit

Apples	Bananas	Carrot sticks
Fruit salad	Grapes	Orange slices

### Grain Products

Whole grain pita	Whole grain bagel
Whole grain crackers	Brown rice

### Milk & Alternatives

1% milk	Cheese	Eggs
Low-fat chocolate milk	Cottage cheese	Hummus
Low-fat yogurt	Soy milk	Nori snacks

## **GUIDING CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOURS**

We believe in providing a safe, secure, respectful and nurturing environment where each child feels free to express their thoughts and emotions. We encourage the development of deep and meaningful relationships between peers and educators. We provide many opportunities for social interaction and discussions as effective ways for children to learn to understand and deal with their feelings and to respect the feelings of others.

### **Our Guidance Strategies**

Respectful guidance from educators helps children gain independence, self confidence, self control and a sense of personal and social responsibility.

### **Clear, Consistent and Simple Limits**

Clear, consistent and simple limits help children to learn and understand what is expected of them. Our educators create positive boundaries, encouraging the child to focus attention on what to do, rather than what not to do.

### **Cues and Indicators**

Cues and indicators offer the children notice that there will be a change in their activity or routine. This provides the child with the opportunity to anticipate, prepare and adjust to the change.

### **Acknowledging Feelings**

By acknowledging children's feelings we help them to feel understood and supported in the environment. Acknowledging a child's feelings prior to stating a limit will help to elicit a more positive response from the child.

### **Choices**

To promote self regulation and independence, we offer age and developmentally appropriate choices for the child, based on the set of circumstances.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **What do I need before my child starts preschool?**

We ask that all forms are completed and returned prior to the first day of class. For information on where to drop off packages, please call the Community Recreation Centre in your neighbourhood. Contacts have been provided in this handbook.

### **My child is new to preschool. Can I stay to help transition him/her into the program?**

Of course! Sometimes a new environment can be scary. Each child has a different way of dealing with separation. To ensure a healthy attachment, your presence may be required. A parent is welcome to stay and make this transition positive for everyone.

### **What does my child need to bring to preschool?**

Please ensure your child has a complete change of clothes and a healthy snack in their backpack.

### **Does my child have to be toilet trained?**

Yes, all children entering preschool should be toilet trained before the first day of class.

### **Do I need to provide a snack for my child?**

Yes, parents should provide a nutritious snack for your child each day of class. More information on snacks will be provided by your child's educator. Please refer to Healthy Eating Guidelines on page 14.

### **What if I need to withdraw my child from the preschool program?**

Please call the recreation centre in your neighbourhood where the front desk staff will be happy to help you. Contacts have been provided in this handbook. Our \$50 program withdrawal fee applies within seven days of the start of the program or anytime during the preschool year.

### **My payment and/or contact information has changed - who should I contact?**

If your address, phone number or payment information has changed, please contact the recreation centre that your child is registered at. We also ask that you inform your child's educator of any changes to personal information.

### **Will my child play outside?**

All licensed child care programs in the province must ensure children have daily access to outdoor play. In the City of Surrey our Active Play Policy mandates a minimum of 30 minutes of outdoor play per day, rain or shine. These outdoor play times vary depending on the length of the preschool program. In extreme weather conditions (thunder and lightning, high winds) indoor active play may be an alternative.

With our Active Play Policy in mind, please ensure your child has appropriate clothes and protection for the weather (for example: sunscreen, rain jacket, hat, boots, gloves, etc.).

When children are dressed properly the barrier of discomfort is removed, allowing everyone to freely enjoy the outdoor experience. Part of the outdoor learning experience of preschool is assessing and properly dressing for the weather. Please refer to Active Play Policy on page 12.

### **Do I have to notify someone if my child will not be coming to preschool for the day?**

If your child is unable to fully participate in the program due to illness, parents are asked to keep children at home. A Health and Illness Procedure is in place to maintain the health and safety of all children. Please also notify the child's educator if your child has an illness, will be late or absent, or picked up early on a particular day.

### **Do preschool programs go on field trips?**

We enjoy offering a wide variety of learning experiences to all of the children involved in our programs. These experiences may include classroom guests, as well as occasional field trips to various locations around our community. In order for us to provide these opportunities for the children, field trips require parent participation and rely on parents for transportation.



## FAMILY RESOURCES LINKS

[www.bcrpa.bc.ca](http://www.bcrpa.bc.ca)

[www.childcareoptions.ca](http://www.childcareoptions.ca)

[www.fraserhealth.ca](http://www.fraserhealth.ca)

[www.dcrs.ca](http://www.dcrs.ca)

[www.options.bc.ca](http://www.options.bc.ca)

[www.surreylibraries.ca](http://www.surreylibraries.ca)

[www.the-centre.org](http://www.the-centre.org)

[www.bced.gov.bc.ca](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca)

[www.activeforlife.ca](http://www.activeforlife.ca)

[www.live5210.ca](http://www.live5210.ca)

[www.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/caring-for-young-children/child-care](http://www.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/caring-for-young-children/child-care)

[www.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/early-learning/teach/early-learning-framework](http://www.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/early-learning/teach/early-learning-framework)

### Accessibility and Inclusion

Tel: 604-501-7572

Email: [inclusion@surrey.ca](mailto:inclusion@surrey.ca)

Address: 13450 104 Avenue, Surrey BC V3T 1V8

Accessibility and Inclusion offers a variety of programs and support services for children with disabilities to get involved and get active. We strive to remove potential barriers so every child in the community can participate in recreation and leisure programs to improve their overall health and wellness.

**Chuck Bailey Recreation Centre**

13458 107A Avenue | 604-598-5898

**Cloverdale Recreation Centre**

6188 176 Street | 604-598-7960

**Don Christian Community Centre**

6220 184 Street | 604-502-6400

**Fleetwood Community Centre**

15996 84 Avenue | 604-501-5030

**Fraser Heights Recreation Centre**

10588 160 Street | 604-592-6920

**Guildford Recreation Centre**

15105 105 Avenue | 604-502-6360

**Kensington Prairie Community Centre**

16824 32 Avenue | 604-592-2605

**Newton Recreation Centre**

7120 136B Street | 604-501-5540

**South Surrey Recreation & Arts Centre**

14601 20 Avenue | 604-592-6970

**Surrey Nature Centre**

14225 Green Timbers Way | 604-502-6065