

VWCA Childcare Parent Handbook

Nature Preschool Daycare Out-of-School Care



Victoria West Community Association
521 Craigflower Road
Victoria, BC V9A 6Z5

Telephone: 250-590-8922
Fax: 250-590-8921

Website: www.victoriawest.ca

E-mail: littlesteps@victoriawest.ca (preschool & daycare)
Email: outofschoolcare@victoriawest.ca (out of school care)

Dear Parents,

We would like to extend a warm welcome to all the children and families at Victoria West Community Association. We are committed to providing the best possible learning experience for each child entrusted to our care. To facilitate the preschool, daycare and out of school care programs, we are pleased to offer this parent handbook. The purpose of the handbook is to better acquaint parents with the philosophy, principles, and operations of the Centre. It is hoped that the contents of this handbook will assist you and your child in making your time at Victoria West Community Association a successful, happy, and positive experience.

All parents are expected to be familiar with the Centre guidelines and policies listed within and abide by them.

Sincerely,

Staff of Victoria West Community Association

Victoria West Community Association

Vision:

Victoria West community is a diverse, healthy and vital place to live, work and play.

Mission:

The Victoria West Community Association is a not for profit organization whose mission is to engage residents in community stewardship, to impact decisions that affect the community, to raise awareness, to foster a sense of spirit and pride and to encourage participation in community issues, solutions, projects and events.

Victoria West Community Centre is the heart of the neighborhood, offering diverse and relevant activities for all. It is a place where neighbors meet, learn and volunteer. The Centre provides physical, intellectual, social and cultural services and programs that contribute to individual and community health and development.

Values:

Accountability: We are transparent and accountable to our community, funders and partners.

Inclusiveness: The purposes of the Society are to promote, support or undertake any activity that will enhance the quality of life in the Victoria West community and supports the diverse population of the community.

Sustainability: The social, environmental and economic health and vitality of the community is enhanced by VWCA activities and initiatives.

Service: The VWCA provides services to the community as an advocate for, and facilitate participation in, the discussion of community issues in the provision of community services and in sharing information.

Little Steps Daycare

Philosophy

The Little Steps program is child directed and play based. This emphasizes the value of unstructured learning that allows children to make choices, experiment, and use hands on exploration with materials in the preschool and daycare environment. The toys and activities are developmentally appropriate to support your child's emotional, physical, social and cognitive needs. It is our philosophy that children learn best when the information provided to them is easily relatable to their lives, so most of the programming revolves around topics that they can find within their community.

Little Steps strives to provide a safe, welcoming environment for children to learn about their world as well as how to navigate in it. Emphasis on cooperation, and using words to solve conflicts and build self confidence is a large part of the program. We strive to allow children to make their own choices and explore in an environment which is physically safe, cognitively challenging, and emotionally nurturing.

Program Hours

Little Steps Daycare operates Monday to Friday from 8:00am to 5:00pm year round:

8am- 9am: Classroom opens with greetings and handwashing

8am – 9:30: Open snack table, play and art

9:30am: Outside play

12:00pm: Lunch time

12:30pm-1:30pm: Rest Time

1:30pm: Children that are awake have quiet activity time

2:00pm: Afternoon play & Snack

2:30pm: Outdoor play

4:00pm-5pm: Indoor Activity & Story Time

We ask that you stay with your child until the classroom door is opened and you have signed the child in.

The times of the schedule are flexible and may be adapted to meet the needs of the children

Nature Preschool

Philosophy

The Nature Preschool offers a curriculum that supports a deep connection to nature. We focus on creating a framework for children to play and learn in a natural environment. The Nature Preschool focuses on the whole child by promoting physical, emotional, social, and cognitive growth. Children will be learning about nature through their direct experience, exploration, and discovery of the world around them. The Nature Preschool is a place where children are free to challenge themselves physically while enjoying the freedom of the outdoors. We will encourage the development of independence and self expression. The majority of the day will be spent outdoor exploring in all weather conditions.

*As our program is outdoors, safety and focusing are key requirements of this program. Children must be three years of age.

Program Hours

Nature Preschool operates Monday to Friday from 9:00am to 12:00pm from September - June:

9:00am: Free play/hand washing upon arrival

9:30am – 10:00am: Circle Time

10:00am – 11:30am: Outdoor Exploration

11:30am: Washroom Break

11:45am: Snack Time

12:00pm: End of program

*Please ensure that you arrive by 9:30am.

Monday: Field Trip/Adventure

Tuesday: Garden/Orchard

Wednesday: Nature Art & Craft

Thursday: Science

We ask that you stay with your child until the classroom door is opened and you have signed the child in.

Little Steps Daycare and Nature Preschool Requirements

Your child must be three years old by December 31st to attend Daycare and Preschool, and be fully toilet trained. This includes using the toilet unassisted and without prompting.

Application forms will not be accepted until fully complete. A tour will then be scheduled by the manager after this process is completed. Registration is not confirmed until the application is accepted and the deposit is received.

What to bring?

Please label each item of clothing and store in a large zip lock bag in cubby or backpack. If items are not labelled, an educator will label them. If clothing is sent home dirty, it must be replaced the following day.

- Two changes of clothes (top, pants, underwear, and socks), indoor and outdoor shoes.
- Weather Wear: rain coat, muddy buddy/rain pants, rain boots, warm hat and gloves, sun hat, sunscreen (summer), and running shoes. (No open-toed shoes or sandals).
- Food: Lunch and two snack and a water bottle needs to be sent each day. Please label all lunch bags, containers, and water bottles with your child's name. ****Please note that all VWCA programs are NUT FREE.****
- Fitted Sheet/Blanket (labelled).
- Optional: small stuffed animal
- All children are required to participate in a 1-hour rest time. Books/quiet toys will be provided after 30 minutes to any child that does not fall asleep.

Food and Drink

We promote healthy eating and nutritional habits. Safe drinking water is always available for all children, and we encourage them to drink as much as they would like. If a child has specific nutritional requirements, we will ensure that all staff understands these requirements. Please pack a snack and/or lunch from home which follows Canada's Food Guide. Please inform the staff of any dietary needs or allergies.

For Daycare, please pack two healthy snacks and a lunch from home.

For Preschool, please pack a small, healthy snack.

****Please note that all VWCA Childcare Programs are NUT FREE****

Junk food/foods with high sugar content are not allowed in our programs. Please do not send candy, gummies, cookies, cake, pastries, chocolate bars, chips, juice or pop.

Active Play

We acknowledge the importance of active play in the preschool and the daycare. Gross motor development is just as important as fine motor development. We go outside daily for 60-90 minutes in both of our Early Childhood Programs. When we are outside, we have outdoor equipment that the children can explore, a variety of games, and time to explore natural materials. We will go out in ALL weather conditions to allow children time to get fresh air and have play time. We will be enjoying all seasons outdoors. Please see "What to Bring" to ensure your child is dressed appropriately for outdoor play.

Grace Period for All Children

There is a six-week grace probationary period for all new children enrolled at the Centre. This gives the Centre and parents the opportunity to see if the child is engaged and thriving in the environment.

Out of School Care

Philosophy

Our program aims at a balanced combination of structured and unstructured program time. Activities are developmentally appropriate to support your child's emotional, physical, social and cognitive needs. It is our philosophy that children learn best when the information provided to them is easily relatable to their lives, so most of the programming revolves around topics that they can find within their community.

VWCA strives to provide a safe, welcoming environment for children to learn about their world as well as how to navigate in it. Emphasis on cooperation, using words to solve conflicts and build self confidence is a large part of the program. We strive to allow children to make their own choices and explore in an environment which is physically safe, cognitively challenging and emotionally nurturing.

Program Hours

Out of School Care operates Monday – Friday from 7:00am – 8:45am and 2:45pm to 5:30pm. Pro D days from 8:00am-5:00pm @ Victoria West Community Centre.

Before School Care @ Victoria West Community Centre

7:00-8:00am: children arrive, craft/activity free play, breakfast

8:20am: breakfast ends

8:30-8:45am, clean up, walk to school (drop off)

After School Care @ Vic West Elementary School (Gym) or Victoria West Community Centre

2:45pm: pick up at VWES.

2:45-3:30pm: outdoor time in designated space

3:30pm: indoors to designated space. Children drop off backpacks, pinnies, and coats.

3:40pm: Washroom break, wash hands.

3:45-4:00pm: snack

4:00-5:00pm: inside activity, programmed choices

5:00-5:30pm: clean up from activity, children prepare for pick-up. Free play until pick-up

Program Information:

Victoria West Community Centre & Vic West Elementary School Site

The Victoria West Out of School Program offers a caring and safe place for children to learn, play, and have fun. Children registered in this program will be offered the chance to participate in a variety of structured and unstructured activities, games, arts and crafts, and activity-based learning.

Program Registration

Children must be school-aged (5-12 years) and **attend Victoria West Elementary School** to be eligible for enrollment in the program.

Fall registration will commence in March.

Priority will be given to:

- Internal Families
- External Families wanting both morning and after-school care
- All other applicants

What to bring?

- A change of clothes (top, pants, underwear, and socks) in a labeled large zip lock bag when your child starts Out of School Care. We can store the bag of spare clothing in a bin at the Centre/School.
 - Food: Breakfast (Before School Care) and Snack (After School Care) and water will be provided during program times. If your child requires additional food, please send it with them to school for the day.
- **Please note that all VWCA Childcare Programs are Nut-Free.
- Outside Wear: Please ensure children are dressed in weather appropriate clothing, as the Out of School program will be spending time outside and active every day.

Food and Drink

We promote healthy eating and nutritional habits. Safe drinking water is always available for all children and we encourage them to drink as much as they would like. If a child has specific nutritional requirements, we will ensure that all staff understands these requirements. A breakfast will be provided during Before-School Care, and a snack will be provided during After-School Care. Please inform the staff of any dietary needs or allergies.

Active Play

The Out of School program spends time outside every day for a minimum of 40 minutes. When it is raining, snowing or too cold, we will still go outside to give the children a chance to run and get some fresh air, but will come inside for some indoor activities if it gets too cold. Please make sure your child has weather appropriate clothing.

Grace Period for All Children

There is a six-week grace probationary period for all new children enrolled at the Centre. This gives the Centre and parents the opportunity to see if the child is engaged and thriving in the environment.

Fees:

Preschool (5 days/wk)

\$370.00/Month

Daycare(5 days/wk)

\$900.00/Month

Out of School Care

Before School Care \$140.00/Month

After School Care \$315.00/Month

Before and After Care \$420.00/Month

Fees may be adjusted to keep up with the cost of living. Parents will be notified with the amount prior to registration for the following year.

Fees are averaged over the year, some months may have fewer days, some have more, but the fees do not vary.

Fees are **due on the first of the month**, payable by direct withdrawal.

Upon registration, a \$125 application fee is due. \$25 will be retained for the administration fee. \$100 will be applied to your first month's fees.

NSF Penalty Procedure

Should your direct debit payment be returned to our organization as NSF, we require repayment. Charges will be applied to your account, unless paying by cash or cheque is requested. Repayment must be in the amount of the original fee as well as a \$30.00 NSF penalty charge. Upon the VWCA receiving notification from our financial institution regarding NSF a notification will be sent to you via email.

Payment Requirements:

Program financials are managed by the Centre Manager. We use email communication and will use the email address you have provided on your child's registration form for all communication. Important information is sent out via email; therefore, please insure that the email provided is accessible at all times, even during holiday breaks. If this is not possible, please provide your preferred method of communication.

- Fees are due on the 1st of the month and are paid via direct withdrawal. Withdrawals will appear on your statement as Victoria West Community Association or VWCA.
- A completed Pre-Authorized Debit (PAD) Authorization form must be provided prior before your first day of care.
- For families wishing to have more than one payee, please complete separate PAD forms.
- A VOID cheque must be attached to the PAD agreement. If you are unable to attach a VOID cheque, please ensure that your financial information is entered correctly. Failure to provide correct information will result in a charge of \$15.00.

Here at VWCA we recognize that there are a number of situations that can cause financial strain. If you need to arrange alternate payment arrangements, please contact the Centre Manager.

Affordable Child Care Benefit

As a licensed child care provider, VWCA is eligible to accept provincial childcare benefit for eligible enrolled children. The following are expectation that our program has for families utilizing childcare subsidy:

1. Parents/Guardians are ultimately responsible for all fees as registrants to our program.

2. Parents/Guardians will be responsible for fee payments until benefit plan authorization has been received by our program. Please note that Affordable Child Care Benefit application processing can take 6 to 8 weeks.
3. Parents are responsible for paying any parent portion remaining after the deduction of subsidy from the program fees.
4. Parents are responsible for renewing the benefit authorization before it expires.
5. For more information about this program, please visit: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/caring-for-young-children/child-care-funding/child-care-benefit>

If you require assistance with the application process please contact your childcare manager, or the Child Care Resource and Referral Centre 250-382-7000 or MCFD at 1-888-338-6622, option 1. Please note, authorization from the MCFD (Ministry of Children and Family Development) may take several weeks to process.

Families receiving the Affordable Childcare Benefit must pay the balance of their account by the 1st of the month.

Child Pickup and Drop Off

The Centre will only release your child to caregivers whose names are indicated on the registration forms. Please register on the Childcare Application Form the name and phone number of anyone who will be picking up your child. Temporary permission may be granted and must be received in writing. Pick up contacts must be responsible adults who are of the legal age 19. Staff will ask for photo ID. Please let us know in advance if you are sending someone to pick up in your place so we can verify they are on your contact list. Parent and/or caregivers must check in with staff so they can sign your child in and out of program. Your child may never sign themselves out, walk home or leave the premises without being signed out. This is a mandatory requirement by Island Health.

Parent Communication

At Victoria West Community Centre, we believe in regular communication. An integral part of a parent’s involvement in their child’s education is through effective communication with the Centre. The Centre has an ‘open door’ policy so should you have any immediate concerns please don’t hesitate to touch base with the teachers in your child’s program.

The main mode of communication is via-email. We will use the address provided on your registration form. Important information, updates and pertinent news will be sent out via email. We assume that you have received and read our e-mail unless it bounces back as undeliverable. If this occurs, we will notify you by phone. It is the parent's responsibility to provide accurate contact information and read the notifications that are emailed out. Please notify the Childcare Manager as soon as possible if your personal contact information changes during the year.

School Schedule

The Daycare and Preschool programs will close for a week at Christmas and one week at Spring Break for Facility maintenance. The first week of both Winter Break and Spring Break (according to the School District #61 School Calendar) will be our closure dates.

We will also close for the following STAT holidays:

New Year's Day	Family Day	Good Friday	Easter Monday
Victoria Day	Canada Day	BC Day	Labour Day
National Day for Truth and Reconciliation	Thanksgiving Day	Remembrance Day	Christmas Day & Boxing Day

In the case of inclement weather, VWCA Programs will mirror the of the Greater Victoria School District (61) for closures.

The **Out of School Care** program will follow the school calendar for closures. There will be no programs on Stat holidays, March Break, Christmas Break, or Summer Break.

Parent Code of Conduct

We are very proud of our community. We do ask that parents observe the following as good decorum:

- Treat their children and other children with respect both verbally and physically.
- Treat each staff member with respect.
- Treat each other with respect on school grounds.
- Use a soft voice while inside the program areas.
- Refrain from using inappropriate language. There are many ears listening.
- If you have a conflict with a staff member, parent, or child, please take it to the Childcare Manager immediately. Any misunderstandings can be cleared up through the office. Unsubstantiated gossip undermines the professionalism of the programs and can be harmful to the community at large.
- Smoking and vaping tobacco or marijuana are strictly prohibited inside the centre or on or near centre property.
- Children will not be released to parents who appear to be under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances.
- It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure Participant Information Forms are kept updated with correct addresses and lists of emergency contacts.

Attendance

Good attendance and arriving on time are vital to the overall learning process and is an essential element that promotes successful integration for the child. It is the responsibility of parents to inform the program manager (Childcare Manager, or OSC Team Lead) by email if their child is unable to attend or is delayed for any reason, preferably ahead of time. Attendance is taken in the program areas daily and children who are absent or late will be recorded in the attendance book. Please note that monthly fees will not be adjusted due to illness or vacation requests.

Punctuality

A sense of order and punctuality is important learning. We strongly encourage parents/caregivers to ensure that their child arrives on time each day. A student arriving late for their program may be both disruptive and distracting to the ongoing learning process. Consistently late arrivals may miss out on valuable topics and materials being introduced. Please adhere to your child's program times for drop-off and pick up.

Daycare (3-5 Yrs) operates from 8:00am-5:00pm.

Please drop off before 9:30am. Please arrive for pick up by 4:55pm.

Preschool (3-5 Yrs) operates from 9:00am-12:00pm.

Please drop off before 9:30am. Please arrive for pick up by 11:55am.

Before School Care (School-Aged) operates from 7:00-9:00am (please arrive by 8:30am).

After School Care (School-Aged) operates from 2:45pm-5:30pm.

Please arrive for pick-up by 5:25pm.

Staff schedules are dependent on these times, so if you are running late please let us know! Please give yourself at least 5 minutes (maybe more when your child first starts the program) prior to closing to pick up your child to make sure that everybody can be out of the room by the time the program ends for the day.

Toileting

We expect all children to be fully toilet trained before entering our programs. It can be disruptive to the learning process of others when one of the teachers is called away to take care of a toileting concern. Ongoing issues can lead to stress and anxiety for the child and turn it into a negative experience.

We understand that accidents do happen from time to time, especially in the first few weeks for new children, but if a child regresses or is not truly toilet trained when they start with us, the program staff will consult with the parents to work on a solution. In extreme cases when a remedy cannot be found we may ask that the child have a shortened day or stay home until they are successfully toilet trained. If this should happen staff will work closely with the parents to ensure a positive and successful return to the program.

Staff do not assist with wiping, instead they will prompt the child on how to wipe themselves and how to dress in dry clothing. If the child is unable to adequately wipe themselves or if they are soiled from a bowel movement the parents will be called to assist.

Diapers and pull ups are not allowed at the school.

Child Guidance / Harassment and Bullying Prevention

Victoria West Community Centre believes that all children have the right to learn in a safe, caring and orderly environment with a focus on physical safety, social connectedness, inclusiveness and protection from all forms of bullying, regardless of a child's gender, race, culture, religion, sexual orientation or gender identity.

Our approach to behaviour guidance is to assist children in developing self-control, self-confidence, and ultimately self-discipline and sensitivity in their interactions with others. The Centre's approach to discipline is positive, proactive and consistent with the developmental age and stage of each child. All children participate in lessons of "Grace and Courtesy".

We encourage acceptable behaviour such as being respectful to ourselves, to others, and to centre property and learning to follow Centre rules such as walking calmly when inside and staying in designated areas. Unacceptable behaviour can consist of but is not limited to: fighting (or play fighting), lack of respect for others, teasing, throwing objects and running in building. This applies whilst at the centre, at a program-related activity or in other circumstances where engaging in the activity will have an impact on the centre environment.

The consequences of unacceptable behaviour will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, will respect an individual's right, and take into account their age, maturity and special needs, if any. Consequences will be restorative rather than punitive.

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

1. The first incident of inappropriate behaviour will result in removing the child to a separate supervised space. The staff will discuss with the child the rules that were broken and the reason for being separated from the group. The parent may be called to pick the child up immediately depending on the severity of the incident. Program leaders will discuss the incident with the pick-up parent/guardian. An internal incident report will be filled for documentation. Reports are available for parents to review.
2. If inappropriate behaviours continue or progresses in frequency and escalates in peril,

the parent may be called to pick the child up immediately. This behaviour will be addressed and solutions will be sought immediately with the parents. All incidences will be discussed with parents/ guardians of the child and documented on internal incident reports. The incident may be documented for our Licensing Officer to review. All reports can be reviewed by parents.

3. Should the solutions arranged by the staff and parents prove ineffective, another meeting will be scheduled to look at alternative solutions. The parents may be advised that the child cannot attend the program temporarily if the alternative solutions are unsuccessful.

4. If the behaviour is still a concern, the Centre Manager reserves the right to discharge the child from the program.

Separation

Separation is a process we go through all our lives. Though often challenging and exciting, this growth towards independence can be painful and scary, especially for young children. Parents and staff working together collaboratively show children that they trust and believe in one another. This offers a foundation of support when the world suddenly seems a new and different place.

Independence is one of the key goals, but many children have second thoughts about being away from their family initially. We do encourage a quick drop off but realize that the transition from parent to teacher can sometimes be challenging. Remember that sometimes staying only makes it more difficult for your child as well as for yourself. We encourage parents to remain in the Centre a few minutes whilst the staff settle their child or to call the Centre once at home or at work to see how they are doing. Please don't leave without letting your child know that you are going.

Illness

PLEASE SEE COVID-19 POLICY REGARDING SICKNESS DURING THE PANDEMIC

We understand that parents may choose to bring their children to program even with a mild sickness. However, we have an obligation to everyone to ensure a healthy atmosphere for all.

If a child has a bad cold with a runny nose or cough and comes to program, the chances are that other children and staff could also contract the cold. Germs have the potential to spread quickly in the program environments. With your cooperation, we can establish a healthier environment for everyone if, when your child is sick, they remain at home.

Please Note: If we see that your child is not feeling well, we will call you to pick them up.

Below is a general list of illnesses that would prevent your child from being allowed to attend school as well as a general guideline for the Centre's teachers to call you to pick up your child from school.

- A fever exceeding 38°C or 100°F
- An infection for which the child has not been on an antibiotic for at least 24 hours.
- A child vomiting or complaining of severe headaches or stomach aches.
- A child who has diarrhea.
- A child who has been constantly coughing or has a runny nose, particularly green-coloured discharge.
- A communicable disease such as pink eye or head lice. Parents are required to notify the Centre immediately if their child contracts a communicable disease.

Please Note: We ask that parents keep their child home until they have been symptom-free for 24 hours.

Medical Information

It is important for the Centre to have all relevant medical information at hand to ensure the safety of your children including:

- **Full Disclosure:** Parents must fully disclose all medical information about the child during registration (information as specified in the medical section of the application and/or registration form). Disclosure is vital so that the Centre can take any medical precautions as becomes necessary – such as requiring an EpiPen be kept in the program areas for a child with a severe nut allergy.
- **Up-to-Date Information:** Should a child undergo a medical procedure or treatment after registration, parents are required to inform the Centre so that changes to medical information can be amended and a medical plan implemented if deemed necessary.
- **Immunization:** Up-to-date immunization record is required for all newly enrolling children.

If a child's caregivers have chosen not to have their child vaccinated:

- a) The Centre will provide the family with a guide from the public health unit that explains the benefits of immunization and risks of not vaccinating
 - b) The Centre will keep a log to confirm that the parent has received a copy of the guide
 - c) The family is advised that in the event of an outbreak, or an immediate threat of an outbreak, the child will need to temporarily stay home from their program to protect their child from becoming ill and prevent the spread of the disease
- **Student Medication:** Staff should be notified of any prescription or non-prescription medication a child is taking. In the case where staff may be required to administer medication, please complete a "Permission to Administer Medication" form, copies of which can be found at the office and hand to the Childcare Manager.
 - **Allergies:** Parents must notify the Centre of any allergies and if/when any new allergies or physical condition arise. Emergency medications such as an EpiPen or puffer must be kept on premises for those children prescribed them for severe and life-threatening allergies. These are labelled and kept safely out of reach of other children in the program areas, but easily accessible to staff should they need to be administered. Parents are responsible for ensuring such medications are up to date.

Inclement Weather

In the event of extraordinary inclement weather conditions such as snow, whether unanticipated or where prior knowledge of such conditions are received through meteorological announcements, programs at the Centre may be cancelled. The Centre will make every effort to inform parents as early as possible of any cancellation of programs through email. The Centre will also follow SD61 inclement weather closures.

Parents are asked to ensure that they have a reliable backup plan should an emergency prevent them from picking up their child on time. Fees will NOT be reduced due to closures caused by extreme weather conditions.

Clothing and Possessions

Please ensure that they are dressed appropriate to the weather and with clothing that they can easily put on and off themselves.

A second set of clothing should be left at the centre full time in case of “mishaps”. Please remember to bring a spare set of clean clothes if the previous ones were taken home to be washed. All clothing should be labeled with your child's name.

Indoor / Outdoor Shoes (Boots)

All children must have a pair of shoes for indoor use as well as a pair of outdoor shoes and, as previously stated, a pair of boots for the playground. This will help maintain a clean program environment.

Accidents/Incidences

All accidents/incidences involving children are documented at the Centre.

In case of a Minor Accident or Incident:

The child/ children will be tended to immediately by a staff member. Appropriate first aid will be administered if necessary (soap and water and/or an icepack, bandage), or comfort and support given should that be more appropriate. It will then be shared with the caregiver picking up the child that day as well as being documented in the classroom communication book and/or on a “VWCC Incident Report Form” which is kept on file for the year.

In case of a Serious Accident:

- The child will be tended to immediately by a staff member who will ascertain the extent of the injury, begin first aid if it is appropriate and inform the Childcare Manager/OSC Team Lead as soon as possible through another staff member
- Parents/ caregivers will be notified
- For serious injuries, the teacher, Childcare Manager and/or Centre Manager will also call 911. (Parents will be expected to assume responsibility for any expenses incurred.)
- Should the child need to go to the hospital and parents cannot be reached, he/she will be accompanied by a staff member who will take along all their necessary medical information; care card number, family doctor etc.

Fires, Earthquakes and other Major Disasters:

- VWCC has an Emergency Preparedness Plan as well as an Emergency Procedures Flowchart, which addresses the procedures staff would take in the event of a fire or bomb threat, a minor or major earthquake (including tsunami), a Lock Down or a major weather event.
- The children do practice fire drills once a month and earthquake drills once a year. The Emergency Preparedness Plan is practiced at least once each year by the staff.
- **We ask that you DO NOT phone the Centre.** Phone lines must be kept open for emergency calls.
- **TUNE into local radio station CFAX 1070** using a battery-operated radio or car radio for information and direction.
- **ESTABLISH an out-of-area contact person.** Phone service will likely be limited during a major disaster. It may be much easier to phone someone outside the region than to contact someone locally.
- **Electronic Mail** may serve as a means of communication.
- **Epipens and Emergency Medication.** Time and safety permitting staff will do their best to ensure that epipens or other emergency medications are taken with them during an evacuation.

Returning Children

Parents of existing registrants are asked to re-register for the new program year in February. A \$125 deposit is required at registration. \$25 is non-refundable, the remaining amount (totaling a full month's fee) will be processed September 1st.

New parents will receive an acceptance letter along with details of the deposit and automatic withdrawal forms to be completed.

Additional Needs

If your child has special learning or medical needs, please discuss with the Childcare Manager. A child who may show additional needs after starting in one of the programs may require a professional assessment. Parents and staff will work together to determine the best course of action to help with the child's success.

Concerns and Issues Resolution

If any parent wishes to clarify or discuss any matter or concern about the programs or their child, the following guidelines should be followed:

Issue/ Concern	Contact
-your child's needs	-one of the staff in your child's program
-your involvement with an individual teacher	-the staff person directly (using discretion as to time and place.)
-general program matters or concerns about program environment	-Childcare Manager
-personnel issues in general	-Childcare Manager, Centre Manager or Executive Director
-financial matters	-Childcare Manager or Centre Manager
-buildings and grounds	-Centre Manager
-overall functioning of the Centre	-Centre Manager or Executive Director
-registration and enrolment	-Centre Manager

Appeals Policy

- If a concern is not addressed satisfactorily with the staff member(s) involved, following the above guidelines, the Executive will make every attempt to solve the matter.
- If the parent feels that the matter has not reached a satisfactory conclusion, the parent should present the matter, in writing, to the Executive Director.
- If a concern is in regard to the Executive Director, the matter should be presented in writing to the Board. The Board will contact all parties involved and after careful consideration, will resolve the matter.

Custody Issues

Should there be custody issues:

- The Centre must have legal papers of visitation schedules and any other relevant legal documents, including restraining orders, etc.
- If there are no legal papers, the office will accept a written agreement signed by both parents.
- Each parent has a right to receive Centre mail, speak to staff, see sign-in sheets, and leave with their child on their appropriate day and time.

Only the parent with legal custody may enroll the child, withdraw the child, or sign permission slips and paperwork.

It is staff policy not to side with either parent in the event of a divorce. Staff also may not write letters in your defense for any legal hearing or legal action. Trust that our staff is here to aid your child and give him/her the best care possible in a consistent and nurturing environment.

If the occasion happens when both parents are in the Centre grounds during a time when the two parents are estranged, we expect both parents to treat each other with respect. No conflicts will be tolerated while on Centre property.

Parents: Notice of Withdrawal and Refund Policy

Parents who wish to withdraw their child must provide written notice to the Childcare Manager thirty (30) days before their intended withdrawal date. Withdrawals with or without notice, and sudden departures are treated the same and are required to pay full fees for the month following the date of notification/departure/withdrawal. If a child is absent a period of 30 days without any notice or other explanation, that child is deemed to have withdrawn.

Screens policy

We do not provide any screen time at preschool, daycare, or out of school care.

Alleged Impaired Pick-up

The staff must take reasonable steps to prevent any person unable to provide care from gaining access to a child. If a staff member believes the child to be at risk, they will offer to call a taxi, relative, or friend to pick up the person and child. As required by law, the VWCA staff may call Child Protection Services and/or the police if a child is taken off premises by an allegedly impaired person.

Manager Contact information:

Daycare/Preschool Childcare Manager

Email: littlesteps@victoriawest.ca

Phone number: 250-516-2770 (cell phone)

***Please contact your child's program by phone if they are away for the day/sick/or if you are running late. If your child is sick you must also contact the manager by email and list their symptoms.**

DAYCARE: 250-516-2752

PRESCHOOL: 250-732-1525

Out of School Care Manager

Email: outofschoolcare@victoriawest.ca

Phone Number: 250-508-0142 (cell phone)

Please use this number to let staff know that your child is sick/away for the day

Out of School Care Cell (Frontline Staff): 250-508-5935

Victoria West Community Centre: 250-590-8922

VWCA Parent Agreement (Please Sign and Return):

The parent/guardian must initial each box and must sign below acknowledging and taking responsibility for all expectations and policies outlined in the parent/ guardian handbook.

- The policies around fee payments, de-registration and penalty payments
- If the information provided on this form changes, I am responsible for updating it with the manager
- Actively communicate with program staff about your child's needs
- If my child is sick or unable to participate safely/appropriately I, upon request, will immediately pick-up
- The policies surrounding program discharges
- The policies surrounding COVID-19 & pre-screening procedures
- The policies surrounding communication in regards to absences from the program
- I have read and understand the Code of Conduct

By signing below, I/we confirm that I/we have read and understand all expectations and guidelines outlined in the parent/guardian handbook.

This document must be signed by all parent(s)/guardians and returned to the Centre before the first day of care.

Please return a signed copy to the Centre by: _____

Name (printed): _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name (printed): _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Child's Name: _____ Program: Daycare/Preschool/Out-of-School Care



Coronavirus COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for Childcare Settings

from BC Ministry of Health and BC Centre for Disease Control

If you're ill—stay at home.

Within childcare settings, children and staff will often have influenza or other respiratory viruses with symptoms similar to COVID-19 (i.e.- influenza). For this reason, all children and staff who are ill with fever, cold, influenza, or infectious respiratory symptoms of any kind need to stay home. If your child or a member of your household has symptoms, you are required to self-isolate for a minimum of 14 days from the onset of symptoms.

There are several viruses and bacteria circulating in the population, in fact influenza and colds are much more common than COVID-19. Parents of children with cold or influenza-like symptoms should keep their children home for a minimum of 10 days from the onset of symptoms. After this period of isolation, they may return to childcare if all symptoms have been gone for a minimum of 48 hours.

During the COVID-19 Crisis, any child attending VWCA Childcare Programs will be screened for temperature before drop-off is completed. If a child presents with a temperature they will be sent home and asked to self-isolate.

If you are at all unsure of your status, the BC Centre for Disease Control's online assessment tool can help you assess whether you should stay home or not.

Encouraging hand hygiene

As we know, little and big hands pick up germs easily, from anything they touch, and can spread those germs to objects, surfaces, food, and people. Handwashing with soap and water is still the single most effective way to reduce the spread of the illness.

Children forget about proper hand washing so practice often and teach them to wash their hands properly in a fun, relaxed way. Everyone should wash their hands more often!

When sinks for hand washing are simply not available, you may use alcohol-based hand sanitizers (ABHS) containing at least 60% alcohol. Know that this is not very effective when a child's hands are quite soiled, when coming in from outside, for example. Read labels and wash hands with sanitizer the same way you would wash with soap and water.

Six steps to proper handwashing

1. Wet hands with warm running water.
2. Apply a small amount of liquid soap. Antibacterial soap is not required.
3. Rub hands together for at least 20 seconds (sing ABC's). Rub palms, back of hands, between fingers and under nails creating a lather.
4. Rinse off all soap with running water.
5. Dry hands with a clean, disposable towel.

6. Discard the used towel in a waste container.

Children should wash their hands...

- When they arrive at the Centre and before they go home.
- Before eating and drinking
- After playing outside
- After sneezing or coughing into hands
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty

Cough and sneeze etiquette:

- Cough and sneeze into an arm or tissue.

Maintain Cleaning and Disinfecting Policies

We don't know yet how long the virus causing COVID-19 lives on surfaces, but early evidence suggests it can live on objects and surfaces from a few hours to days. Regular cleaning and disinfecting of objects and high-touch surfaces is very important to help prevent the transmission of viruses from contaminated objects and surfaces.

Please note that VWCA Child Care Centres are:

- Well-stocked with hand washing supplies at all times (soap/clean towels, paper towels, and, if needed, 60% alcohol-based hand sanitizer).
- Increasing how often the premises and toys are cleaned.
- Cleaning and disinfecting high-touch surfaces regularly.
- Staying on top of waste management- Emptying garbage containers often.
- Using bleach solution (1-part household bleach and 9 parts water) for sanitizing surfaces-making sure this solution makes contact with the surface for 1 minute for disinfection.

What about toys?

- Staff will keep enough toys out to encourage individual play. Offering toys that can be easily cleaned (i.e. no dress-up clothes or stuffed animals).
- Staff will not be providing playdough or goop- this will reduce hand-to-hand contact and cross-contamination.

Physical Distancing Ideas:

Understandably, social distancing is challenging in a childcare setting. At the same time, it is important that we do what we can to try and assist children. VWCA is:

- Avoiding close greetings like hugs or handshakes
- Taking children outside more often
- Setting up regular activities outside, such as snack time, arts and craft time.
- Regularly cleaning and sanitizing items that are designed to be shared
- Setting up mini environments within the facility to reduce the number of children in a group, for example, setting up 2 or 3 craft areas for colouring or doing crafts.
- Increasing the space between children during activities such as snack and lunch by moving or separating tables and chairs so that they are farther apart.
- Making use of all the space in the facility for napping to increase space between children.
- Setting up distinct areas for children who may have symptoms of illness until they can be picked up.
- **Discouraging any food or drink sharing.**
- Staggering snack and lunch time so you can accommodate smaller groups with more space at the tables.
- Minimizing the number of non-essential people in the facility such as entertainers, librarians etc.

- Reinforcing and reminding children of the rule 'hands to yourself'.

Illnesses

Please keep your child at home if they have any of the following symptoms: cough, fever, runny nose, respiratory symptoms, ear infections, eye infections, diarrhea, fever, lice, vomiting and any other communicable disease like chicken pox.

This prevents the spread of illness in the centre.

If your child has any of these symptoms, please report them to the Manager by email.

During the COVID-19 Crisis, any child attending VWCA Childcare Programs will:

-Wash hands before entering the program space.

-All children be screened for temperature before drop-off. If a child presents with a temperature they will be asked to contact 8-1-1 and follow all instructions given, including self-isolation for 14 days before returning to VWCA Programs.

-Parent/Guardians will not be allowed in the program space. Drop-off/screening will take place in the lobby.

-If your child becomes sick while attending VWCA programs you will be contacted to pick your child up as soon as possible (within 1 hour). If you are not able to pick up, we will contact your Emergency pick up persons listed on your registration form.

-If you choose not immunize your child, you agree to temporarily withdraw your child from the program should the community be facing an epidemic.