

Parent Handbook

COVID-19 Health and Safety Revisions (revised 09.04.20)

Parkgate Child & Family Centre has been developing adaptations to our child care programming to ensure the health and safety of our families and our staff. This document details the amended policies in our Parent Handbook that will be put in place effective June 1, 2020 in response to COVID-19 health and safety protocols.

We have also implemented a new Child Care Management App that will serve as a communication tool between you and your child care provider. It will also provide details of your child's *Daily Chart*, which may include information on your child's toileting, naptime, lunchtime and special activities. We encourage you to become familiar with this app as it promises to make communication between parents and staff more efficient and effective.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Drop-Off/Sign-In

Infant/Toddler, Three-to-Five Group Care, Before School Age Care & My First Preschool Programs:

Public access to Parkgate Community Centre is restricted to staff only until further notice. All entry to our child care centre will be through the playground at the rear of the facility.

Upon arrival, please wait outside with your child at your dedicated drop-off time until a child care provider comes and receives your child. Should other parents also arrive at the same time, you are requested to keep at least 6ft physical distance from each other and wait in line (physical distancing markers will be put in place).

Check in will include answering a set of health screening questions (see appendix A) and your child's temperature may be measured with a no-touch thermometer. If your child screens healthy, s/he can be signed in by you using our new on-line Child Care App.

Please take the opportunity to talk to staff about your child's needs for the day and who will pick-up your child. You will be shown how to communicate this information ahead of time through the on-line app.

Please notify the Program Supervisor if your child will be absent or arriving later than usual before your dedicated drop-off time. This can be done either through our new app or by calling the program directly:

- Infant/Toddler and 3-5 Programs: 604-983-6380
- Parkgate School Age Care: 604-983-6381
- Seymour School Age Care: 604-983-6673
- Preschool: through the app only

Please allow more time when arriving, as these additional Health & Safety procedures upon arrival will take a little longer.

After School Age Care:

Please notify the School Age Care Programs through the app or by calling your program directly (Parkgate 604-983-6381/Seymour 604-983-6673) before 2:00 p.m. on regular school days if your child will be absent.

Upon school dismissal, all children will be picked up at the spot predetermined by the School Age Care Supervisor and agreed upon with the school. Children are expected to come immediately to this destination. The children will be greeted by a School Age Program staff person and signed in. Should a child be delayed or absent, the School Age Program staff will:

- have the child paged over the school "PA" if possible
- check attendance with the school office
- check the school office, library and school grounds
- contact the parent/guardian regarding other arrangements that may not have been communicated to the Child Care Program staff

If the child cannot be located, the School Age Program staff will:

- contact the enrolling parent/guardian
- contact the police to report a missing child if parents cannot be reached

NOTE:

- *All children and staff are requested to wash their hands upon arrival to the facility and frequently throughout the day*
- *Hand sanitizers will be readily available*
- *Parents will have limited access to the facility and are requested to make an appointment if they wish to speak to a supervisor*

Pick-up

All Programs

At your dedicated pick-up time, please wait in front of your child's playground entrance door. Should other parents also arrive at the same time, you are requested to wait in line, keeping at least 6ft physical distance from each other (physical distancing markers will be put in place).

A child care provider will bring your child outside to meet you. Once you have received your child, you can sign your child out using our on-line management app.

General Notes on Departure

Please make sure a child care provider has acknowledged that you are taking your child.

Once you have reunited with your child and have begun departure, staff is no longer monitoring your child. Please do not allow your child to leave ahead of you. The street and parking areas can be dangerous to an excited child.

Please inform Child Care Program staff if you have made arrangements for someone else to pick up your child. This person's name must be recorded on your child's pick up form.

If an emergency arises during the day, alternate arrangements can be made over the phone or by using the child care management App with the senior staff person.

If the person picking up your child is not known to the program staff, we will need information from you about that person (name, address, telephone number and a physical description). This person will be asked to show photo identification to the program staff and be expected to sign out your child.

Without notice, we will not release your child to unauthorized persons. If an unauthorized person does arrive to pick up your child, we will call you for verbal authorization. If attempts to contact you are not successful, staff will not release your child.

If the parent or person responsible for picking up your child appears incapable of providing safe care at the time of pick up, staff will discuss safe options, offer to call a family member or friend to assist and ensure the safety of the child, or call the appropriate authorities, if deemed necessary.

Late Pick-up

Late fees will apply if your child is picked up after your dedicated pick-up time:

- \$20 for each 15 minute period past your pick-up time

You are responsible for payment of the late fee to the Society within one week of the incident. Unpaid late fees will be deducted in the following month's automatic withdrawal.

If there are repeated incidences of late pick-up (more than three instances in a twelve month period) our Child Care Manager will follow up with the family to discuss alternate arrangements for pick up.

Failure to Pick Up

If you have not picked up your child or called the Centre by your dedicated pick-up time, staff will first attempt to contact the parents and then the alternative authorized person/s to pick up your child.

If every attempt has been made to contact both the parents and the alternate person/s with no success, and you have not contacted the program staff within one hour of closing time, we are required to notify Emergency Services of the Ministry for Children and Families.

Children cannot wait unattended in the Parkgate playground and will not be sent home in taxis, nor will children be walked or driven home by staff.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Our Child Care Programs have been adjusted and redesigned to minimize the risk of exposure to COVID-19 and other communicable diseases and illnesses, while maintaining a comfortable and inviting environment. Our goal is to promote optimum health, safety and nutrition by providing the children with a clean, well-maintained and safe environment, plus opportunities for:

- learning how to take care of their bodies and developing self-help skills
- engaging in active and quiet activities
- engaging in indoor and outdoor activities

Immunization

As immunizations are one of the most effective ways of preventing the spread of communicable diseases, we recommend that all families have their child's immunizations brought up-to-date prior to starting at Parkgate's Child Care Program. Once enrolled, please provide your child's updated immunization information to the program staff. If you have refused standard immunizations for your child, you will be required to fill out the appropriate form as provided by Vancouver Coastal Health.

If your child is not immunized and there is an outbreak of a communicable disease, your child will be required to stay away from Parkgate's Child Care for a period of time as determined by the Vancouver Coastal Health Officer. Child care payment throughout this withdrawal period will still be required.

Illness

Your child may not attend child care if:

- Your child has any (even mild) COVID-19 symptoms: fever, cough, difficulty breathing, sore throat, trouble swallowing, runny nose, loss of taste or smell, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea
- your child, or anyone in your household, has had close contact with someone who has had an exposure to the COVID-19 virus (note: this means you would have been contacted by your health authority's public health team)
- your child travelled to any countries outside of Canada, including the US (United States), within the last 14 days

While we are sensitive to the stress that illness causes families, we are not licensed to care for ill children and have now a ZERO tolerance policy in place. To prevent the spread of COVID-19 or any other communicable diseases at Parkgate Child Care Centre you will need to keep your child home, as per BC Health Authority, if your child:

- has a communicable disease
- has a contagious infection, including pink eye
- has a fever over 37.5 degrees
- is vomiting or has diarrhea
- has a skin infection or an undiagnosed rash
- is not well enough to participate in all program activities including outdoor activities.

Your child may return to child care once symptoms have resolved fully. Your child can re-enter child care earlier than noted above, only with a physician's clearance letter, which confirms that your child is not contagious and is able to participate in all program activities, including outdoor programming.

Fever, diarrhea and vomiting require the child to additionally be symptom free without fever reducing medication for 48 hours following the last symptom.

Please notify the Child Care Program if your child has a communicable disease (such as measles, chicken pox etc.) so that other families and the Community Health Department can be notified.

If your child becomes ill during the day, your child will be immediately separated from all other children to a supervised quiet rest area and comforted until pick-up.

You will be contacted to pick up your child immediately by phone and our child care management app. If you are unavailable, we will reach out to your emergency contact/s.

If the situation becomes urgent, we will follow the medical emergency procedures as outlined in our medical emergency policy.

While your child is waiting to be picked up we will practice hygiene (gloves) and respiratory (masks) etiquette. We will make your child comfortable by providing a blanket and tissues.

Children, their immediate family members and staff who have been exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19 or have been confirmed with COVID-19 (note: this means the public health authority would have contacted the person /family affected), will be excluded from child care for 14 days or as described by public health.

Nutrition

Food preparation, including transferring food to different containers and plates, increases the risk of exposure to diseases and viruses as well as cross-contamination.

In an effort to reduce staff-handling of food, Parkgate Child Care will no longer provide any food at any of our child care programs.

Parents are requested to provide all food ready to eat for their children. Please have all your food pre-cut and prepared in a manner that your child can help him/herself directly out of the containers you are providing.

All staff in the Infant Toddler Program are educated on proper handling and procedures of breast milk. Feeding those children who are not able to feed themselves will continue.

Eating nutritious food is an important part of each child's day. Please use Canada Food Guide (<https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/>) as your guideline when preparing your child's snack and lunch.

Staff will:

- Offer time and opportunity in the program for snacks (and lunch for full day programs)
- Times may be staggered to decrease the numbers of children sitting at tables at the same time
- Create a relaxing atmosphere to enjoy meal and snack times
- Encourage children to eat their foods
- Be sensitive to individual food preferences, cultural preferences and any restrictions/allergies
- Provide sufficient time to eat
- Not force a child to eat or dictate how much or in which order foods are to be eaten
- Communicate with parents about food eaten and nutrition ideas or suggestions through the child care management app

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will:

- Provide nutritious lunches and snacks (precut, portioned, and ready to eat), including utensils, that their children will like and enjoy
- Inform staff of any food restrictions/allergies or changes to your child's food intake

Note:

Staff will not dictate the order in which a child eats the foods packed in their lunch. If parents choose to pack a "treat" staff will not make them finish their "healthy" foods first. Please pack a lunch that you will be comfortable with your child eating in the order that they choose.

In accordance with Section 48 of the Child Care Licensing Regulations, Parkgate Child and Family Centre and Seymour School Age Care Program (herein referred to as "the licensee") will follow the written policies and procedures respecting food and drink to be given to children as listed here:

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

BIRTHDAYS

Each child's birthday will be acknowledged by our staff in a special way which includes singing the *Happy Birthday* song, reading favourite stories and doing special activities.

We will not be accepting any cupcakes, birthday snacks or *goodie bags* to share until further notice.

VOLUNTEERS & PRACTICUM STUDENTS

To provide best safety and to limit exposure for your children, only practicum students are allowed at this time.