

Parkgate Child & Family Centre

FAMILY HANDBOOK

(Policies and Procedures)

Operated by

Parkgate Community Services Society

Revised: March 2023



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Welcome to Parkgate Child and Family Centre

Child Care Programs

The Board of Directors and Staff of Parkgate Society welcome you to Parkgate Child and Family Centre's Child Care Programs. We look forward to working with you to provide quality care for your child in a safe and caring environment.

Please take some time to familiarize yourself with our Programs. The **Family Handbook** will provide you with an introduction to Parkgate Society and basic information about our Child Care Programs.

If you have questions, concerns or suggestions, please do not hesitate to bring them to the attention of the Child Care and Family Programs Manager. Your feedback is important to us as we strive to meet your child care needs.

Glossary of Terms

The policies and procedures in this Handbook refer to all of the Child Care Programs. Those which are Program specific will state which Program they refer to.

Note the following terms are used throughout:

Society

Society refers to Parkgate Community Services Society.

Program

Program refers to the individual Program within the Child and Family Centre, e.g., Infant/Toddler Program or Three-to-Five Group Care Program

Group Care

Group Care refers to all programs licensed under the umbrella of Group Day Care including:

Infant/Toddler Program

Three-to-Five Program

School Age Program

Centre

Centre refers to the Child & Family Centre, which includes:

Infant/Toddler Program

Three-to-Five Group Care Program

School Age Program

Family Resource Centre

You

You shall be understood to mean the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the child(ren). In more formal policies, we specifically refer to parent(s)/guardian(s).

Manager

Manager refers to the Child Care and Family Programs Manager

OVERVIEW OF THE SOCIETY

PARKGATE SOCIETY was established in 1983, as a result of an expressed desire by the community to provide opportunities for input into the delivery of services and programs for the community.

The Society, under the direction of an elected community Board of Directors, strives for the highest standards of delivery in all of its services with the ongoing support, encouragement and participation of the local community.

Parkgate Society currently offers the following services:

- Youth Outreach Services
- Summer Camps
- Seniors' Services
- Child Care Programs
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Special Events
- Family Resource Services

The PARKGATE COMMUNITY CENTRE serves as the hub of the Seymour and Deep Cove communities. The Centre meets the changing community needs of North Vancouver residents by empowering the community and building upon its capacity through the provision of integrated programs and services.

Parkgate Community Centre includes the following features:

- Pottery, Arts and Crafts Studio
- Climbing Wall
- Seniors' Centre
- Gymnasium
- Meeting Rooms
- Vancouver Coastal Health - Community Health Centre
- Weight Room
- Youth Centre
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Multi-Purpose Rooms
- Community Offices

THE CHILD & FAMILY CENTRE includes:

- Infant/Toddler Program (licensed)
- Three-to-Five Group Care Program (licensed)
- School Age Program (licensed)
- Family Resource Centre

MISSION/PHILOSOPHY

Mission

THE PARKGATE CHILD & FAMILY CENTRE enhances the lives of children, their families, staff and the community by providing a caring, supportive and vital community service. It is a place of security, adventure, co-operation and playfulness for our children.

The spirit of Parkgate Community Centre is a commitment to all ages experiencing life together, making it a lively and innovative place that embodies the Parkgate motto to *live life better*.

Philosophy

Parkgate Child & Family Centre will be a place where:

CHILDREN are encouraged to question, to be self-reliant and to be respectful of the rights and differences of others. Children learn through their experiences as they grow in confidence and competence. Child guidance is always positive and nurturing.

FAMILIES are involved in a meaningful way in their child care experience. Families are assured of quality care for their child. Family members and staff support and encourage each other.

STAFF are entitled to a work environment which recognizes and respects their training, skills and commitment to child care. Staff, families and the community work skillfully to meet the needs of the individual child and the group in an environment that is creative, stimulating, flexible and predictable. Inclusion, multiculturalism, interdependence and dignity are valued.

THE COMMUNITY plays a vital role in supporting the development of healthy families. There is recognition of partnerships among staff, family and the community.

GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

The Infant/Toddler, Three-to-Five, and School Age Programs are licensed as group care and operate under the provincial Child Care Licensing Regulation. Our program ratios are as directed by the provincial Child Care Licensing Regulation.

These Child Care Programs are licensed as follows:

Infant/Toddler Program	12 children 1 staff: 4 children
Three-to-Five Group Care Program	25 children 1 staff: 8 children
Parkgate School Age Care Program	35 children 1 staff: 12 children
Seymour School Age Care Program	24 children 1 staff: 12 children

Each program provides developmentally appropriate nurturing, safe, stimulating and challenging environments which focus on individual and group needs. This includes:

- creative play
- dramatic play
- manipulative play
- water
- playdough
- gross motor activities
- blocks
- language and literature activities
- sand
- science/plants/animals
- woodworking

Outdoor activities are part of the daily routine and may include walks and field trips in the neighbourhood. Children go outside *every* day, regardless of the weather.

The children have opportunities to develop physical, cognitive, language and social skills. Positive social skills are modelled with an emphasis on ensuring respect for self and others, equal rights and opportunities for group members, and an acceptance of differences.

GUIDANCE

Each child will be encouraged and supported to develop positive adult and peer relationships. Our goal is to provide a safe and healthy learning and living environment in which each child can feel secure and learn friendship and social skills. Staff will:

- demonstrate appropriate, caring, respectful behaviours at all times
- promote the development of self-esteem, social skills and self-control
- supervise the children at all times
- establish clear, consistent expectations and limits and implement natural and logical consequences whenever possible
- discourage aggressive play and assist the children to learn and practice resolving conflict in non-violent ways
- acknowledge children's feelings and promote self-regulation and problem-solving
- give verbal direction and redirection as the main way of guiding children.

In accordance with Division 2 – Guidance and Treatment of Children Section 51 of the Child Care Licensing Regulations:

- 1) A licensee must
 - a) Ensure that behavioural guidance is appropriate to the age and development of the child who is receiving the guidance, and
 - b) Provide to employees and parents a written statement of the licensee's policy on behavioural guidance.
- 2) If the child has a care plan that includes instructions respecting behavioural guidance, the licensee must ensure that
 - a) Any behavioural guidance given to the child is consistent with those instructions, and
 - b) If the behavioural guidance includes the use of restraints that the restraints are administered only by a person who is trained in the use of, and alternatives to the use of, restraints.

Harmful actions not permitted

- 1) A licensee must ensure that a child, while under the care or supervision of the licensee, is not subjected to any of the following:
 - a) Shoving, hitting or shaking by employee or another child, or confinement or physical restraint by another child;
 - b) Confinement or physical restraint by employee, except as authorized in a child care's plan if the care plan includes instruction respecting behavioural guidance;
 - c) Harsh, belittling or degrading treatment by an employee or another child, whether verbal, emotional or physical, that could humiliate the child or undermine the child's self respect;
 - d) Spanking or any other form of corporal punishment;
 - e) Separation, without supervision by a responsible adult, from other children;
- 2) As a form of punishment, deprivation of meals, snacks, rest or necessary use of a toilet.
- 3) A licensee must ensure that a child is not, while under the care or supervision of the licensee, subject to emotional abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse or neglect as those terms are defined in Schedule H.

We encourage you to discuss guidance and discipline approaches with staff.

DAYS AND HOURS OF OPERATION

Monday to Friday:

Infant/Toddler Program:

8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Three-to-Five Program:

7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

On regular school days:

School Age Program: Before & After school: 7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m-6:00 p.m.

On early dismissal days, earlier pick up and care will be provided at no extra cost. A minimum of 5 students to attend school age care are required to accommodate an early dismissal.

On non-instructional days, spring break and winter break, care is provided for School Age children in the form of a daycamp. Parkgate Child Care Families will have an opportunity to register for any of our daycamps ahead of the public. Registration and payments for daycamps are done through the NVRC website or Parkgate Community Center Front Desk. Families in our program are given advance notice. The School Age Care programs close for the months of July and August to accommodate Parkgate Society's Summer Daycamp programs. Families register for the days they need during the summer.

Please arrive to pick up your child at least ten minutes prior to the Program's closing time.

This allows your child to depart in a relaxed and unhurried manner and allows staff to pass along any necessary information.

The Child Care Programs will be closed for the holidays listed below (monthly fees do not change):

New Year's Day

Family Day

Good Friday

Easter Monday

Victoria Day

Canada Day

B.C Day

Labour Day

National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

Thanksgiving Day

Remembrance Day

Christmas Day

Boxing Day

Please note: in December 2023, Parkgate Child & Family Centre will be closed between Christmas and New Year (December 25 – 31). Child care re-opens on January 2, 2024. Full monthly fees are still applicable.

In addition, to provide time for child care staff to attend mandatory training, we will be closed for one *Professional Development Day* per calendar year. **For 2023, the closure date is Wednesday November 1, 2023.**

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Infant/Toddler, Three-to-Five Group Care & Before School Age Care

You may enter the Child Care Program either through the doors inside the Community Centre or through the doors from the playground. Easiest is to arrive by the cubby area. Here you can help your child hang their coat, connect with staff and help your child to settle in. Check-in may include a health screen check. If your child screens healthy, s/he can be signed in by you using our 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 communication 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 communication app (preferred) or by calling the program directly:

- Infant/Toddler cell phone: 604-716-2110
- 3-5 Program cell phone: 604-781-2434
- Before School Care use the school specific cell phone
 - Dorothy Lynas Elementary School cell phone: 604-721-6552
 - Cove Cliff Elementary School cell phone: 604-716-3238
 - St Pius X Elementary School cell phone: 604-721-5331
 - Sherwood Park Elementary School cell phone: 604-783-5527
 - Seymour Heights Elementary School cell phone: 604-506-4206

After School Age Care:

Please notify the School Age Care Programs through the app or by calling your program directly (please call to the designated cell phone for the school your child is attending) 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

IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT FAMILIES TAKE THE TIME TO INFORM STAFF OF THEIR CHILD'S ALTERNATE PLAN TO AVOID UNNECESSARY WORRY.

If on occasion your child wishes to make arrangements (e.g. visiting with a school friend) instead of attending the School Age Program, such arrangements *MUST* be made the day before and confirmed by the parent/guardian. Permission will not be given by School Age Program staff for your child to make any alternate arrangements without your prior permission.

Children Arriving or Leaving on their Own (School Age Care Only)

It is the expectation of Licensing and the school age care programs that children be signed in and signed out by a parent or someone on the authorized pick-up list.

PICK-UP ALL PROGRAMS

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 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 the person (their name, address, telephone number and a physical description). The 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.

The person picking up your child must a minimum of 16 years of age.

If the parent or person responsible for picking up the 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.

General Notes on Departure

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

FAILURE TO PICK UP

If you have not picked up your child or called the Centre by closing time, staff will first attempt to contact the parents and then the alternative person/s (on your authorized pick-up list) 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 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 lobby and will not be sent home in taxis, nor will children be walked or driven home by staff.

LATE PICK UP

Late fees will apply to you if your child is picked up after closing time. The fee is equal to \$20 for each 15 minute period past closing 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) the Manager will follow up with the family to discuss alternate arrangements for pick up.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Our Child Care Programs have been carefully designed to be safe, comfortable, and inviting environments. Our goal is to promote optimum health, safety, and nutrition by providing the children with a clean, well-maintained, safe environment and 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
- enjoying wholesome snacks
- participating in food preparation.

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 the Child Care Program. Once enrolled, please provide updated immunization information, as necessary. 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 may be required to stay away from Child Care for a period of time as determined by the Vancouver Coastal Health Officer. Child care payment throughout this withdrawal period must still be made.

ILLNESS

Your child may not attend child care if:

- Your child has any COVID-19 symptoms: fever, cough, difficulty breathing, sore throat, trouble swallowing, loss of taste or smell, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea.
- your child has been ordered to self isolate.
- Parkgate Child Care Programs receive any quarantine orders as specified by the Public Health department.

While we are sensitive to the stress that illness may cause for families, we are not licensed to care for ill children. You will need to keep your child at home, or make alternate arrangements, if your child:

- has a communicable disease
- has a contagious infection, including pink eye
- has a fever over 38 degrees Celsius within 48 hours
- is vomiting or has diarrhea within 48 hours
- 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, your child is not contagious and is able to participate in all program activities, including outdoor programming.

A child may also return to child care 24 hours after stating the first dose of antibiotics. However, the child must feel well enough to participate in all activities fully.

Fever, diarrhea, and vomiting require the child to additionally be symptom free without fever reducing medication for 48 hours (2 days) following the last symptom.

Communicable Diseases

Please notify the Child Care Program if your child has a communicable disease so that other families and the Community Health Department can be notified. If your child becomes ill during the day, we will attempt to contact you. If you are unavailable, we will try to reach your emergency contacts. We will provide a quiet rest area and close staff supervision until you, or one of your emergency contacts, can pick up your child. If the situation becomes urgent, we will follow the medical emergency procedures as outlined below.

Our regular handwashing routines, and cleaning and sanitizing procedures will be enhanced during outbreaks, e.g. high touch surfaces and objects are being cleaned and sanitized many times throughout the day.

While every effort will be taken to maintain a healthy environment, it is important for you to plan now for alternate arrangements in the event of your child's illness.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY

If your child is injured or becomes ill while at the Child Care Program, staff will quickly assess the situation to decide what action/attention is required. Outlined below are three procedures that will be followed.

If First Aid Treatment is required, staff qualified in First Aid will:

- acknowledge the child's feelings
- provide First Aid treatment
- provide close supervision to ensure that the child does not require further first aid or medical attention
- complete an Incident Report and process according to the Child Care Regulation
- inform you when you pick up your child.

If non-emergency medical attention is required, a staff qualified in First Aid will attend to the needs of the child while another staff person will:

- support the child and family/contact person (when the latter arrives)
- access the child's file for medical information and permission
- contact the parent/guardian, then the emergency contact(s) if the family/guardian is not available
- contact the child's doctor if the parent/contacts cannot be reached
- if the child's doctor is not available, proceed as if it is an emergency medical situation
- complete the Incident Report and process according to the Child Care Regulation.

If emergency medical attention is required, qualified staff will administer First Aid until emergency health services i.e., fire department and/or ambulance arrive. Staff will:

- support the child and family/contact person (when the latter arrives)
- access medical information
- call and request an ambulance
- contact family and/or emergency contact(s) to meet staff, accompanying the child to the emergency facility
- provide information to the doctor and family
- complete Incident Report and process according to the Child Care Regulation.

Note: Parents/guardians are responsible for the cost of ambulance transportation to the hospital.

ADMINISTERING MEDICATION

If you would like the Child Care Program staff to administer prescription or non-prescription medication (e.g., Tylenol) to your child for a **diagnosed illness**, the Child Care Regulation requires that we follow certain procedures. We require that the medication be provided in the original container and a **Medication Consent form** be completed and signed with instructions on administering the medication. Please ensure that the consent form and the medication is given directly to the staff as all medication must be stored in a locked container.

If emergency medication is required (e.g., Epi-Pen, liquid antihistamine) you must complete the Emergency Medication Consent form and the Anaphylaxis (Life Threatening Allergy) Information form, as provided by Vancouver Coastal Health, outlining what symptoms your child would have during a reaction and the exact procedure for administering the medication. If you require this form, please speak to the manager. Epi-Pens are kept in our First Aid kit

ALLERGIES

It is extremely important for you to inform staff of allergies related to food, pets, stings, and the environment. If your child has a reaction to a food, e.g., peanuts or shellfish, our staff will ask parents/guardians to refrain from bringing these foods into the building while your child attends the Program.

You will be informed by a memorandum, as well as by a sign, of the current restrictions due to allergies. This sign will be permanently displayed.

NUTRITION

Parkgate Society Child Care provides snacks and parents provide lunch.

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.

*Please note that the staff will **not** dictate the order in which a child eats the food 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.*

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:

- create a relaxing atmosphere to enjoy meal and snack times
- prepare nutritious snacks for the children
- encourage children to eat a variety of foods
- be sensitive to individual food preferences, cultural preferences and any restrictions/allergies
- be educated on proper handling and breast milk procedures
- provide sufficient time to eat
- **not** force a child to eat or dictate how much or in which order foods are to be eaten

The Infant/Toddler and 3-5 Group Care Programs will:

- provide space in the refrigerator for children's lunches
- Provide nutritious, and age-appropriate snacks
- welcome mothers to come to the Infant/Toddler Program and provide support and a comfortable area for breastfeeding.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) of children in the Infant/Toddler & 3-5 Group Care Program will:

- provide lunches
- inform staff of any food restrictions/allergies or changes to your child's food intake.

The School Age Group Care Programs will:

- provide afternoon snacks as part of programming

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) of children at the School Age Care Program will:

- inform staff of any food restrictions/allergies or changes to your child's food intake

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.

CLOTHING AND POSSESSIONS

As the children participate in a variety of indoor and outdoor play activities each day, it is helpful if your child wears washable, comfortable clothing appropriate for the weather. Please provide (and label with your child's name):

- an extra shirt, pants, underpants, socks and sweater
- a pair of skid proof, soft, comfortable indoor shoes
- for rainy days - boots and a muddy-buddy or rain suit
- in the winter - a pair of mitts, a toque and warm outdoor clothes
- in the spring and summer - a sun hat and sunscreen
- disposable diapers and wipes for infants and toddlers

While children are toilet training, it is advisable to keep several complete changes of clothing at the Child Care Program.

The children are often involved with wet and/or messy art projects and should be dressed accordingly. While the Program uses washable paints, there is no guarantee that clothing will not become stained. Please leave "good clothes" at home.

We ask that all clothing be labelled clearly with your child's full name. We cannot be responsible for lost clothing.

If needed, the Program has a supply of extra clothing. If your child wears these home, please return them so we can keep an extra supply available. Also, if your child has outgrown some of her/his clothes, and you would like to donate them, we would be pleased to add them to our collection.

We request that children **do not** bring toys or other play items from home. Toys from home cause difficulties with sharing, and items can become broken or lost. In School Age Care children may begin to collect specialty cards and may want to bring these to child care to trade. These cards may have special trading value. We cannot be responsible for lost or damaged items. Please keep your special items at home! Electronics are NOT permitted, except for the centre's cell phones.

The 3 to 5 Group Care Program welcomes special from home once a month on "Show & Tell Day". Parents will be notified ahead of time which day this will be. Children can then share their special item with their friends at circle time.

Children are welcome to bring a soft, cuddly toy or special blanket from home for use during rest time.

TOILETING AND DIAPERING (as applicable)

As toileting of young children involves close adult-child contact, this is an opportunity for one-to-one time with the child. The staff will involve the child by explaining what is being done and encouraging the child's cooperation.

Upon enrolment you will be asked to provide disposable diapers and wipes for infants and toddlers. Infant and toddler diapers are changed at regular intervals. A record of daily diaper changes is posted in the change room.

Frequently, toddlers are offered the opportunity to sit on the toilet. As staff notice longer and more regular intervals between wet or soiled diapers and your child shows an interest in using the toilet, discussions concerning toilet training will take place with you.

Our staff view toilet training as a part of natural development and take the child's lead in determining readiness. When a child feels pressured, a setback may occur, so accidents are treated in a matter-of-fact manner. Staff mentions to the child that the wetness, etc. must be uncomfortable and offer a change of clothing.

Children wash their hands after using the toilet. Our staff follows the Child Care Regulation and practice Universal Precautions when changing diapers, which includes using gloves, washing hands and using bleach solution to disinfect the change table between each change.

REST TIME

Rest time is a healthy part of a child's development. Infants have individualized rest schedules and staff respect that. Toddlers and the children in the Three-to-Five Group Child Care Program have a rest time each day after lunch. **All children rest.** Children who do not fall asleep will be given quiet time activities that they can engage in on their mats. We understand that parents sometimes prefer that their children not nap during the day; however, rest time is a healthy and important part of the child care day. Play is a young child's work and your child plays hard at child care! After a busy morning, most children do fall asleep during rest time and staff will **not** force a child to stay awake or wake a sleeping child too soon.

Children in the School Age Care Programs do not have a formal rest time.

BIRTHDAYS

Each child's birthday will be acknowledged by our staff in a special way. You are welcome to bring individually portioned healthy and allergy free snacks or goody bags for all children to celebrate your child's birthday. (Please refrain from sugary cupcakes with coloured icing or similar unhealthy treats). 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.

EXCURSIONS AND FIELD TRIPS

It is part of each Program to go on walking excursions within the immediate neighbourhood of the Child Care Program. Field trips, by bus and away from the neighbourhood, are carefully pre-planned and supervised. You will be informed prior to the trip and permission will be requested.

PHOTO-TAKING/FILMING

We will request permission to use photos of, or film, your child for specific purposes (other than for use within the Program).

VIDEOS

Parkgate Society Child & Family Centre has a no electronics or screen time policy and request that your child/ren do not bring cell phones or other electronics to care. Our programming does not include the use of video or computer screen time as an activity. We may however on a special occasion show a video. (E.g., during Winter Camp on Christmas Eve Day.) The selected video title will be posted and parents will be notified. All videos shown will be rated 'General'. Should you or your child not wish to participate, other activities will be available.

TRANSPORTATION (SCHOOL AGE PROGRAM)

In the School Age Program, it is necessary to transport the children to and from the Child Care Program and school. All vehicles used for transportation are insured for transporting children, are government inspected, and are driven by qualified, licensed class four drivers. Parkgate Society ensures that the requirements from Transport Canada are followed.

INCLUSIVE CHILD CARE & PROGRAMMING

It is our commitment to provide an inclusive, and welcoming environment for all enrolled children. If your child requires additional support while in our child care, please contact us prior to the start of the first day of enrolment, so we can plan for your child's inclusion. Sometimes a child receives a diagnosis through their paediatrician or through the school system. Please notify us immediately, so that at child care we can support your child appropriately. If a child needs support at school, a child will also need support at child care. Extra support staff may need to be employed.

Sometimes it is during the child care's day-to-day activities, that we notice that a child needs extra support. We will then speak to the parents(s)/guardian(s). We may call for a meeting and discuss support strategies, that parents and child care providers can use together to support the child.

Parkgate Child & Family Centre collaborates with Infant Development Program, Supported Child Development Program and Vancouver Coastal Health.

VISITORS AT THE CENTRE'S CHILD CARE PROGRAMS

At Parkgate Society Child Care we have an open-door policy for parents. Parents can come and enter Child Care at our Parkgate or Seymour location, to participate or observe. We encourage all parents to take time to connect with staff and ask as many questions as you like, or to share as much family information as you like.

As an inclusive child care we may have from time-to-time coordinators of different support organizations come and visit the camps. These visits are all pre-scheduled and approved by our Child Care Supervisors or Child Care Manager.

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

Safety is an ongoing part of the Centre's Child Care Programs and staff have received emergency preparedness training. Earthquake and fire drill/evacuation procedures (approved by the Fire Marshall) are posted in the Child Care Program and are practiced once a month.

Emergency Planning

Parkgate Child and Family Centre and Seymour School Age Care Program are committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all children by:

- minimizing and, where possible, eliminating any hazards/risks
- ensuring mandatory and up-to-date First-Aid training for all staff
- orienting and training all staff in emergency procedures
- orienting and training children in emergency procedures
- being prepared for all types of emergencies, including fire, earthquakes, floods, ice storms, power failure, and lack of heat or water
- providing the necessary resources for all types of emergencies

Evacuation/Relocation Procedures

In the case of evacuation or relocation, Parkgate Child and Family Centre and Seymour School Age Care Program staff, will:

- collect all children and the daily sign in sheet
- access the emergency equipment bin. This will include emergency consent cards, a first aid kit, quarters for a public telephone, a cell phone, a battery operated radio, and other emergency supplies.
- proceed to the nearest designated safe place, or meeting spot according to the building evacuation plan
- count the number of children to determine if anyone is missing and keep the children together
- the designated building supervisor for that day will contact emergency assistance
- provide first aid if necessary
- wait for emergency assistance
- contact families
- remain with the children until families have picked them up or staff has been relieved of duties by a Supervisor, the Manager of Care or an alternate.
- complete a Serious Incident Report for Licensing

Earthquake Procedures

In the case of an Earthquake, Parkgate Child and Family Centre and Seymour School Age Care Program staff will:

- access the emergency equipment bin and proceed to the nearest safe place
- direct children to the closest safe place
- count the number of children to determine if anyone is unaccounted for
- if there is a gas leak, evacuate the children
- provide First-Aid, if necessary
- listen to the radio for directions
- use the telephone only if there are life threatening injuries
- wait until it is safe to evacuate
- follow the evacuation procedures

Follow Up Guidelines

When an emergency occurs at the Parkgate Child and Family Centre or Seymour School Age Care Program, this follow-up will occur:

The Manager of Care or an alternate will:

- report to Licensing, the Board, the families and emergency personnel
- debrief with staff and make counseling available for staff if necessary
- connect with families to assess the effects of the emergency on their children
- make support and counseling available to families and children if necessary

Each Program Supervisor will:

- debrief with the children to answer their questions and provide support appropriate to their age and developmental abilities

The Executive Director or an alternate will:

- notify the insurance company, legal advisors, and the District of North Vancouver
- deal with the media

CENTRE CLOSURE

In the case of fire, extended power or heat failure, extreme weather conditions, public health orders, or an evacuation due to the safety of the facility, or due to any other unforeseen reasons, the child care may have to close and be cancelled. The staff will care for children until families/emergency contacts have picked them up. Evacuation Procedures are posted at the exits will be followed.

Should a non-emergency closure/cancellation be anticipated (e.g. heavy snowing in the morning or predicted through the day) staff will advise you of the possibility of closure as children are dropped off. Staff will distribute a message to the Sandbox Parent App and record a message on the Camp's voice mail with closure details.

During the school year we will follow School Districts 44 School closures, with a closure of our Child Care (e.g. if SD 44 announces school closures due to heavy snow, Parkgate Child & Family Centre will close too).

All monthly fees will still apply.

WITHDRAWAL OR CHANGE OF STATUS BY PARENT(S)/GUARDIAN(S)

You are required to provide 45 days notice in writing to the Manager directly if you plan to discontinue using the Centre's Child Care Programs or pay 45 days in fees in lieu of notice. Notice must be received prior to the fifteenth of the month (i.e., for withdrawal on March 31, notice must be received by February 15).

For Group Child Care if an increase or decrease in the number of days (e.g., decrease to part-time) your child attends is desired, or if the days of attendance need to be changed, please contact the Manager. **If the request is a decrease in days, a calendar (from the last day of the previous month) a full month's notice is required.** Changes will be accommodated whenever possible.

SPECIAL NOTE:

School Age Care – end of school year withdrawal:

Withdrawal notice for children enrolled in the School Age Care program does not include July and August. ***Withdrawal for September must be received by May 15.***

TERMINATION OF SERVICES BY PARKGATE SOCIETY

At the Parkgate Child and Family Centre, staff are committed to providing a caring and supportive environment for all families. However, termination of services may be required if:

- fees for services are not paid and suitable arrangements cannot be agreed upon, or
- the Centre is unable to satisfactorily resolve an issue with the enrolling parent/guardian using the conflict resolution steps.

If the Centre plans to terminate service, the Manager will give one month's written notice to the enrolling parent/guardian. Staff will provide assistance with finding alternate care.

FEES

Monthly fees are due on the first of the month and collected from families through the process of Direct Withdrawal. .

A \$75.00 administration fee for each child is required and payable upon placement in program.

In cases such as power failure, severe weather conditions or public health closures, etc., Parkgate Society will have an interruption of service provision and close the Centre. Child Care Fees will NOT be reimbursed, nor any portion thereof. Monthly fees will be due as per usual, and our regular WITHDRAWAL OR CHANGE OF STATUS BY PARENT(S)/CAREPROVIDER policy for terminating services with Parkgate Society Child Care will also still be in effect

An official tax receipt for child care fees will be issued annually. Please retain this receipt for your income tax purposes.

N.S.F. cheques must be repaid within one week, including a \$25 bank service charge.

\$10 a day Child Care BC Prototype

Parkgate Society Child Care and Camps are currently an approved Prototype to the \$10 a day Child Care BC Initiative.

Child Care fees are \$10 a day, or a max of \$200 a month.

This new arrangement with the Ministry limits the funding for extracurricular activities and field trips. The Ministry therefore recommends we charge families a 'Fieldtrip/Activity Fee' as an add-on.

We may collect extra fees per special outing or activity. You will be notified before such fees occur. All our Winter, Spring and Summer Camps are offered weekly and will have a weekly add-on fee to accommodate costs for fieldtrips and special fun activities.

Child care fees are tax deductible, add-on fees are not.

BC AFFORDABLE CHILD CARE BENEFITS

Parkgate Child and Family Centre is encouraging parents to apply for BC Affordable Child Care Benefits (formally known as child care subsidy), please contact the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) at 1-888-338-6622 or visit their [website](#).

Families that earn up to \$111,000 may qualify for funding. Families that earn more than \$111,000, but have considerable deductions for family size or children, who have special needs, can also apply.

If your family is eligible for the income tested benefit, you will receive an authorization form from MCFD which needs to be shared with the Manager to complete the process. The benefit covers a portion of the child care fee and you will be expected to pay the parent portion (difference) of the fee.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality at Parkgate Society refers to all verbal and written information about potential, enrolling and former children, families and staff. It also includes minutes/discussions of all 'in camera' board/advisory committee meetings.

STAFF

All child care staff are trained and certified as Early Learning Educators, as per licensing regulations. Infant/Toddler, and Three-to-Five Group Care Program child care staff are trained and certified as Early Childhood Educators or ECE Assistants and are experienced in providing child care. Many staff also have Special Needs and/or Infant/Toddler training and certifications. They maintain valid First Aid Certificates and are encouraged to be members of their professional association, the Early Childhood Educators of B.C. (ECEBC), and adhere to the ECEBC Code of Ethics.

The Senior Educators in the School Age Program have a School Age Child Care Certificate or post-secondary training in a related field, as well as experience working with school age children. The School Age Educators have a minimum of Responsible Adult qualification or post-secondary training in a related field, maintain valid First Aid Certificates and are encouraged to be members of the School Age Child Care Association of B.C.

Our experienced staff is supported to continue their professional development and are committed in enhancing their knowledge and certifications.

In addition to our regular staff, we will work with substitutes, students, and volunteers. You will have an opportunity to meet them as they participate in the Program. All staff, substitutes, students and volunteers will complete the Criminal Record Search process prior to starting at the Child Care Programs, in accordance with the Child Care Regulation.

SUBSTITUTES

Qualified substitute child care staff will be called in when regular staff are away in order to maintain the staff/child ratio required by Child Care Regulation.

STUDENTS

We also welcome the opportunity to participate in the practicum portion of publicly funded training programs for Early Childhood Education students. The Senior Educator coordinates the placement, orientation, and supervision of practicum students in the Centre's Child Care Programs.

VOLUNTEERS

Our Child Care Programs welcome volunteers who participate in activities that enhance our programs. This may include baking and preparing snacks with the children, accompanying a group on field trips, assisting with cleaning/preparation work for special events/activities, or reading to children. All volunteers will be screened by our Volunteer Coordinator which includes completing a criminal record check. Volunteers will not be responsible for the supervision of the children.

ENROLLMENT/WAITLIST

When there are vacancies and the setting is suitable for the child, children will be accepted as follows:

1. Children currently enrolled in the Parkgate Community Centre's Licensed Child Care Programs and moving to the next age group.
2. Children currently enrolled in part-time care in the Parkgate Community Centre's Licensed Child Care Programs wishing to increase to full-time care and vice versa
3. Siblings of children currently enrolled in the Parkgate Community Centre's Licensed Child Care Programs
4. Families applying for admission for the first time, based on date of application, age of the child, school that the child attends or will attend, and desired entry date.

Vacancies will be assessed and be defined based on a range of eligible waitlist criteria (e.g. age of child, school child does/will attend, ratio of part to full-time spaces within the child care setting, ability of staff to plan for continued delivery of service from one program to the next, and the ages of other children in the child care program). Parkgate Society will maintain a waitlist. Families who wish to be on the waitlist are required to submit an online waitlist application form available on our website www.parkgatesociety.ca. Children's names will remain on the waitlist and will be removed if the family does not return our email or phone calls when offered a spot or when asked to update information.

MOVING UP IN GROUP CARE...

When your child has reached the age upon which it is necessary for her or him to move up to the next age-appropriate program, the program supervisors will make this arrangement and provide you with a gradual entry schedule.

It is important to note that once a child is enrolled in one Program, space in another Program is not automatic or guaranteed.

PART-TIME GROUP CARE

Parkgate Society aims to meet family needs for part-time group care by offering a limited number of part-time spaces per Program. Where appropriate "matching" in terms of scheduling and ages of children can be made, you may be able to register for either 2 days per week or 3 days per week. If you are enrolling your children 3 days a week, it is required that one of these days to be either a Monday or Friday. In the Infant/Toddler Care it is preferred, that part-time children register with consecutive days (e.g. M/T/W or W/TH/F), so that the child has an easier time to adjust to program routines. Please note that part-time days of care do not change because of children's illnesses, family holidays, statutory holidays, etc.

CHILDREN WHO REQUIRE EXTRA SUPPORT

Children who require extra support are welcome in our Child Care Programs as per the enrolment policies. In addition to the orientation with the family, an orientation will be arranged with any professionals providing support on-site in the Child Care Program.

If a child requires extra support at school, then extra support in child care is needed too. Please disclose all medication that is prescribed to your child in your child's registration form and emergency form.

GRADUAL ENTRY/ORIENTATION

Starting at a new Child Care Program is an important event in a child's life. For some children this will be their first large group experience. It is natural for children to have concerns, though they may not have the language to express their feelings. New situations can be a challenge even for those who have had some large group experience already.

In order to assist families with the transition to a new Program, gradual entry will be arranged by staff on a family-by-family basis. Gradual entry is a common child care practice where during the child's first week, he/she attends the Program for an increasing number of hours each visit. Please be prepared to spend some time with your child during the first few days of gradual entry until your child has established a comfortable trusting relationship with the staff. This is an important experience for you as well as your child to become better acquainted with staff and the program.

Steps for transition (a gradual entry plan) will be developed based on the needs of your child when your child is moving from one Program to another within the Centre.

COMMUNICATING WITH FAMILIES

Our staff will at all times demonstrate respect for, and recognition of families' traditions, languages, communication styles and cultural diversity. We will aim to provide as much written and verbal information as possible in the home language (dependent upon availability of resources).

For sharing information about the Society and its Programs, we have both a bulletin board and regular newsletters. We look forward to communicating frequently, setting goals and if needed, solving problems together with each family in the best interests of the children. If you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions, please speak with Program staff or the Child Care Manager.

COMMUNICATING WITH SCHOOL STAFF (SCHOOL AGE PROGRAM)

When appropriate, you will be asked to indicate, in the "School Communication Consent Form", your agreement for sharing information between the school and the Senior Educator. Information that is private and personal will only be shared between the Child Care Program and the school on a "need to know basis" and with prior consent from you.

COMMUNICATING WITH CHILD CARE PROGRAM STAFF

Parkgate Society promotes open, trusting relationships between parents/guardians and staff. Please call and if the appropriate staff person is unavailable, she/he will call back as soon as possible.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

You are encouraged to discuss questions or concerns regarding any aspect of the Child Care Program with the Program staff or Manager. If an issue arises, the goal is to resolve differences of opinion and conflict in a peaceful, respectful way and find solutions that everyone can accept. The steps outlined will be followed:

Step 1

The enrolling parent/guardian and Program staff will meet to define the issues and state their point of view.

Step 2

Solutions and/or appropriate resources will be identified, whenever appropriate.

Step 3

A plan will be agreed upon by the enrolling parent/guardian and the Senior Educator or Child Care & Family Programs Manager.

Step 4

If a plan cannot be agreed upon by all parties, other arrangements may be required.

CUSTODY AND ACCESS

If parents live separately, the Child Care Programs expect that the information provided by the enrolling parent is accurate. If a family has a custody agreement or court order, a copy must be provided and placed in the child's file. Without a custody agreement or court order on file, staff cannot deny access to the non-enrolling parent. If one of the parents is not authorized to pick up the child, the policy on unauthorized persons will be followed.

If custody has not been legally determined and conflict between the parents and/or their family members is evident, Parkgate Society Child & Family Centre may not be able to care for the child unless both parents and/or other family members sign a written agreement confirming details re: authorization for pick up and access to information about the child.

CHILD ABUSE

The Child, Family and Community Service Act states that all children in the Province of B.C. "are entitled to be protected from abuse, neglect and harm or threat of harm." The Act also states that any "person who has reason to believe that a child needs protection must promptly report the matter" to the Ministry for Children and Family Development (MCFD). If you have any questions, or would like more information, we invite you to talk to the Manager.

PROGRAM REVIEW/FEEDBACK

As part of Parkgate Society's ongoing commitment to serve our community and to strive for quality care in its Child Care Programs, we appreciate your feedback and input. We view this as a dynamic and positive opportunity to implement your recommendations into our work plan for the Child Care Programs. Summaries of your feedback will be shared with staff, Advisory Committee, Board members and parents/guardians.

We want to hear from you!