

**2016-2017**  
**Parent Information Package**

This booklet will provide you with information for  
Fort George Explorers After-School Care Program

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**Childcare Cell Phone:**  
250.981.5919

**Museum Phone:**  
250.562.1612

**Location:**  
333 Becott Place  
in Lheidli T'enneh Memorial Park

[www.theexplorationplace.com](http://www.theexplorationplace.com)



## Contents

Staff Contact List .....	3
FGE Philosophy.....	4
Other Child Care Programs .....	4
Hours of Care .....	5
Program Fees .....	6
No Call Fee for Shuttle Service.....	7
Invoicing .....	8
Parent Communication .....	8
Shuttle Services .....	10
Shuttle Rules .....	11
Snack .....	12
Staff Qualifications.....	12
A Day at the Museum .....	13
Arrival & Departure Procedures .....	13
Emergency Drills & Emergencies .....	14
Gallery Time, Outdoor Play & Urban Garden .....	14
Clothing .....	15
Electronics .....	14
Well Child Policy .....	16
Immunization .....	16
Medication & Food Allergies .....	17
Care Plans.....	17
Late Pick-up.....	17
Child Release Policy.....	18
Custody .....	18
Withdrawal.....	18
Guidance Procedure.....	19
Rules and Guidelines.....	19
Termination of Services.....	22
Parental Concerns.....	23

# Staff Contact List

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## CHILD CARE

**Natalie Chappell**, child care assistant – 250.562.1612 ext 243  
childcare cell phone—250.981.5919  
childcare@theexplorationplace.com  
Primary Group

**Kimberly Carlton**, child care officer—250.562.1612 ext 243  
fge@theexplorationplace.com  
Intermediate Group

## MANAGEMENT

**Robyn Reimer**, child care coordinator – 250.562.1612 ext 235  
robyn.reimer@theexplorationplace.com

**Amanda Smedley**, deputy director – 250.562.1612 ext 221  
amanda.smedley@theexplorationplace.com

## INVOICES & PAYMENT

**Barb Laass**, finance officer – 250.562.1612 ext 228  
finance@theexplorationplace.com

## OTHER STAFF

**Heather Swanky**, visitor services assistant – 250.562.1612  
frontdesk@theexplorationplace.com

# FGE Philosophy

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The Fort George Explorers After-School Care Program features a well-rounded structure with a foundation grounded in hands-on educational and social experiences for children with one another, and with the adults that care for them.

Our program is designed to captivate the interests of our participating children and entice them to explore the world around them. Our educational philosophy centers on lifelong learning opportunities for our participants and their families in the areas of science, technology, heritage, and innovation.

We have been providing child care in Prince George since 2001, caring for 45 school aged children and 80 preschoolers daily. Our child care staff members are all qualified responsible adults and early childhood educators with a genuine love for working with children.

At Fort George Explorers, we believe that the best way to learn is by doing, and fully subscribe to the adage, “Hands On, Minds On”. Our goal is to recognize and nourish the individual strengths and learning styles of the children in our care, and we do so by ensuring that our curriculum is hands-on, learner-centered, and most of all, fun!

## Other Childcare Programs

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- Early Explorers Preschool
- Science Alliance Summer Day Camps
- Fort George Explorers Summer Care
- Spring Break Camps
- Homeschooler Monday Program

Please check our website for more information about our other child care programs.

***The Exploration Place provides all children enrolled in our child care programs with unique opportunities and experiences in a fun, non-intimidating environment that fosters social, physical, emotional, and intellectual development.***

# Hours of Care

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Monday to Friday: 2:00pm to 6:00pm September through June (see program closures below).

Non-Instructional Days: 8:00am to 6:00pm on days set out on the School District #57 calendar and the private school calendar (please check the laminated calendar you received with your registration package).

***Please note that The Exploration Place only provides care on the days noted in our enclosed laminated calendar. We do not provide full days of care or early shuttle pick-up on report card writing days or other days not outlined in our calendar.***

Weekly Early Dismissals: 1:30pm-6:00pm on Wednesdays (Ron Brent & Van Bien.) If your child attends one of these schools and is enrolled for Wednesday care, you are responsible for paying the early dismissal fee regardless of your child's attendance.

## PROGRAM CLOSURES

Please refer to the laminated calendar you received with your registration package for a complete schedule of program closures. FGE will NOT be in session on Statutory Holidays, Winter Break or Spring Break.

## SEPTEMBER 2016

We will be providing a full day of care (8am-6pm) on Tuesday, September 6<sup>th</sup>, and shuttle service for private school children will begin on Wednesday, September 7<sup>th</sup>. We will provide a full day of care (10am-6pm) for public school children who will be dismissed early on September 6<sup>th</sup>, but will not be able to provide shuttle service for public schools on this day. You may drop your child off with our childcare staff after 10am. Regular shuttle service will resume for all schools on Thursday, September 8<sup>th</sup>.

**Kindergarten Gradual Entry:** Please note that our shuttle is unable to accommodate kindergarten students who are on a gradual entry schedule at the beginning of the school year. If your kindergarten child is dismissed early during the first weeks of school, you may drop them off at the museum any time after 2pm.

## WINTER BREAK 2016

We will be CLOSED during Winter Break 2016. There will be no care available during this time.

## SPRING BREAK 2017

This school year, we will be offering weekly camps during Spring Break. This registration is separate from regular FGE registration. Registration will first be offered to current families in our after-school care, then to the general public. FGE after-school care will be closed during this break.

# Program Fees

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## FULL TIME

\$406	Monday to Friday care including shuttle
\$320	Monday to Friday care without shuttle

***Full-time fees include Pro-D Days (designated School District #57 and private school Pro-D Days)***

## PART TIME

\$26/day	After-school care with shuttle*
\$20/day	After-school care without shuttle
\$38/day	Full day of care**

***\*Please note there is a minimum shuttle fee of \$42.00 per month***

***\*\*If your child is enrolled to come on a Pro-D Day, you will be charged for the full day regardless of the child's attendance.***

## ADDITIONAL CHARGES

+\$10	Early Dismissal Day Charge (applies if your child's school has a scheduled weekly early dismissal day)
+\$10	Late Pick Up (applies if you arrive after 6:00 pm to pick up your child and for each period of 15 minutes following)

## PROGRAM ENHANCEMENT FEE

\$25	This non-refundable annual fee goes directly to our childcare programs, and is payable upon registration with your deposit
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## DISCOUNTS

50% off Family Membership!	At the time of registration, each family will receive the option to purchase a family membership for 50% off!
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# No Call Fee for Shuttle Service

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This fee was introduced due to the number of incidents of parents failing to call the Fort George Explorers mobile number to inform the program of a child's absence.

When a parent does not call to tell us their child is not taking the shuttle the result is:

- The driver must stop his/her route to call the school, parents/guardians and/or emergency contacts to determine the whereabouts of the child.
- The shuttle becomes anywhere from 10-30 minutes late to pick up other children on the shuttle route
- Unnecessary allocation of staff resources, drivers and program staff, to locate the child
- You have asked us to pick up your child and we take that responsibility seriously! As a team, we worry about the child and continue to allocate our resources until we are able to confirm they are safe.

## NO CALL FOR SHUTTLE FEES

1 <sup>st</sup> offense	warning
2 <sup>nd</sup> offense	\$10
3 <sup>rd</sup> offense	\$25
4 <sup>th</sup> offense	1 week suspension
5 <sup>th</sup> offense	Permanent loss of shuttle privileges*

*\*All offenses remain on file and are carried over year to year.*

# Invoicing

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## DEPOSIT/PROGRAM ENHANCEMENT FEE

A non-refundable, non-transferrable deposit of \$100, plus a \$25 Program Enhancement Fee is required to secure a space for your child in our program. Your deposit will be credited to your first month's fees for child care.

## INVOICES AND PAYMENT

Invoices are mailed or emailed two weeks prior to the payment due date. Payments are due and payable on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month. If the payment due date falls on a statutory holiday, payment will be processed on the next business day. Families paying by Pre-Authorized Debit (PAD) will be given the option to split their monthly fees, with half payable on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month, and the remainder payable on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month. If a payment withdrawal is returned as NSF, you will be issued an NSF notice and a \$25 processing fee will be charged to your account for each NSF occurrence. You will then have five business days from the date of the notice to contact the Finance Officer and clear up the account. If you have not cleared the account or made payment arrangements within five days, childcare privileges will be suspended.

## PRE-AUTHORIZED PAYMENT

After your deposit and Program Enhancement Fee is paid, all subsequent monthly childcare payments can be paid by Pre-Authorized Debit (PAD) directly from your bank account, or by Visa, Mastercard, or American Express placed on file. Please see front desk for the available forms to set up your preferred method of payment.

## CHILD CARE FEES

You are responsible for the fees pertaining to the days you have registered for. Cancelling care\* or dropping days requires 30 days' notice, and this notice should be given prior to invoices being mailed out (please check the laminated calendar for payment due dates.) If your child is absent due to sickness, vacation, or for other personal reasons, it is necessary to pay the full fee in order to maintain your child's space, including full days of care.

## SUBSIDY

The Exploration Place accepts provincial government child care subsidy. Please speak with our Finance Officer if you are applying and to obtain necessary documents. For subsidy information or to renew your subsidy, please contact the Ministry office at 1-888-338-6622 or visit:

[http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/child\\_care/subsidy\\_promo.htm](http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/child_care/subsidy_promo.htm). Parents/guardians who receive subsidy are responsible for paying the difference between the subsidy and the FGE child care fees.

**Please contact our Finance Officer with any questions about subsidy, invoicing or payment at 250.562.1612 ext. 228 or email [finance@theexplorationplace.com](mailto:finance@theexplorationplace.com).**

# Parent Communication

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## NOT ATTENDING\*

If your child does not require shuttle or care on a particular day, please call or text the FGE cell phone (250.981.5919) BEFORE 1pm regardless of your child's school dismissal time. Calling before 1pm ensures there is proper communication with our drivers who are out picking up children. Please see the No Call for Shuttle Fee information on page 6.

*\*Please do not email or call the museum's land line as staff will not take a message and will direct you to the cell phone.*

## UP-TO-DATE CONTACT

If there is a change of address, phone number, email address, or your child's medical/custody concerns, please inform the Childcare Assistant immediately with these changes. This ensures we can properly contact you and safely care for your child(ren).

## ACCIDENTS & EMERGENCIES

It is essential that you keep us informed of current phone numbers so that we can notify you or your emergency contact in case of an accident or emergency. In the case of an emergency/disaster situation, we will attempt to contact parents/guardians as soon as possible.

## MONTHLY NEWSLETTERS & EMAIL

A newsletter and calendar is sent out each month with information regarding activities, special events, and other notes relevant to the after-school care program. **Please take the time to review the newsletter as there may be important messages.** We deliver these items electronically via email. Please provide us with an email address you check frequently, as important communication may be delivered by email.

## LOST & FOUND

There is a lost and found bin located in the museum. Please ask one of the child care or front desk staff if your child is missing an item. As lost & found items are accumulated, we will send out a reminder to parents to check the bins for any missing items. Due to limited space, items not claimed within three months will be donated to a local charity.

# Shuttle Services

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***Please remember to call or text the FGE cell phone (250.981.5919) BEFORE 1pm regardless of your child's school dismissal time if your child is not attending!***

## SHUTTLE ROUTES

### FGE-1 ROUTE

School	Estimated Pick Up Time	Notes
Ecole Lac des Bois	2:27pm	
Foothills	2:45pm	
Spruceland	2:50pm	

### FGE-2 ROUTE

School	Estimated Pick Up Time	Notes
Sacred Heart	2:15pm	
Van Bien	2:35pm; 1:30pm (Wed)	
College Heights	2:50pm	

### FGE-3 ROUTE

School	Estimated Pick Up Time	Notes
St. Mary's	2:20pm	
Pinewood	2:35pm	
Peden Hill	2:45pm	
Ron Brent	2:55pm; 1:40pm (Wed)	FGE-2 on Wednesdays

**Please note that we are not able to accommodate changes in pick up time due to kindergarten gradual entry, class field trips, early dismissals (except on Wednesdays for Ron Brent and Van Bien,) report card writing days, detention, parent teacher meetings, or extra-curricular activities. Pick up will be the responsibility of the parent if schedules are adjusted for special occasions. Fort George Explorers follows the School District #57 calendar and the private school calendar, and not those of individual schools.**

If you require shuttle services, but your child's school is not listed above, please contact the Childcare Assistant to discuss the possibility of adding new schools to our route. Due to time constraints, we only pick up from schools in the bowl area

## KINDERGARTEN PICK UP

When a school is first on a van driver's route and at the request of schools, van drivers pick up kindergarten children from their classes. In some cases, when the van driver already has children in the van, this may not be possible. In these cases, we will ask for the cooperation of the parent and school to find a suitable adult (teacher, outside supervisor, older child enrolled in the program) to bring the kindergarten child(ren) to the van. Children in grades 1 and up are responsible for meeting at the designated pick up spot after their bell has rung. Please contact us for more information.

## LATE CHILDREN

It is crucial that children arrive to the vans on time as late arrivals will cause delay in getting to the next school. Please remind your children of the importance of getting to the vans promptly. If your child is late for the van repeatedly, we will ask you to speak with them and remind them of the importance of arriving at the van on time. If your child continually misses the shuttle or displays unsafe or inappropriate behaviour in the van, we may discontinue services. The Exploration Place reserves the right to cancel transportation service to any child who displays unsafe behavior in the shuttle. **If your child will be away for a day, you must inform us before 1pm. This is especially important with children using our transportation services. Please call our cell phone: 250-981-5919.**

## BOOSTER SEATS

All children under the age of 9 must be in a booster seat. The Exploration Place provides booster seats in our vans for all children who require them at no additional charge.

## SHUTTLE DRIVERS

All of our shuttle drivers have a valid Class 4 unrestricted driver's license, a first aid certificate, a clean driver's abstract, and a clear criminal records check.

## SHUTTLE CANCELLATION

In the event that transportation services are cancelled due to weather, or if it unsafe for the shuttle to pick up your child, transportation will be cancelled for the day and parents will be contacted. It will be the responsibility of the parent to pick up their child from their schools, and Bones Bucks (gift certificates) of the approximate value of the cancelled services will be issued to affected parents.

# Snack

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Fort George Explorers promotes healthy eating habits and uses the Canada Food Guide as a resource for providing healthy snacks to the children in our care. Each day, child care staff will provide children with a nutritious snack with food from at least two food groups.

Please make sure we have up-to-date information about your child's allergies or dietary restrictions so we can provide alternative snacks if needed. All our snack food is peanut and tree nut free.

## FOOD FROM HOME

Children may choose to eat something from their backpack in addition to, or instead of, our provided food as long as it is peanut and tree nut free. We ask that only healthy snacks from home be consumed while in our care. We will ask children to return chips/candy/pop to their backpacks to eat later at home.

## BIRTHDAY DAYS

Each month we have a Birthday Day to recognize children who have a birthday that month. The Exploration Place will provide a special nut-free treat for all the children to celebrate their birthdays.

## PRO D DAYS

On Pro D Days, we will provide your child with both morning and afternoon snack. Please pack a cold lunch for your child (no microwaveable items) on these days, as only snacks are provided.

# Staff Qualifications

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The Exploration Place childcare team is made up of a unique and dedicated group of qualified Responsible Adults and Early Childhood Educators with a genuine love for working with children. All of our childcare staff members meet the criteria outlined in the Community Care and Assisted Living Act and the Child Care Licensing Regulations. Our staff members:

- Are 19 years of age or older
- Have completed and cleared a criminal record check
- Have current First Aid and CPR certificates
- Have a valid ECE/ECE assistant certificate, or
- Have a valid Responsible Adult certificate, or have received a minimum of 20 hours of education in child development, guidance, health/safety, and nutrition
- Receive a minimum additional 20 hours of professional development per year

# A Day at the Museum

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The following schedule is a typical day at the museum. However, each day may be different as it depends on planned activities and weather. Please note that all times are approximate.

- 2:30 – 3:00** Children begin to be dropped off
- 3:00** Split into Primary and Intermediate groups (outside during winter)
- 3:00 – 3:30** Outdoor play
- 3:30 – 3:45** Snack
- 3:45 – 4:45** Guided Activities and Games (outside during summer)
- 4:45 – 5:00** Free play
- 5:00 – 6:00** Gallery time during pick up (or outside during summer)

## ARRIVAL PROCEDURE

If you drop your child off at our program, you must sign your child in and ensure that a child care staff member is aware that you are dropping your child off. Please notify us prior to 1pm on any day that your child will be absent. Please notify a child care staff member if your child will be picked up by another adult (if they are not on the authorized pick up list, we will require written or verbal authorization). Please let a child care staff member know any pertinent information about your child's night or morning that may be helpful to staff.

## DEPARTURE PROCEDURE

Your child must be picked up by 6pm daily. When you arrive to pick up your child, please check in with front desk, and a staff member will let you know where your child is located.

Parents/guardians/authorized pick-ups must sign the child out and check with staff for any messages about the child's day. Always ensure that a child care staff member is aware that you are taking your child home. **A CHILD WILL NOT BE RELEASED TO ANYONE OTHER THAN A PARENT/GUARDIAN OR AUTHORIZED PERSON LISTED ON THE REGISTRATION FORM UNLESS WE HAVE WRITTEN OR VERBAL CONSENT FROM YOU.** Photo identification will be required to verify the identity of the person picking up your child. Please do not be offended, we do this for your child's safety!

## EMERGENCY DRILLS & EMERGENCIES

Children will participate in a brief fire drill once a month to learn about fire safety. We will also conduct a disaster preparedness drill once annually. Children are expected to follow all emergency drill rules (i.e. listening to leaders, staying in line) during the drill. Please make sure your child has a pair of indoor shoes as they will not have time to change into their outdoor shoes for these practices.

In the event that we need to evacuate the building, a staff member will notify you and tell you where your child can be picked up.

It is very important that you keep us informed of current telephone numbers so that we may notify you or your emergency contact in the case of an emergency.

## GALLERY TIME

An important aspect of our program is providing children access to our changing exhibits and galleries. The Exploration Place will provide many opportunities for children to visit these spaces, and participate in guided activities led by our education and interpretive staff.

## OUTDOOR PLAY

Weather-permitting, we spend at least 30 minutes outdoors each day. During the winter, we do not go outside when the temperature is -15 degrees Celsius or colder (including wind-chill). It is our policy to not allow children who are not appropriately dressed to participate in outdoor winter activities such as sledding. Please make sure your child comes dressed appropriately to go outside (i.e. boots, coat, mitts, hat, snow pants). Whenever possible, we will try to outfit a child not dressed appropriately with gear from the lost and found, but proper sizes are not always available.

## URBAN GARDEN

The Urban Garden is open from Spring to Fall and children will be given ample time to participate in various projects related to planting, growing and caring for plants and food items. This is an important aspect of our program during the Spring and Fall months, and children will spend time in the urban garden weekly. Please see our monthly newsletters throughout the year for additional information.

## INDOOR SHOES

All children who attend our Fort George Explorers After-School Program must wear indoor shoes. Please make sure your child has a pair of indoor shoes on his or her first day of care. An extra set of clothes may also be helpful for younger children. Children who do not have indoor shoes will be outfitted with affordable "croc"-style shoes and the cost of these shoes will be added to your monthly invoice.

## CLOTHING

Time is spent outdoors daily, regardless of weather conditions (unless it is colder than -15 degrees Celsius including wind-chill). Please ensure your child has appropriate clothing; the weather conditions as they leave for school in the morning may vary significantly from the weather conditions after the school day is done. Please mark your child's belongings with their name, and remember that they come to play, have fun, and get dirty! If your child wears a school uniform or something that should not get soiled, please send a change of clothes with them.

## HOME TOYS

Children may bring toys from home as long as they first ask a leader and understand it is for their use only (i.e. no sharing or trading). The Exploration Place and its staff are not responsible for lost or broken items.

## ELECTRONICS

We ask that personal electronic devices (i.e. cell phones, iPods, iPads, Nintendo DS, etc) **not be used** while children are in our care. We believe that while children are with us, they should be engaging with one another, the staff and the environment around them. We would prefer that electronic items be kept at home; however, if your child is allowed to use electronic devices at school, we ask that these items remain in their backpacks while they are at FGE. If a child is found using an electronic device while in our care, we will confiscate it and return it to you when you pick your child up. If you feel you need to communicate directly with your child, please do not hesitate to call us on the FGE mobile line: 250-981-5919.

## PLANNED ACTIVITIES

Each month, The Exploration Place child care staff plan activities based on a theme. These activities range from guest speakers, museum-specific activities (i.e. snowshoeing), science programs, and crafts. "Parties" are also scheduled on major holiday months such as Halloween and Christmas. Please check the monthly newsletter for more information about these activities.

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT

We welcome and encourage parents and guardians to visit our program any time.

# Museum Policies

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The following policies have been put in place for the health and safety of your child.

## WELL CHILD POLICY

We are unable to provide care for your child when the following symptoms are present:

- undiagnosed or unexplained pain
- sore throat or difficulty swallowing
- fever of 38 degrees Celsius or higher
- nausea and vomiting
- unexplained diarrhea with nausea cramps or vomiting
- difficulty breathing, wheezing or persistent coughing
- severe itching, unexplained rash or infection
- communicable disease (i.e. chicken pox, head lice, pink eye)

Your child may not return to our care until s/he is symptom-free for 24 hours and well enough to participate in all aspects of our program, including outdoor play (this may extend to 48 hours in the case of a larger outbreak of illness). In the case of some communicable diseases, we may require notice from a doctor that your child is healthy and ready to return to care.

If your child is ill, please keep them at home and inform a child care staff member by calling or texting our cell: (250)981-5919. This will help us reduce the spread of common childhood illnesses. This information is kept confidential.

If your child becomes ill during the day, we will contact you and request that you come and pick your child up. If we cannot reach you, we will call the emergency contacts you listed on your child's registration form. We will provide a quiet, supervised area for your sick child to rest until they are picked up. Please pick up your child within thirty minutes of our call to you.

We understand that it is stressful for parents and employers when children become ill; our well child policy is in place to protect all of the children, as well as the staff that care for them daily.

## IMMUNIZATION

The Ministry of Health Services of the Province of British Columbia recommends that your child's immunizations be up-to-date before your child enters a child care program. You will be asked during registration to indicate whether your child is immunized according to the recommended schedule, and this information will be on file. If an outbreak of communicable disease occurs, non-immunized children will be excluded immediately, for their safety. In the event of an outbreak, Community Care Facilities Licensing will be notified.

## MEDICATION

Only medications that are prescribed by a doctor can be administered by our child care staff. We ask that parents personally deliver any prescription medications to us and complete a Permission to Medicate Care Plan. Please ensure that the medication is in the original container with the prescription label attached. We will keep the medication in our medication lock box (or in the refrigerator if required).

If your child carries an inhaler for asthma, an epi-pen for allergies, or other medication for illness or disease, we require that you meet with our child care staff prior to your child starting care with us to create a care plan that ensures all of our staff are aware of your child's condition(s) and aware of the steps necessary to properly care for your child in case of emergency.

## FOOD ALLERGIES

Please make sure our child care staff is aware of any food allergies or restrictions that your child has. Also, please remember that our program is peanut and tree nut free. We will ask your child to return any snacks containing nuts to their backpacks to be eaten at home.

## CARE PLANS

If your child requires special or additional care due to allergies, disabilities, behavioural issues, or other reasons, please contact the Childcare Assistant to set aside a time to meet to discuss the need of your child so that we may create a care plan that will aid us to properly care for your child.

## LATE PICK-UP

Please remember that your child must be picked up by an authorized person by 6:00pm daily. If you have arrived after the pick-up time, there is a fee of \$10 per child for every 15 minute period (or portion of). This fee will be added to your next invoice. Please note that three late pick-ups in any six month period may result in withdrawal of services.

If your child is not picked up five minutes after closing time and there has been no contact with the parent/guardian, the staff will:

1. Check the sign-in sheet for any information regarding alternate arrangements for the day's pick-up
2. Call parents/guardians at home/work/mobile numbers to remind them of pick-up required.
3. If the parents/guardians cannot be reached after fifteen minutes, emergency contacts will be called.
4. If the parents/guardians and emergency contacts cannot be reached after thirty minutes, staff will call the Ministry for Children and Family Development Emergency Services who will come and take your child into care until a parent or guardian can be located.

## CHILD RELEASE POLICY

**A CHILD WILL NOT BE RELEASED TO ANYONE OTHER THAN A PARENT/GUARDIAN OR AUTHORIZED PERSON LISTED ON THE REGISTRATION FORM UNLESS WE HAVE WRITTEN OR VERBAL CONSENT FROM YOU.** Until our staff members get to know you, they will ask for I.D. Please do not be offended as we have your child's safety in mind. All people, including parents, should be prepared to show photo identification when picking up children.

A child will not be released from care when the person appears incapable of providing safe care (i.e. intoxication/drug use). Staff will suggest that the parent/guardian or authorized pick up person call a friend/taxi for alternate transportation. If staff feels a child is at risk and the person makes the decision to drive, staff will call the police.

A child will not be released from care when the person who arrives to pick up the child is not listed on the emergency card or registration form unless the parent/guardian has provided us with written or verbal consent for this individual (this includes friends or family members that the child knows; written or verbal authorization is still required).

A child will not be released from care to a person who is unable to provide proper photo identification (driver's license, provincial identification card).

## CUSTODY

Please provide us with a copy of any custody agreement or court orders in place for your child's file. We will act in accordance with these legal documents. If you do not have any legal documents, the enrolling parent/guardian must provide us with written information about access. We will act in accordance with information provided to us by the enrolling parent/guardian.

If custody issues create conflict in our program (i.e. non-custodial parent attempting to pick-up child at a time not specified in the custody agreement) and this places the child, staff, and other children in our care at risk, we will ask you to make alternate care arrangements.

Parents/guardians that require copies of files relating to their child's care for personal or court use will be charged a \$75 administration fee. Copies of requested documents will be provided to both parents. Please allow at least two weeks for us to process these requests.

## WITHDRAWAL

We require 30 days' written notice if you intend to withdraw your child from our program. Please provide us with written notice by the first of the month for withdrawal the following month. An additional month's fee will be charged if the required notice is not given. Please contact the Childcare Assistant to discuss withdrawal from the program at 250.562.1612 ext 243.

# GUIDANCE PROCEDURE

Our goal is to provide a secure, healthy learning environment in which children may feel safe. Guidance is an integral part of the after-school care program, aiming to provide a safe and healthy environment for children.

Children are encouraged to become self-disciplined as they learn appropriate and acceptable ways to treat themselves, others, and their environment.

Fort George Explorers Child care Staff will:

- Be caring and respectful to all children, using appropriate verbal and physical interaction.
- Guidance strategies will focus on the child's behaviour rather than the child (it is the behaviour that is unacceptable, never the child)
- Provide clear, consistent limits
- Use verbal direction and redirection for guidance, stating expectations in a positive fashion, allowing the children time to respond
- Recognize and encourage positive behaviour
- Validate children's feelings
- Encourage children to use adults as a resource when having difficulty
- Supervise children at all times

If a child is not managing in a situation and has been reminded and redirected, they will be asked to leave the situation that is causing that behaviour. If a situation needs immediate attention (i.e. an imminent threat to other children or themselves,) these actions will take place:

- Stop the action immediately (non-negotiable standard)
- Talk to the child(ren) about the situation and attempt to resolve the conflict by encouraging them to come up with ideas on how to resolve the conflict or how they could have handled the situation differently
- Be sure to validate the feelings of the child(ren) and discuss the experience with the child(ren)
- If necessary, child(ren) will be asked to take some time away from the situation. This allows the child(ren) to calm down, and halts the behaviour so that the child(ren) can reorient themselves towards positive behaviour and gain self-control
- The child(ren) will then decide when they think they are ready to rejoin the group/situation.

# RULES AND GUIDELINES

**The following behaviours violate our Zero-Tolerance Policy:**

- |                  |               |           |                 |
|------------------|---------------|-----------|-----------------|
| •wrestling       | •horseplay    | •hitting  | •slapping       |
| •punching        | •head-butting | •pushing  | •pulling        |
| •throwing        | •poking       | •tripping | •verbal insults |
| •kicking         | •threats      | •yelling  | •swearing       |
| •name-calling    | •racial slurs | •biting   | •scratching     |
| •use of a weapon | •pinching     |           |                 |

## **Bullying**

Bullying behaviours will not be tolerated in our programs. Allegations of bullying will be promptly investigated, and follow-up actions may be taken in accordance with our Zero-Tolerance Policy.

## **Inside Rules**

- Walking feet only
- Keep your hands and bodies to yourself
- Use inside voices
- Respect the museum and the toys
- Always stay in the designated space
- No throwing objects inside the museum
- All games are for everyone
- All toys are for sharing
- Respect your own body, leaders, other children, and museum property
- Use your words and listening ears with others
- Keep toys and activities in designated area

## **Galleries & Exhibits**

- No running or playing tag/hide-and-go-seek
- No tapping on animal cages
- Ask gallery staff or a leader if you want to touch or take out animals
- One person in the slide at a time
- Leave the blocks in the block area - no blocks on the boat, in the slide or in the tunnels
- Wear only indoor shoes on the boat
- Keep the sand in the dig pit
- Circular structures must stay on the ground (no rolling them)

## **Outside – Playground**

- Always wear your pinnie (no choice; this is a safety rule!)
- Stay on the woodchips
- Keep your shoes on your feet
- Use the playground properly – no climbing on top of the train or the outside of slides
- Slides are for going down, not running up
- If there are little children around, watch out for them and let babies use the baby swings
- If you have to go to the washroom or need a drink, find a buddy before you come ask a leader

## **Outside – Fields**

- Always stay in the boundaries that the leaders have shown
- Always wear your shoes
- Respect nature – no pulling grass, flowers or hurting the trees
- Keep the toys away from the toy-eating tree

## Shuttle Vans

- Food, drinks and personal items stay in backpacks
- All children must sit in their assigned seats
- Seatbelts MUST stay on at all times and be worn properly (not too loose)
- Use your inside voices (talk only to the people close to you)
- Do not engage in any behavior that is distracting for the driver. If a child is acting in a manner that is unsafe, the driver will pull the van over to the side of the road when it is safe to do so, will address the issue with the child, and will talk to the children about safety.
- Face forward at all times
- Feet belong on the floor (not on the seat or kicking the seat in front of you)
- Stay in your seat, buckled up, until you are told it is safe to unbuckle and exit the shuttle
- If you are sitting in a booster seat, remember to buckle up your “invisible person”

## Kordyban Learning Centre (Intermediate Childcare Space)

- Put away toys and crafts when you are done with them
- Ask a leader for supplies (paper, paint, white glue), and use scrap paper if possible
- Only 1 person at a time to wash hands or use washrooms in the Kordyban’s washrooms
- Everyone washes their hands as soon as you get your inside shoes on and get into lines to wait to use bathrooms for hand washing (some may use kitchen sink)
- Everyone sits down together for snack; if you are not hungry you may ask a leader to play quiet activities (lego, quiet area etc.)
- No drawing on the white boards (leader’s choice)
- No unsupervised time in the boot/bin room
- Program laptops may only be used at times specified by leaders, and only for purposes approved by leaders
- **Homework:** While we encourage all children to participate in the program whenever possible, we understand that there is only so much time at the end of the day, and homework is a priority! Homework will be left to the child’s discretion, unless specifically instructed otherwise by the parent/guardian. Children will be permitted to work on homework at any time while they are in the program, except while sitting at the snack table. Intermediate children will also have a designated period each day for homework, and may also choose to work on homework instead of doing the day’s planned activity.

## Upstairs Primary Space

- Put away toys and crafts when you are done with them
- Ask a leader for supplies (paper, paint, white glue), and use scrap paper if possible
- Only one person in the washroom at a time – even for washing hands
- Wash your hands as soon as you get inside
- Everyone sits down together for snack, even if you are not hungry
- The blocks stay lower than your head, and please play gently with them
- ABC mat is not a toy
- Ask to go in the quiet area
- Stand by your bin/cubby when you are asked to line up

## TERMINATION OF SERVICES

When an issue or conflict occurs, our staff will make every attempt to work with families to resolve the issue in a way that is mutually satisfactory to all parties, provided the arrangement does not:

- Compromise the mission and values of The Exploration Place
- Put staff, the child, or other participants at risk
- Diminish the value of programming for staff or other participants

All situations are dealt with on an individual basis, taking into account the specific needs and circumstances of the family. After meeting with and working with the family, and making every attempt to resolve the situation, the Childcare Coordinator, in consultation with the Deputy Director, may come to the decision that it is not appropriate for a child to continue involvement in our childcare programs. The following are some situations where termination of services may occur:

- **Behavioural Concerns**

The Exploration Place makes every effort to accommodate all families and children. However, we may not always be equipped with the resources to deal effectively and appropriately with a child whose behaviour requires ongoing significant intervention or supported child development services. (eg. persistent unprovoked physical violence, persistent bullying, verbal harassment of peers or staff, unauthorized departure from the facility). The Childcare Coordinator, in consultation with the Deputy Director, will make every effort to link the family and child to appropriate services. In the event that such services are unavailable, it may not be possible for the child to successfully continue in our program.

- **Unresolved Custody Issues**

If a family's custody issues result in continuous conflicts at our facility (eg. non-custodial parent continually attempting to pick the child up at a time not specified on the court order,) and places the child, staff, and other children at risk, the family may be asked to make alternate care arrangements.

- **Philosophical Differences**

Occasionally, the needs and opinions of a family do not fit with the principles, policies, and procedures of The Exploration Place. The Childcare Coordinator, in consultation with the Deputy Director, will try to promote discussion to come to agreeable terms with the family. If this is not possible, or the mutual trust and confidence between The Exploration Place and the family are negatively impacted, it is in the best interests of the family to seek alternate care that is more in line with their needs and beliefs. The Exploration Place reserves the right to ask any family to find a more suitable childcare arrangement under these circumstances.

- **Inappropriate Conduct**

If a family member verbally or physically harasses, threatens, or commits a violent act toward a staff person, child or other family involved in the program, services will be terminated.

- **Late Pick-up Issues**

If The Exploration Place is unable to satisfactorily resolve problems of late pick-up with a family, services may be terminated. Services may be terminated if late pick-up occurs three times in a six-month period, or if parents/guardians fail to pay the late payment fees associated.

- **Non-Payment of Fees**

The Childcare Coordinator, in consultation with the Finance Officer and Deputy Director, reserves the right to terminate services in the event of default of fee payment.

## PARENTAL CONCERNS

The Exploration Place and its staff strive to offer exemplary care, and are continuously improving our childcare programming. If you have questions or concerns about our policies, procedures, or staff, we encourage respectful, open communication between all families and our childcare team. It is important that you contact us in a timely manner if you have concerns. When there is a delay in addressing concerns, it affects our ability to resolve the issue.

The Childcare Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that The Exploration Place policies and childcare standards are followed, and that all issues and concerns are addressed to the satisfaction of all families and staff. If you feel that your concerns are not being addressed or resolved, please bring your concerns to the Childcare Coordinator.

You are encouraged to contact the Childcare Coordinator at any time:

**Robyn Reimer**

**[robyn.reimer@theexplorationplace.com](mailto:robyn.reimer@theexplorationplace.com)**

**250.562.1612 ext. 235**

## Questions?

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If you didn't find the answer you were looking for in this parent package, please feel free to call us at 250.562.1612



