



MOUNT PLEASANT
COMMUNITY CENTRE ASSOC.

Preschool

Family Handbook

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Dear Families:

Welcome to Mount Pleasant Community Centre Association – Our House Preschool. We look forward to your child's attendance in the program and to a fun-filled, creative and rewarding school year.

This handbook has been designed to introduce families to our licensed preschool program has been proudly serving the Mount Pleasant community for over 30 years.

Our House Preschool offers;

- ✓ A fun, friendly, play-based learning atmosphere
- ✓ A team of qualified and experienced Early Childhood Educators with integrity and a passion for their chosen field of work
- ✓ A beautiful purpose built facility for child care facilities
- ✓ A kindergarten readiness program of activities
- ✓ Daily routines that are flexible and responsive to your child's needs
- ✓ Newsletters to keep you informed about class activities

We have included in this package:

Family Handbook
Forms Package
Enrollment Form
What to Bring to Preschool
School Calendar

Forms Package

Registration and Health Form
Emergency Consent Card
Photo Release Form
Local Field Trip & Face Painting Consent Form
Parent / Guardian Agreement Contract (to sign and return)
Immunization Record

Please feel free to share your questions, concerns or suggestions with our Preschool Teachers, Centre Supervisor or the Childcare Manager. Your feedback is valuable.

Sincerely,

Preschool Teachers
Mount Pleasant Community Centre Association

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PROGRAM INFORMATION

Our Mission Statement

The Mount Pleasant Community Centre Association Child Care Programs exists to provide safe, affordable, high quality child care for infants, toddlers, preschoolers and school age children. Our goal is to provide a nurturing environment and learning experiences for children, to ready them for life-long learning. Our programs offer the opportunity for each child to develop physically, socially and cognitively according to their individual learning styles.

Philosophy

Children learn by experience; it is our responsibility to guide them through a variety of child appropriate activities designed to expand feelings of confidence and success. It is also our responsibility to provide a stimulating environment where children develop socially and emotionally, as well as intellectually, physically and creatively. We model positive social values with an emphasis placed on building life skills, which allow children to be responsible for their choices and actions. We treat each child as an individual with his or her own unique needs and abilities. Our program provides a comfortable and supportive setting with a focus on the needs and development of children.

Children are taught through a variety of activities including: play, art, songs, games, outdoor exploration, story time, sensory play and more. We believe that each day is a learning experience for your child. Our daily schedule consists of both structured and non-structured activities, preparing each child to become confident and ready for entry into the elementary school system. We encourage all children to reach their full potential within an environment that provides opportunities for optimal social, emotional, physical and intellectual development. All of our child care programs promote the inclusion of all people and recognize the diversity of age, culture, religion, socio-economic status, sexual orientation and abilities in our community.

History

The Mount Pleasant Community Centre Association opened its first licensed preschool program in 1978. We have also been providing licensed school age care for children five through twelve years for over fifteen years. Our Preschool and Out of School Care are located at a new facility for MPCCA called the Our House Child Care Centre at 123 West 16th Avenue, which opened its doors on July 1, 2010. 3 Corners Child Care Centre opened its doors on November 2nd 2009. 3 Corners Child Care provides child care for Infants, Toddlers, and 3-5yr olds, and is located in the Mount Pleasant Community Centre at #1 Kingsway.

Our Staff

Our Preschool Teachers are trained and certified as Early Childhood Educators/Assistants and meet all the requirements outlined in the Provincial Child Care Licensing Regulation and maintain a valid First Aid Certificate.

Qualified substitute staff will be called in when one of our preschool teachers are away for reasons of illness, vacation or professional development in order to meet the 1:10 staff/child ratio required by Child Care licensing.

From time to time you will see Early Childhood practicum students in our program as well as special guests visiting the program throughout the year such as: public health nurse (vision screening) and entertainers.

Our Program

Our program is a structured but flexible preschool. We use a play based approach to support learning and to develop social skills. The program follows a daily that is child-centered that helps children develop a sense of security and well-being. Monthly themes are developed in conjunction with activities that are developed

based on the children's interests. Each month you will receive a newsletter with upcoming special events, closures, themes and the previous month's photos.

Our activity centres include: a creative play area, art, blocks, dramatic play, library, music, sand and water play, science, puzzles and sensory table activities (ex: play dough). Daily outdoor play takes place in both small and large groups. Through these activity areas children receive opportunities to gain new skills, values, and stimulating experiences in a safe, healthy environment.

Parents/Guardians and authorized visitors are welcome to observe classes dependent on the student/adult ratio. Please let us know in advance if you want to visit the program so that we can arrange a time that works for everyone.

Internal Registration

Once a year we hold a pre-registration for families already enrolled in our program. Pre-registration takes place at the beginning of April each year. Once a class fills, a waitlist will be maintained. Children enrolled during the school year will be given first priority to register for the following school year. Siblings will also be able to pre-register for preschool classes prior to the April registration. Please note, that to be eligible to register as a sibling you must have a child currently attending the program.

Program Closures

We are **closed** during:

Winter Break
Spring Break

We are **closed** during all statutory holidays:

School Year

Labour Day
Thanksgiving Day
Remembrance Day
Christmas Day
Boxing Day
New Year's Day
Family Day
Good Friday
Easter Monday
Victoria Day

In addition to statutory holidays, and school breaks, the program will also be **closed** on the following days for professional development and planning as per the public school calendar. On these days the facility will be used by our Out of School Care program. Closures will also occur during Vancouver School Board Strike days, which we would inform you of in advance.

Classes may also be cancelled due to poor weather conditions. Listen to local radio station CKNW AM 980 for further information. Closures are based on the Simon Fraser Elementary School Closure dates and public transit cannot operate.

Photos

With your permission, staff will take photographs of your child for the newsletter, archival or promotional purposes. Please address any questions or concerns with preschool staff.

Class Photos

In the fall a professional photographer will take individual and group photographs of the children. Further information regarding class photos will be distributed to you at picture time.

What to Bring

In order to ensure your child's full participation in the variety of activities planned, please send the following items to preschool class each day:

- * A comfortable pair of indoor shoes for active play
- * Appropriate clothing for indoor/outdoor play
- * An extra change of clothing
- * Water bottle or sealed drink container
- * Snack (refer to page 13)

In order to ensure your child's full participation in the variety of activities planned, it is helpful that your child wears washable, comfortable clothing and shoes that will allow for active play in all types of weather.

Reminder: Please put your child's name on all of your child's belongings.

Children's Personal Items

We understand that children sometimes want to bring in toys and personal items from home, however these items can get lost in our very active environment. This can be disruptive to the class and upsetting to your child when this happens, please leave these items at home.

Labeling

We would like to stress to families how important it is that you clearly **LABEL** all of your child's belongings. There is a lot of clothing, containers and personal effects that come through the centre so it is impossible for staff do not know what items belong to each child. If an item goes missing there is a greater possibility that they can be identified and returned if it is labelled.

Items to Label

Lunch Containers, Lunch Bags, Back Packs, Jackets, Muddy Buddies, Toques, Mitts, Extra clothing, Water Bottles, etc.

Label Resources

Labeling can be as simple as a permanent marker or if you would like to have labels made up so that you do not have to go through the work; here are some companies that make fun labels for children!

- Mabel's Labels - <http://www.mabelslabels.com/> (**blank ones available at WalMart**)
- Loveable Labels - <http://www.lovablelabels.ca/label.aspx>
- Emily Press - <http://www.emilypress.com/>

Introductions

As starting preschool is an important event, we believe that a carefully planned gradual entry will assist you and your child to:

- build a trusting relationship with the teachers
- meet classmates
- become familiar with the preschool environment

Gradual Entry Steps

Information Nights *(In August)*

In order to give you our undivided attention, we ask that you please leave your children at home for the information session.

Welcome
Attendance
Introduction to Teachers
Gradual Entry process
Introduction to the Room: Cubbies, Bathroom, Play Area
Forms and Packages
FAQ

First week of **Regular Classes** – begin the 1st Wednesday after Labour Day.

At this time your child might be ready to attend preschool on their own, however, if they are not, please see your classroom teachers to arrange an additional support plan. Each child's experience when entering preschool is unique. Some children find it easier than others to adjust to attending preschool without a family member present. The gradual entry process can be easier for children when:

1. Parents/Guardians let their children know that they will return to pick up their child after school is finished.
2. Parents/Guardians allow the Preschool Teachers to work with their child and play an active role in their child's transition to Preschool.
3. Comfort items that might help bridge home and school like a Teddy, Blanket, pictures of Mommy's, Daddy's, Keys, etc.

Kindergarten Readiness

Kindergarten is the first big step in a long line of formal learning and no one knows your child better than you do. Our program offers kindergarten readiness activities through a variety of play based activities and learning experiences. Our 4 year old programs offer enhanced activities that emphasizes kindergarten readiness. Children in the 4 year old program will receive 2 progress reports per year.

Social Development – Sharing, Turn Taking:

Promoting Social Skills:

Providing daily opportunities for sharing and turn taking during group activities
Following rules and respecting individual rights
Supporting and developing positive interactions with peers and adults

Cognitive Development - ABC's, 123's

Facilitating Cognitive skills:

Incorporating a wide variety of activities to support letter & name recognition
Supporting and expanding vocabulary development
Providing opportunities for math skills; counting, sorting and matching
Practicing and reviewing current skill set
Setting sights on next achievable milestone

Physical Development -Fine Motor, Gross Motor:

Developing Physical Skills:

Encouraging fine motor skills with an assortment of manipulative; lego, play dough and puzzles
Promoting gross motor development with music, movement and outdoor play

Creative Development-Art, Music

Engaging Creative Skills:

Through imaginative play in our dramatic play area.

Using open ended art experiences as well as guided art activities.

Fostering imagination through a wide variety of circle time activities with felt boards, finger plays, puppets and literacy.

Knowing that all children develop at their own pace, we will work to support your child's developmental needs. The milestones we are working towards all play an important role in kindergarten readiness. Kindergarten will build upon these skills, but a child should enter with some of these skills already in place. So, in collaboration with you and your support at home, we will continue to build on their unique skill set to support your child's future success!

Birthday Party Policy

We are excited to celebrate your child's very special birthday at school. We will not have any specialty foods provided by the family or us; however, we will celebrate your child's birthday with songs, love, and a small gift from our birthday box.

Social Media Policy

For the protection of our Staff and Families, we ask that there be no social media interaction between children/families that attend MPCCA Child Care and the staff.

Example of Social Media Outlets:

Facebook, Twitter, etc

We believe this is important to implement because these are personal outlets and are not professionally appropriate forms of communication between our Families and Staff. If you do have information you would like to share please feel free to exchange your email address and communicate that way!

Parking

The parking lot that is located in the park off of 15th is for the use of the school and the Our House Child Care Centre. The stalls are clearly marked, and we ask that you respect those clearly marked signs. There are **5 drop-off and pick-up stalls for the strict use of the Our House Child Care Centre**. These stalls are to be used for a max of 15 minutes. (Please do not park your car in the designated stalls while you take your child to the park before or after class).

We also ask that for the safety of the children, you park in a designated stall only.

Outdoor Play

Outdoor play is included as part of our daily schedule with a few exceptions:

1. When we observe that children are playing well and are fully participating in an activity with the desired outcome (i.e. sharing, turn-taking, a successful group project, etc.) and we do not want to interrupt their focus.
2. When children are new to our preschool routine, (September-December) we want them to be comfortable and gain self-confidence within the classroom setting before introducing additional transitions to the day.

3. The decision to have outdoor play is dependent on the needs of the group of children on a given day. For example, if the energy level is high, we will offer outdoor gross motor activities to help the children 'burn off' that energy so that the group can settle down for learning during group time. On the contrary, if the group is calm and comfortable from the start of class, then teachers will use that opportunity to stay in the classroom to extend group times, and to encourage more quiet-type learning (i.e. puzzles, books, science activities, listening centre etc.).

Outdoor play is an extension of the preschool program; Preschool is not designed to full fill the one hour recommended physical activity for children each day. Outdoor play complements the learning and socialization that takes place within the classroom setting. Outdoor play provides gross motor development opportunities (running, climbing, pedaling, jumping etc.) whereas indoor play provides enriching opportunities for fine motor and cognitive growth (hand-eye coordination, listening and concentration skills, etc.)

Playgrounds

Fenced in attached Playground

Please note that the playground is for use of the Our House Child Care Centre on Monday to Friday from 7:30am and 6:00pm. Unfortunately your child/siblings cannot play on the playground unless their class is in session. Please feel free to enjoy the playground outside of these hours

School Playground

Please also note that the school playground is off limits during school hours.

Please enjoy the beautiful park and playground east of the Our House Child Care Centre.

Holiday Celebrations

We honour and celebrate all Canada's major holidays and celebrations in our child care programs. In addition, where possible we will incorporate other cultural celebrations into our program. If you would like us to celebrate something meaningful to your family, please fill out a Holiday Celebrations request form. We will do our best to accommodate your request. If there are celebrations you prefer your child not to be involved in, please discuss this with us prior to the date so we can accommodate your preference.

Questions

How will I know how my child is doing?

Just ask! We firmly believe that giving you honest, helpful feedback when you ask for it is important. We are also committed to letting you know about important issues that come up regarding your child.

How does my child learn through play?

Although adults generally separate "working" and "playing" it is important to remember that playing is the work of young children. As your child plays they connect their play objects to what they are thinking and observing in the world. Play allows them to learn math and spatial concepts, language development, fine and gross motor skills, social skills, and to express themselves emotionally and creatively. Play is how children naturally learn about themselves and the world around them.

Sunscreen

Sunscreen is a must! On days where there is a bright sun please ensure that you put sunscreen on your child before arriving to class.

CHILDREN'S SAFETY & SECURITY

Children's Records

It is the responsibility of the enrolling parent/guardian to keep all children's records up to date and inform the preschool staff of any changes listed on the following forms:

- a) Registration Form
- b) Emergency - Consent Card
- c) Immunization Record

All written information that is confidential will be stored in a secure place. No information will be released about a child or family without the written consent of the enrolling parent or legal guardian. (Exceptions include: situations related to child protection or when the information is subpoenaed by the court).

Custody & Access

The program expects that all information provided by the enrolling parent/legal guardian is accurate. If a family has a custody agreement or court order, a current copy of the legal document must be placed in the child's file. The preschool staff will only follow the access or pick up instructions of the enrolling parent/legal guardian unless otherwise instructed by a court order.

When custody has not been legally determined and a conflict between the parent/guardian(s) is evident, we will be unable to care for your child unless the following takes place:

- Both parent/guardian(s) have signed a written agreement authorizing pick up and access information about your child.

Emergency

In case of a fire, earthquake, or an evacuation due to the safety of the facility, the program may have to close. Your child will be cared for by the preschool staff until he or she have been picked up. The program may also close due to poor weather conditions. Please call Our House Child Care Centre at 604-707-0311, if you are unsure whether the program is open.

Emergency Evacuation Procedures

Fire drills are held once a month as required in the Provincial Child Care Licensing Regulation. Staff will sound a bell and have the children line up quickly and quietly. Staff gathers first aid kits, attendance sheets and emergency cards and takes the children to a designated location to conduct a head count and attendance. We record information from the event: the date and time it took place and how long it took evacuate everyone.

Emergency/Disaster Drills are also held once a year. During the drill children are taught to stay away from windows and to "duck, cover, and hold" until shaking stops.

Siblings in the Classroom

To be able to properly care, limit the spread of an outbreak and for the health and safety for all of the children in our program we ask that you do not bring siblings into the preschool rooms. Siblings may enter the cubby areas. Please note: siblings in slings are fine, just not "free" roaming children.

Suspected Child Abuse

The Child, Family and Community Service Act state that all children in the Province of BC "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 of Children

and Family Development. This means that anyone including our staff have a legal obligation to report any suspected abuse.

Decisions related to when, how and where the Ministry of Children and Family Development can apprehend a child, rest with Ministry.

Person(s) Authorized For Pick Up

It is important that you sign your child in and out each day on the "Sign-in/Out" sheet.

Please inform preschool staff if a person other than those listed on the "Registration" form will pick up your child. If an emergency arises during the day, alternative arrangements can be made over the phone with a preschool staff and needs to be followed up with an email to the program supervisor. If the person picking up your child is not known to the staff then the person will be asked to show photo identification and be expected to sign out your child.

The enrolling parent/guardian is also responsible for ensuring that those authorized to pick up your child are informed of the program's hours of operation and room location. (IMPORTANT: The preschool staff will determine late charges based on the clock time in the preschool).

Please note that your child will not be released at pick up time if a staff person is concerned for the child's safety.

Late Pick Up

When a parent/guardian is late for the first time, he or she will receive a late charge reminder notice. (The pickup time will be recorded on a "Late Pick Up" form). On the second and subsequent occasions, a \$5.00 late charge - per family - will apply to the first 5 minutes past the scheduled pick up time and \$2.00 for each additional minute thereafter. The overtime fine must be paid within 24 hours to the Our House Child Care Supervisor (cash or cheque only) or the front office at #1 Kingsway, or your child's care will be withdrawn until the fee has been paid in full. (IMPORTANT: The Preschool staff will determine late charges based on the clock time in the Preschool room).

Late Pick Up Emergency

The Ministry of Children and Family Development will be contacted for assistance in the following situation:

- If the staff are unable to reach the person(s) authorized for pick up or have not heard from the enrolling parent/guardian within thirty minutes of the program's closing time.

Ratio

According to Provincial Child Care Licensing Regulation, a 1:10 staff/child ratio for children 3-5yrs is required. The toddler (2 year old program) is required to maintain a 1:4 staff/child ratio. This program is operated with two qualified ECE staff, one of which holds their Infant/Toddler Certificate, and two Responsible Adults.

Criminal Record Searches

The preschool staff along with all substitutes, students and volunteers is required to complete a criminal record check prior to starting in the preschool program.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Program Fees

Fees for the preschool program are set annually by the Mount Pleasant Community Centre Association and are subject to change.

Payment Procedures

Fees are due and payable on the first of each month. We require a series of post-dated cheques or credit card information (credit card number and expiry date) and a non-refundable registration fee (\$50.00) at the time of registration.

All cheques are payable to the ***City of Vancouver***. **Please write your child's name and class at the bottom of each cheque.**

Monthly Payments

If you are unable to make the payment schedule then please contact the Childcare Administrative Assistant to make alternative written arrangements for the payment of fees.

* Check the Newsletter each month for changes in the date of payment processing.*

If payment is not received by the 5th of the month then a \$10.00 late payment charge will be applied to the amount owing. Continued late and/or missed payments without explanation will result in being asked to withdraw from the program until the fee has been paid in full.

The monthly fee reserves your child's space in the program; therefore fees must be paid in full during periods when your child is away due to illness, vacation or other reasons. Furthermore, your fees will remain unchanged regardless of the shorter sessions during December and March.

It is your responsibility to inform the Child Care Administrative Assistant when you have changed your chequing accounts or credit card information (including a change in expiry date) and provide current documentation.

Security Deposit

A full month's fee (per child) is required to secure your child's placement at MPCCA - Preschool. Your security deposit will be held and applied to your child's last month of care, June if you stay enrolled for the entire school year.

Please note that if you fail to give the one month's notice when withdrawing your child from the program your Deposit will not be refunded.

NSF

You will be required to pay a \$35.00 charge per NSF cheque received. An NSF cheque must be paid in full within three business days once the family has been notified. We will accept cash, debit or credit card as the only form of payment for returned cheques.

Withdraw

All requests to withdraw your child from the program must be made by giving one month's written notice. You are required to give notice by the first calendar day of the month. For example, if you decide to withdraw your child from the program for September 1st, then you must give one month's notice by August 1st. Written notice can be in the form of an email to the Program Supervisor.

Please note that if you fail to give the one month's notice when withdrawing your child from the program we will be unable to refund your deposit.

Withdrawal notices are **not** permitted for the months of **May and June**. April is the last month to withdrawal, which means your withdrawal notice would have to be in by April 1st.

Income Tax Receipts

You *will not* receive a receipt each month for payments. A yearly tax letter will be issued to you. i.e. In February you will receive a letter for all payments from January through December. Please also note: your Security Deposit, will apply to the year in which your child's last month of care was.

Online Receipts

If you have an on-line account with the City of Vancouver, you can view all of the programs etc. that your child(ren) has been enrolled in including preschool. Once you are in the system you can click on each program/transaction and print the receipt if you wish or just view. Please note that yearend tax letters for the previous year will be issued in February. If you do not already have an on-line account and wish to view your transactions, please go to <https://ca.apm.activecommunities.com/vancouver/> to set one up.

Child Care Subsidy

The Province of British Columbia is committed to helping families obtain affordable child care. Child Care Subsidy is a monthly payment to assist eligible British Columbia families with the cost of child care. Monthly subsidy payments vary depending on your family's circumstances.

Please contact:

Child Care Subsidy Service Centre
PO Box 9953 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9R3

Phone: 1-888-338-6622

Fax: 1-877-544-0699

Online applications can be found at:

<http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/application.htm>

Families receiving subsidy are still responsible for paying the non-refundable registration fee, as well as the security deposit.

Please make sure that you meet your deadline for filing with the Child Care Subsidy Service Centre as we require their confirmation on all amounts you are eligible to receive prior to the first of each month that fees are due. If we do not have confirmation you will be required to pay the fees in full. MPCCA will reimbursement you the subsidy amount when the confirmation is received. Families are also responsible for ensuring that their subsidy forms are kept up-to-date. The monthly fee will be calculated based on the maximum subsidy received by the family.

HEALTH & NUTRITION

Eating nutritious food is an important part of a child's health. We ask that each child bring a healthy snack to school each day. Please inform the preschool staff of any food restrictions/allergies or a change to your child's food intake. A list of snack suggestions is included below:

Snack Suggestions

DO'S

Fresh Veggies and Cheese Spread
Sandwiches
Fresh or dried fruit
Milk
Yogurt
Cheese and crackers (unsalted)
Oatmeal
Muffins
Nut free Granola Bars

DON'TS

ALL NUTS – Peanuts, Almonds etc.**
Chocolate
Jello
Pop
Cheezies / Potato Chips
Cookies
Donuts
Sweet, rich Cakes
Chewing Gum



Nut Free/Aware Centre

We are **always** a **Nut Free** program therefore **nut products** are not permitted in the facility. This includes products that have traces of nuts, (for example granola bars). Please check food labels before sending your child to school. Thank you for your cooperation.

The program may be required to restrict certain foods or other products (e.g., latex balloons) from entering the preschool environment when there is a child attending the program with a serious, life-threatening allergy. You will be informed of what not to send with you child if a child attending has a life-threatening allergy.



Illness

While we are sensitive to a family's needs, we are unable to care for your child if he or she is not well enough to participate in all program activities, including outdoor play. You will need to keep your child at home or make alternative arrangements, if your child:

- has a communicable disease
- has a fever of more than 38.0 degrees Celsius or 100 degrees Fahrenheit
- is vomiting or has diarrhea
- has an infection or undiagnosed illness

Please note that if your child has a communicable disease please inform the centre as we will need to notify other families and the Community Health Department.

Your child may return to the centre after 24 hours of the last symptom (fever, diarrhea, vomiting etc.). Or with permission from a doctor (Dr.'s note is required).

If your child becomes ill or injured during the day, we will contact you or your emergency contact/s to have your child taken home.

Immunizations are recommended as one of the most effective ways of preventing the spread of communicable diseases. However, the decision to immunize a child rests with the family. The program has the right to have the child stay at home if the health and wellbeing of the children and staff is being affected. In some situations, the program will request written medical clearance from a physician before a child can return to the program.

Sneezes & Diseases

Sneezes and Diseases is a resource for Child Care Providers and Parents about Communicable Diseases.

<http://www.vch.ca/media/SneezesDiseases.pdf>

There is one binder in the lobby area for parents to use as a resource.

Under each tab you will find a resource sheet that you can take for info if you need. If you take the last info sheet please let a staff member know so we can make more copies.

Medical Emergency

If your child is injured or becomes ill while at the program, the staff will quickly assess the situation to decide what action/attention is required. If the child requires medical attention by a physician or health care professional, as per the signed permission on the "Emergency - Consent Card" staff will:

- Contact the parent/guardian or the emergency contact/s (if the parent/guardian cannot be reached).
- Call and request an ambulance if the child has serious injuries.

Administering Medication

If you would like the program staff to administer medication to your child, we require that the medication be **prescribed** by a physician. The medication is provided in the original container/bottle, clearly showing the child's name, doctor's name and the type of medication, along with a "Consent to Administer Medication" form (available from a preschool staff) is completed with instructions on administering the medication.

If you would like us to administer Non-Prescription Medication we also require that you fill out a form with information of dosage etc. for that specific medication.

Toileting

The preschool program recognizes that toileting for a child is an individual and personal experience; therefore there is no scheduled washroom time during preschool hours. Each child is encouraged to communicate with a preschool staff when they need to go to the washroom so the preschool staff is aware of the whereabouts of your child.

Recognizing that the child to staff ratio for the program is 20:2, it is helpful to have your child fully toilet trained for their entry into preschool. However, please let us know if your child requires assistance or are in the process of independent toileting.

Face Painting Policy

Hygiene and sanitation are important in the application of face paint to prevent any possible allergic reactions and spread of skin infections between individuals.

We follow the below Guidelines which are set out by Vancouver Coastal Health:

FACE PAINTING PRODUCTS

- Face paint must be non-toxic, cosmetic-grade, and suitable for applying to the face
- Paints must be hypoallergenic
- All face paints used should be easily removable with make-up remover, baby wipes or with regular soap and water.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE FACE PAINTING ARTIST/STAFF

- Artist hands must be clean and free of sores and open cuts.
- Non-latex gloves may be worn and should be changed frequently.
- Disposable wipes for wiping tips of pencils in between use are available.
- At/near the face painting station, a hand washing station should be available with running water, liquid hand soap and paper towels. If this is not possible, we use disposable wet towelettes or alcohol based hand sanitizer for hand cleaning between participants.
- Supplies are checked before face painting events to ensure we have the proper application tools.

FACE PAINT APPLICATION

- Permission from the parent or caregiver will be obtained prior to applying face paint on a child.
- Paint will not be applied to any person who has visible sores, conjunctivitis (pink eye), open cuts, skin rashes or other skin conditions.
- Area on the skin where the paint will be applied will be cleaned with single use alcohol wipes, baby wipes, or face cleanser (dispensed with a disposable applicator e.g. cotton swab)
- If we know a child has skin sensitivities we will test for an allergic reaction (paints can be applied to the arm first).
- Creams and paints will be dispensed in small quantities onto a disposable paper/cup/container (left over paint and paper must be discarded after each customer)
- Application of paints close to the eyes or lips will be avoided.

- Application on the face will be with single use disposable applicators such as:
 - Sponges
 - Swabs
 - Cotton tipped applicators
 - Disposable brushes*
 - Applicator sticks
- Common use brushes will not be used if the brushes cannot be cleaned and sanitized in-between customer use

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

Guidance

Each child will be encouraged and supported to develop positive relationships and learn problem solving skills. Preschool Staff will:

- model appropriate, respectful behaviour at all times
- promote the development of positive social skills including self-esteem and self-control
- encourage children to understand and follow simple rules

Preschool staff will use the following guidance strategies:

- Gain a Child's Attention in a Respectful Way
- Use Proximity and Touch
- Remind
- Acknowledge Feelings Before Setting Limits
- Redirect or Divert When Appropriate
- Model Problem-Solving Skills
- Offer Appropriate Choices
- Use Natural and Logical Consequences
- Limit the Use of Equipment
- Provide Opportunities for Children to Make Amends

We encourage families to ask about our guidance and conflict resolution strategies. We also ask that you keep us informed of any changes, big or small, in your child's life and/or routine, as this can cause behavioural changes in your child at preschool.

BULLYING

Our preschool recognizes that one of the key ways to creating a safe space for children is to develop a bully-free environment.

What is bullying?

Generally, bullying involves a person who has a strong need to dominate others and who uses aggression as a means of resolving conflict.

The main types of bullying behaviour are:

Physical - This form of aggression is action-oriented and may involve some of the following behaviours - pushing, shoving, kicking or hitting. Other types of physical bullying involve: stealing, use of a weapon, property damage (e.g., breaking a child's favourite toy), or humiliating acts (e.g., pulling down a child's pants).

Verbal - Some examples of verbal bullying are: name calling, insults, racial comments, teasing, taunting or any verbal threat of violence.

Social - This type of bullying involves trying to cut the person being bullied off from social connections. Through threats, hurtful gossip, or public humiliation (e.g., revealing personal information), the bully convinces his/her peers to exclude or reject their victim.

Bullying in its most extreme form can lead to violent situations or events.

SAFE SPACES - Bullying Prevention Education for Preschoolers

Safe Spaces is bullying prevention education for preschoolers, a unique program created by West Coast Child Care Resource Centre to meet the specific needs of preschool-aged children. It is implemented in child care and other early childhood programs by the staff team who interact with and care for the children every day. The success of *Safe Spaces* is its developmentally appropriate, integrated approach to teaching young children the pro-social attitudes and skills that are known to reduce the likelihood that bullying behaviours will emerge in later childhood and adolescence.

Safe Spaces gives children life-long skills that serve to protect themselves and others from bias, unfairness and violence. Our preschool staff were trained *Safe Spaces* in the spring of 2011.

Safe Spaces is centered on the four following concepts:

Safe / Not Safe

The first module strengthens children's self-identity, group identity, sense of belonging, self-esteem. Children learn the importance of accepting, respecting and valuing similarities and differences. Children learn ways to keep their bodies safe, their feelings safe and their work safe and to respect others' bodies, feelings and work.

Friendly / Not Friendly

Building on the concept of *Safe / Not Safe*, the *Friendly* module aims at children's friend-making skills and development of empathy. Children learn that when their actions are safe, they are often perceived as being friendly. The *Friendly Jar* is introduced, providing group recognition for specific pro-social behaviours that teachers and children observe. Children are encouraged to notice each other's safe and friendly words and actions, record these on slips of paper using pictures or sentences dictated to a teacher, and put them in the jar. Every few days teachers open the *Friendly Jar* and share the observations with the whole group.

Feelings

The *Feelings* module helps children develop emotional literacy so that they can read and identify their own feelings and those of others, with a focus on the four universal feelings: happy, sad, angry and afraid. Teachers demonstrate acceptable behaviour by validating feelings and offering support so that children learn to express their feelings appropriately. A key activity in this module is the *Feelings poster*; where there is a mirror that children can use to see how the face shows different emotions.

Feelings Poster

Fair / Not Fair is the final module. All children are included in the activities of this module, but it is most developmentally appropriate for 4 and 5 year olds. Children learn how to take action when they see unfair situations affecting themselves or others.

The *Safe Spaces* concepts are reinforced at all times of the day - at circle time, during transitions, at meal and nap times as well as during indoor and outdoor play times. Staff and children use the *Safe Spaces* vocabulary

and follow the Safe Spaces Rules throughout the day, every day. This is key to the success of the *Safe Spaces* approach.

COMMUNICATION

Communication Tools

Our communication tools are designed to ensure that you are aware of what is happening in your child's preschool class.

The **bulletin/white boards** located in each room provides up to date information on our program, class activities, useful resources and other related topics.

Our **monthly newsletter** is emailed out at the beginning of each month. It is full of past, present, and future monthly activities, events, projects, songs, tips, and much more.

If You Have Concerns

First Step

We encourage you to talk directly to the preschool teachers. Most often, situations and problems can be solved quickly at this level.

If a resolution does not happen please contact the Centre Supervisor, Ileana Gavrilă, 604-707-0311, Ileana.gavrilă@vancouver.ca, or the Child Care Manager 604-257-3061 so your concern can be addressed.

Termination of Services

We are committed to providing children and families with a positive program experience. If a conflict arises, it is our goal to resolve differences in a peaceful way and find solutions that everyone can accept. However, termination of services may be required if:

- The family does not abide by the expectations in the family handbook and a successful resolution of differences is not achieved
- The program is unable to satisfactorily resolve problems of late pick up with a family or the family has an overdue payment
- A family member harasses, threatens abuse or commits a violent act toward a staff person, child or other participants (e.g., a parent/guardian)
- The child's behaviour is severely disruptive or physically threatening to the well-being and safety of other children or staff additional avenues of support to accommodate the child are unavailable.

If a child is dismissed from the program fees will be refunded in lieu of notice.

Division of Communication

We understand that families want to discuss situations that come up with their child and/or family with staff. Please direct your questions to the following:

Who to address	Topics
Preschool Staff	Issues regarding your child's day to day care: routines, eating habits, toileting, illness. Concerns about your child's development, questions about programming, questions about snack.
Program Supervisor	Fees, concerns with staff, changes in care, withdrawal, overall operations,

	policies, any concern not to do with your child's day to day routines at Preschool.
Child Care Assistant	Fees, payments, withdrawal, registration
Child Care Manager	Concerns that cannot be resolved through the above contacts

It is very important that you direct your communication to the right people so you can receive an accurate and informed answer. It is also for the wellbeing/safety of your child and the other children as the child care staff are busy with the children during the program times.

We encourage ongoing feedback of our services and look forward to working with you and your child.

The Right to Confidentiality

All staff, volunteers, and students at MPCCA Child Care Programs enter into a signed Confidentiality Agreement to ensure:

- information about your child and family is held in strictest confidence.
- information about your child and your family is not released without your written consent.
- that information is released appropriately when parents are separated or divorced (the program requires proof e.g. a legal document such as a custody agreement)
- that your child's program file will be reviewed only by the MPCCA Child Care staff that are working with your child and family.

We Welcome Your Feedback

We want to provide helpful and clear information to families. If you have suggestions that will help us to improve this Handbook, please let us know by contacting the Child Care office at 604-257-3061.



MOUNT PLEASANT
COMMUNITY CENTRE ASSOC.

Parent/Guardian Agreement

The Mount Pleasant Community Centre Preschool is a non-profit program run by the Mount Pleasant Community Centre Association. This agreement is an outline of the parental responsibilities necessary to providing quality service to all children in the preschool program.

I have read the Mount Pleasant Preschool Family Handbook and agree to the following conditions of enrollment:

REGISTRATION

Registration is not a guarantee that the program will be able to accommodate my child. It is important for each child to be successful and that the program can meet the needs of the entire group. Should we require more information for your child to successfully participate in our program please contact the Our House Supervisor – Ileana Gavrilă at ileana.gavrila@vancouver.ca or Childcare Manager – Kim Hempler at kim.hempler@vancouver.ca

FINANCES

1. I will be required to pay a \$35 charge per NSF cheque. An NSF cheque must be paid in full within 3 business days once the family has been notified. We will accept cash, certified cheque or credit card as the only form of payment for returned cheques.
2. I understand that it is my responsibility to notify the child care administration office when I have changed chequing accounts or credit cards to provide current documentation.
3. I understand that my fee reserves my child's space in the program and fees must be paid in full during periods when my child is away from the program (illness, vacation or other).
4. I understand that my fees will remain unchanged regardless of shorter sessions during March and December. The fees are calculated over the 10 month period and then divided evenly by 10 months.
5. I understand that if my child has not been picked up by the class dismissal time, I will be charged a late fee. I will be expected to pay a \$5.00 late charge - per family which will apply to the first 5 minutes past the scheduled pick up time and \$2.00 for each additional minute thereafter. The overtime fine must be paid within 24 hours to the front office or your child's care will be withdrawn until the fee has been paid in full.
6. I will give one month's written notice to the Preschool Teachers or email to amy.butler@vancouver.ca when withdrawing my child from the Preschool program. In order to withdraw my child from the program, I am required to give my notice by the first calendar day of the month. For example, if I decide to withdraw my child from the program for September 1st, then I must give one month's notice to the office **on or before** August 1st.
Withdrawal notices are **not** permitted for the months of **May and June**. April can be the last month to withdrawal, which means your withdrawal notice would have to be in by April 1st.

I also understand if I fail to give one month's written notice, I will lose my June 2017 deposit.

CHILDREN'S RECORDS:

1. It is my responsibility to keep all my children's records up to date and inform the preschool staff of any changes (address, phone number, legal documentation, etc.).
2. I accept that photos or video recordings may be taken of my child throughout the preschool year.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

1. I understand that the preschool staff will notify me to have my child taken home if the health and wellbeing of all children is being affected.
2. I am aware that it is my responsibility to arrange the drop-off and pick-up of my child to the classroom each day of attendance. I will also notify the preschool staff when my child will be absent from the program.
3. I will notify the preschool staff in writing or by phone if someone other than persons listed on the consent form are picking up my child. The person will be asked to show photo identification and be expected to sign my child out.
4. If, after a half an hour of the program's closing time, the staff has been unable to reach the parent or alternate persons on the pickup list, the Ministry of Children and Family Development will be notified. The Ministry Child Emergency number is 604-310-1234.

TERMINATION OF SERVICES

If a conflict arises, it is our goal to resolve differences in a peaceful way and find solutions that everyone can accept. However, termination of services may be required if:

1. The family does not abide by the expectations in the family handbook and successful resolution of differences is not achieved.
2. The program is unable to satisfactorily resolve problems of late pick up with a family or the family has an overdue payment.
3. A family member harasses, threatens abuse or commits a violent act toward a staff person, child or other participants (e.g., parent).
4. The child's behaviour is severely disruptive or physically threatening to the well-being and safety of other children or staff, and additional avenues of support to accommodate the child are unavailable.

If a child is dismissed from the program, fees will be refunded in lieu of notice.

I will give **one month's written notice (or e-mail to amy.butler@vancouver.ca)** to the Preschool Teachers when withdrawing my child from the Preschool program. In order to withdraw my child from the program, I am required to give my notice by the first calendar day of the month. For example, if I decide to withdraw my child from the program for September 1st, then I must give one month's notice to the office **on or before** August 1st.

Withdrawal notices are **not** permitted for the months of **May and June**. April can be the last month to withdrawal, which means your withdrawal notice would have to be in by April 1st.

I also understand if I fail to give one month's written notice, I will lose my June security deposit.