

St. Joseph's Catholic School

Child Care Programs



Parent Handbook

St. Joseph's Catholic School

757 West Burnside Road

Victoria, BC

Phone: 250-479-1237 (answered 7:30am – 3:00pm)

Centre Cell Phone: 250-580-7964 (for all programs after hours)

FAX: 250-479-1907

Contact:

Glen Palahicky, Principal, [gpalahicky@cisdv.bc.ca](mailto:gpalahicky@cisdv.bc.ca)

Susan Clifford, Director St. Joseph's Early Learning Centre, [scarvalho@cisdv.bc.ca](mailto:scarvalho@cisdv.bc.ca)

Debbie Clarke, Administrator and Daycare Teacher at St. Joseph's Early Learning Centre,  
[dclarke@cisdv.bc.ca](mailto:dclarke@cisdv.bc.ca)

The director can also be reached at [sjvelc@cisdv.bc.ca](mailto:sjvelc@cisdv.bc.ca)

**September 1, 2025**

\*This handbook will be amended to reflect changes in licensing and policies at the discretion of management and licensing.

## Table of Contents

Introduction	
Philosophy .....	3
Programs	
• Preschool Program .....	3
○ Hours of operation	
○ Fees	
○ Closure Days	
○ Field Trips	
○ Uniform	
• Day Care Program .....	4
○ Hours of operation	
○ Fees	
○ Closure Days	
○ Field Trips	
○ Uniform	
• Before and After School Program .....	5
○ Hours of operation	
○ Fees	
○ Closure Days	
○ Super days	
General Policies .....	6
• <b>Enrollment</b> .....	6
• Staffing .....	6
• Lunches and Snacks .....	6
• Arrivals and Departures .....	6
• Late Pickup .....	7
• Clothing .....	7
• Consent for Photographs .....	7
• Unexpected Centre Closure .....	7
• Communicable Disease Policy .....	7
• Administration of Medication Policy .....	8
• Illness and Injury while at Centre .....	8
• Accident Policy .....	8
• Suspected Child Abuse Procedure.....	10
• Custodial Access Policy .....	10
• Conflict Resolution Policy .....	10
• Release of Child Policy .....	11
• Potty Training Policy.....	12
• Guidance Policy .....	12
• Inclusion Policy .....	13
• Screen Time and Active Play Policies.....	20

- Emergency Preparedness Policy..... 21

St. Joseph’s Catholic School is pleased to offer childcare programs to both the families within our school community (Before and After School Care – school-aged) as well as the community at large (Preschool and Daycare 3-5 years old).

St. Joseph’s Offers:

- A full Daycare program for ages 3 and 4 years old
- A 4 hour Preschool program for ages 3 and 4 years old
- Before and After School Care program for the students of St. Joseph’s School, grades K- 7

**Philosophy**

Each child is a unique gift from God and our programs strive to awaken the child’s spirit and imagination and encourage a desire for independence and high self-esteem through creative, child-led, play-based learning. Kindness, courtesy, and self-regulation are central to children’s participation and learning, as are opportunities to observe, question, and explore ideas both independently and as a group. We utilize the BC Early Learning Framework, emergent curriculum concepts, child-centred inquiry and play based learning, responsive relationships, inclusion, documentation, and narration in our classrooms.

Children learn through play and interaction with peers and adults. St. Joseph’s Early Learning and Child Care Programs are committed to providing children with a safe and healthy environment that encourages a positive self-image, personal growth, and development. We believe in enriching each child’s development in terms of the whole child – spiritually, physically, intellectually, culturally, emotionally, and socially.

**PROGRAMS**

**Preschool Program**

**Hours**

- Preschool classes: 3 & 4 year old’s: 9:00 – 1:00 PM.
- Monday/Wednesday/Friday, Tues/Thurs, or limited Monday – Friday spaces

**Fees (after the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative is applied)**

- 2 days per week (Tues/Thurs): \$185 per month
- 3 days per week (Mon/Wed/Fri): \$218 per month
- 5 days per week: \$275 per month

**Closure Days**

The program is closed all statutory holidays, during July and August, spring break, and Christmas break.

The program is also closed in accordance with the school calendar but is open most professional development days. Administration chooses 4 professional development days per school year for all staff to attend workshops. We will give at least 1 months' notice of these closures.

### **Field Trips**

There will be times when staff will plan field trips for children in our programs. Parents will be informed in advance and parent volunteers may be required and requested. All parent volunteers must have a current volunteer form on file at St. Joseph's School, a current Criminal Record Check, and training completed as part of volunteer requirements. Families will be required to complete a "Field Trip Consent" form before their child can participate.

### **Uniforms**

All students in the program are required to wear a uniform. The uniform consists of a St. Joseph's burgundy crested polo shirt and any grey bottoms. The crested polo shirts must be ordered from [www.mccarthyuniforms.ca](http://www.mccarthyuniforms.ca). Used uniforms are available through St. Joseph's Used Uniform program (please inquire for schedule). Also, please provide a pair of shoes with non-marking soles to be kept at the preschool (running shoes only please. No slippers, sandals, or crocs). A full change of clothing is also to be left at the preschool, marked with your child's name. These clothes do not have to be uniform pieces.

## **Daycare Program**

### **Hours**

- Daycare program: 3 and 4 year old's: 7:30 AM – 5:00 PM, Monday to Friday

### **Fees (including the BC Government Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative)**

- 5 days per week: \$520.00
  - Only fulltime enrolment is available in the daycare program.

### **Closure Days**

The program is closed all statutory holidays and Boxing Day and Easter Monday. The program is also closed **two weeks** during Christmas and one week at the end of the summer (the week before Labour Day). It is up to families to find alternative care. Unforeseen closures may happen in order to comply with licensing (service interruptions). These may include power outages, inclement weather (i.e. snow or heatwave), and disruptions to water supply, etc. We will provide as much notice as possible in these circumstances. Please check the school website and your email for information about closures due to inclement weather. Both the daycare and preschool programs close if the school has to close. The daycare and preschool are also closed for 4 pro-d days per year and will give at least one month's notice before any pro-d day closure.

### **Field Trips**

There will be times when staff will plan field trips for children in the program. Parents will be informed in advance and families will be required to complete a "Field Trip Consent" form before their child can participate.

## Uniforms

All students in the daycare program are required to wear a uniform. The uniform consists of a St. Joseph's burgundy crested polo shirt and any grey bottoms. The crested polo shirts must be ordered from [www.mccarthyuniforms.ca](http://www.mccarthyuniforms.ca). Used uniforms are available through the used uniform store run by the school (please inquire at the school for uniform sale days). Also, please provide a pair of shoes with non-marking soles to be kept at the daycare (runners only. Please no sandals, slippers, or crocs). A full change of clothing is also to be left at the daycare, marked with your child's name. These clothes do not have to be uniform pieces.

## Before and After School Program

### Hours

- Before School Care: 7:30 - 8:30 AM
- After School Care: 2:40 – 6:00 PM
- Early Dismissal Days – the After School Care program runs from the scheduled dismissal time (either 1:40 pm or noon)

### Fees

(After the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative is applied)

#### Before School Care

- Full Time - \$201.00/month for grades 1-7 and \$151.00/month for kindergarten

#### After School Care

- Full Time - \$233.00/month for grades 1-7 and \$216.00/month for kindergarten

#### Full Time Before and After School Care

- Fees are \$276.00/month for grades 1-7 and \$200/month for kindergarten.

**Part-time registration is not available for Before and After School Care.**

## Closure Days

The program follows the school calendar for open and closure dates.

## Staff Meetings

Monthly, the After School Care program will close early at **5pm** for a staff meeting. We will give at least one month's notice of these early closures.

## Pro-D Day Care

Pro-D Day care is available on school Professional Development days for students registered in St. Joseph's School. The pro-d day program will be available on a first come, first serve basis for children in K-7 and is only available for children enrolled in St. Joseph's Child Care Programs. If your child is not

registered in before or after school care, you must register and submit the necessary paperwork and fees before your child can attend a Pro-D Day program.

#### Hours

- 7:30 am to 5:00 pm

#### Fees

- \$55.00 per child per day

## **GENERAL POLICIES**

### **\*ENROLLMENT POLICY**

If you need to make a change to your child's enrollment in our programs, such as withdrawal, **we require two full months' notice**. If you are unable to provide 2 months' notice, you will be charged for the entire month.

- Please note: If you change your registration after September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025, there will be a charge of \$45 per change. This does not include new students or withdrawals.

### **STAFFING POLICY**

All staff are required to meet the Child Care Licensing Regulations for professional designations, including a criminal record check, in accordance with their program prior to being employed by the Child Care Centre. Any volunteers within the program are also required to complete a criminal record check and provide references.

### **LUNCHES AND SNACKS POLICY**

St. Joseph's Child Care Centre is a nut-free environment. Parents are asked to provide nutritious lunches and snacks for their children. Children are encouraged to eat their nutritious choices first, followed by food with less nutritious value to healthy eating habits are established at a young age. No child is ever denied the food that is provided from home. Feel free to ask staff for suggestions for snack times.

There may be times when we have a group or special snack and we will let parents know in advance in consideration to children's allergies listed on their registration forms.

### **ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES OF CHILDREN POLICY**

Please drop off children no earlier than the start time of the child's program. Doors remain locked until the program start time to ensure staff get time to prepare for the day.

Please ensure your child is picked up just before the program's end time as there are several programs running back-to-back and in order to meet licensing requirements the center needs to ensure children are picked up on time. Please be sure to let staff know you have picked up your child and you are leaving.

If your child will not be attending the Early Learning Center Programs on any given day, please phone or email and let staff know of their absence, or leave a voice-mail message (available 24 hours a day – 250-

479-1237), centre cell phone 778-677-2966 (answered after 2:40-6) and center email: [sjvelc@cisdv.bc.ca](mailto:sjvelc@cisdv.bc.ca).

If your child attends St. Joseph's Elementary School, please ensure that if your child is absent for the day the information is also communicated to the Early Learning Center.

### **LATE PICK-UP POLICY**

Please pick up your child promptly at the end of their program. Children must be picked up no later than the following times:

- Preschool by 1:00 PM
- Daycare by 5:00 PM
- After School Care by 6:00 PM

If a parent is late, a late fee will be charged. Late fees are as follows:

- \$25 for every 15 minutes or portion thereof.

If a child has not been picked up 30 minutes after the program end time, listed individuals on the Emergency Contact List will be contacted. If no one can be contacted, it is the child care program's responsibility to contact the Ministry for Child and Family Development.

### **CLOTHING POLICY**

The childcare center requires that all clothing is weather appropriate as all students will be going outside for a significant portion of their day. Each program will communicate individually to the parents the specific clothing requirements. We go outside in all weather conditions.

Any lost clothing is put in a lost and found box/bin located in each program area. Clothing left in the lost & found box will be donated twice a year. Parents will be given notice before the donation is made so that they can check for any lost items.

### **CONSENT FOR PHOTOGRAGHS POLICY**

With your written permission, staff will take photographs of the children from time to time to be used on promotion material featuring children, families, and staff, or for projects and pedagogical narrations. If permission is not granted by the parent, the childcare center will not take pictures of your child.

### **UPEXPECTED CENTRE CLOSURES**

In the event that the center must close due to fire, an extended power or heating failure (more than 3 hours), extreme weather conditions, or an evacuation due to safety issues, or other exceptional circumstances, staff will care for children until families or emergency contacts have picked them up.

## **COMMUNICABLE DISEASE POLICY**

The St. Joseph's Early Learning Center is a safe and healthy environment and is in full compliance with licensing regulations.

Please do not bring your child to the facility if there is any indication of illness. If the staff believes a child is sick and should not attend, the facility retains the right to refuse admittance. If a child becomes ill during the course of the program, the parent(s) will be contacted to pick the child up. If your child is not able to fully participate in the Early Learning Center programming, they must stay home until well enough to do so. Parents are required to keep their child home if the child exhibits any of the following:

- Has a communicable disease. Parents must notify the centre if your child has a communicable disease so that other families and the Health Authority can be notified (Chicken Pox, etc)
- Any symptoms of a cough/cold/flu AND the child cannot fully participate in programming.
- Has a fever of over 38 degrees. The child can return to the centre 24 hours after the fever has broken without the use of medication.
- Has a skin infection or undiagnosed rash (can return once it has cleared up or has started treatment upon advice of a medical professional).
- Is not well enough to participate fully in all program activities, including outdoor play.
- If a child receives a prescribed antibiotic, the child will not be able to return to the facility until 24 hours from the time of the first dose of the antibiotic.
- Has diarrhea or vomiting. Children can return to the centre **48 hours after last episode** of diarrhea or vomiting.
- Has pink-eye (can return once treated and cleared up).
- Has lice (until treatment is complete and the child is free of lice).

## **ADMINISTERING MEDICATION**

Staff will only administer medication prescribed by a doctor. All over the counter medication must have labelled instructions from a doctor before staff will administer it. Parents must complete a "Permission to Administer Medication Form" which is signed by the parent and the staff. All medications must be in the original container and be clearly labeled. All medications will be stored in a locked container following storage instructions. Children that require long-term medications (such as inhalers or allergy medication) must have the child's medical requirements registered with the centre and a current care plan on file.

## **ACCIDENT POLICY**

### **Illness or Injury while at the Centre Policy**

If a child is injured or becomes ill while at the centre, staff will immediately assess the situation and decide on what action to take. Outlined below are three procedures that may be followed:

### **Minor Injuries Policy**

(such as scrapes and minor abrasions)

Staff will:

- Provide first aid treatment such as a band aid or ice pack
- Acknowledge the child's feelings and reassure them
- Provide close supervision to ensure the child does not require further first aid
- Complete an in-house incident report
- Inform the family at pick up time and have the parent sign off the incident report

### **Medical Attention that may require a Doctor's Visit Policy**

(This would incorporate medical issues such as possible bone breakages, cuts that may require stitches)

Staff will:

- Contact the parent/guardian immediately while another staff member provides First Aid.
- If the parent/guardian is unavailable, staff will contact the emergency contact listed with the centre.
- If the family emergency contact cannot be reached staff will proceed with the emergency medical policy.

Once the family, guardian, or emergency contact has been reached

Staff will:

- Access the child's medical file for information and permission.
- Arrange transportation for and accompany the child to the hospital or a clinic, with the medical information, and will meet the family there.
- Provide information to the doctor and family/emergency contact.
- Immediately report the incident to our Licensing Officer.
- Complete a Community Care Facilities Incident Report Form and file it with the Ministry and give a copy to the School Office.

### **Medical Attention that is an Emergency Policy**

If emergency medical attention is required, staff will administer first aid until the ambulance attendants arrive.

Staff will:

- Call and request an ambulance
- Contact the family or guardian and arrange to meet them at the hospital
- If family/guardian are unavailable, staff will reach the emergency contact and arrange to meet them at the hospital
- Access the child's medical file for medical information and permission
- Accompany the child to the hospital along with medical information
- Provide the doctor and family with information about the emergency
- Immediately phone the Licensing Officer to report the Incident
- Immediately phone the School office and inform administration
- Complete a Community Care Facilities Incident Report Form and file it with the Ministry and give a copy to the School Office

### **HEAD INJURIES POLICY**

As per St. Joseph's School policy, all injuries to the head regardless of severity, will be immediately reported to the parents and the childcare center office. You may be asked to immediately pick up your child.

### **SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE POLICY**

As required under the Child, Family, and Community Services Act, staff having reason to suspect that a child has been or may be physically or emotionally harmed, neglected, sexually abused or sexually exploited by a parent or other person, have a legal obligation report to the Ministry for Children and Family Development.

Even if unsure, staff has a legal obligation contact the Ministry and speak to an intake worker to get information. The decision to investigate lies with the Ministry. Staff will document and date all observations, which will be kept in the child's file.

If a child discloses being at risk or likely to be at risk, staff will contact the Ministry and report the disclosure. Staff will not interview the child with regard to the details; interviewing the child will be completed by Ministry officials.

### **CUSTODY AND ACCESS POLICY**

Parents who are separated or divorced are required to provide accurate information on custody and access arrangements to the manager and staff.

To prevent a child being released into the care of a non-custodial parent who does not have access, a copy of the Custody Agreement or Court Order must be on file in the centre. If there is no Agreement on file, staff cannot refuse or deny access to the non-enrolling parent.

If no agreement exists and conflict between parents/families is evident, the centre may refuse to care for the child unless both parents sign a written agreement confirming details of pick-up and access to information about the child.

If a Custody or Court Order exists, a copy of the order must be placed in the child's file. The parent/guardian is responsible for providing accurate and up-to-date information concerning legal guardianship of the child(ren). If this information changes at any time, it is imperative that staff be notified immediately. Without a custody order or court order on file, child care staff cannot deny access to the non-enrolling parent. If the non-enrolling parent is not on the authorized pickup list, the policy relative to unauthorized persons will be implemented. The parent/guardian is responsible for providing all consents.

### **CONFLICT RESOLUTION POLICY**

Families are encouraged to discuss questions or concerns regarding all aspects of the program with the director and/or staff. If an issue arises, the goal is to resolve the differences and arrive at

mutually satisfactory resolutions.

The following steps will be taken:

Step 1:

The enrolling parent will meet with the director and staff member to define the issue and state clearly their concern.

Step 2:

Solutions and/or appropriate resources are identified, where possible. A plan for dealing with the concern(s) will be shared between the staff and the enrolling parent.

Step 3:

If no resolution can be achieved directly between the parties, the enrolling parent will bring their specific concerns, along with documentation of attempts at resolution, to the Principal and/or the Executive Director of Early Learning and Child Care for further consideration.

### **TERMINATION OF SERVICE**

Services will be terminated when:

- Fees for services are not paid by month's end and no alternative arrangements for payments have been made.
- The centre is unable to satisfactorily resolve an issue with an enrolling parent/guardian using conflict resolution steps.
- A child is persistently unwilling or unable to abide by centre rules and expectations and poses a safety risk towards themselves and/or others.
- If all reasonable efforts have been made to provide for a child's specific care needs, but we are unable to do so due to lack of qualified staff, funding limitations restricting support worker placement, or if quality of care is impacted by the previous reasons listed, services may be suspended until these issues can be resolved.
- St. Joseph's Early Learning Centre policies and procedures are not being adhered to, even after an attempt to rectify the situation, and the family has been given warning.

### **RELEASE OF CHILD POLICY**

Children enrolled in St. Joseph's Child Care Programs will only be released to a person the parent/guardian has given written permission to do so, even in the event of an emergency. The parents have given written permission to for pick up are listed on the "Release of a Child Consent & Registration Form". If a staff member does not recognize a person picking up a child, they will ask the individual to provide identification. If the person is not listed on the "Consent/Registration Form" and does not have the written consent of the parent/guardian, the parents will be contacted and the child will not be released until we have approval from parents.

Persons other than the parent/guardian or emergency contact persons picking up children must be pre-arranged by parents with childcare staff. The parent is required to email or otherwise submit to child care staff a written document authorizing the pickup of their child by a specifically identified individual. Without this written authorization, the child will not be released

and will remain under the supervision of childcare staff. Parents are to provide as much notice as possible of an alternate person picking up their child.

If a parent or guardian arrives to pick up a child and is intoxicated or otherwise impaired, the staff member will follow this procedure:

- Offer to call a relative or friend to pick up both child and adult.
- Offer to call a cab.
- Inform the parent/guardian that if they choose to leave the facility in the car with or without the child, police will be contacted immediately.
- Call the Ministry for Children and Family Development if the staff member feels the child is at risk and/or in need of protection.

### **Potty Training Policy**

All children enrolled in either our preschool or daycare programs must be potty trained, as we do not have the facilities or extra staff to help change children on a regular basis. We understand that accidents do happen, and we will help your child in a respectful and compassionate manner. Please provide 2 changes of clothing (these can be non-uniform) that must be replaced when used. If clothing is not provided, we will call parents to bring fresh clothing to the centre.

### **GUIDANCE POLICY**

St. Joseph's Child Care Programs operate on the belief that all children are unique individuals who learn through their interactions with peers, adults and their environment. The purpose of guidance in our programs is to ensure an inclusive, safe, and healthy environment in which all children can feel secure, respected, and valued. As a child grows and develops, it is normal for them to explore a variety of behaviours in order to learn what is acceptable and appropriate ways of interacting with the world around them and the people in it.

St. Joseph's Child Care Programs use a variety of methods to assist children in choosing appropriate behaviours. Each child will be encouraged and supported to develop positive relationships with peers and staff. Staff will strive to role model appropriate behaviours for children by showing respect to children, parents, co-workers and the environment.

#### **Staff will:**

- Demonstrate care and affection towards children through appropriate contact
- ALWAYS lead through positive behaviour support.
- Provide clear, simple, and consistent limits regarding appropriate behaviours within the Programs. Limits will be offered in a positive manner. Harsh or belittling language will not be used at any time, nor will the use of any physical punishment.
- Respect that there is always a reason for a particular behaviour and will observe, problem-solve, and strategize to work with children to remediate unacceptable

behaviour. As behaviour is a method of communicating needs and wants, staff will assist the child in learning appropriate ways to communicate needs and having them met in acceptable ways.

- Differentiate between the behaviour and the person, leaving the child's dignity intact.
- Verbally prepare the children for the transition to another activity.
- Communicate with parents about children's behaviour and guidance strategies.

## **Guidance Methods**

### Environment

The physical environment will be set up in a way to encourage desirable behaviours and minimize conflict. Staff will observe and modify the environment as needed to promote positive behaviours.

### Modeling

Staff will demonstrate respect, understanding, compassion, kindness, listening and cooperation in all interactions with children, parents, and colleagues.

### Choices

Children will have access to a variety of choices so that they learn to make decisions, be self-directed, and discover things in their unique and individual ways. All choices will be given when appropriate and within clear limits.

### Routine

Daily routines and schedules will be kept so that children will know the expectations each day. The Program will have a balance between quiet and active play, indoor and outdoor play, and structured and unstructured play time.

### Limits

Staff will explain limits to children so that children can learn the reasons behind the limits in a way that children can understand. Appropriate alternatives will always be presented to children. Limits will be clear, simple, and consistent. Limits are in place so that children do not harm themselves or others by engaging in unsafe activities or play. Staff will clearly state what is expected, for example: "It is unsafe for you to run inside – inside we walk." or "Use your words to ask Jane what you want. We keep our hands to ourselves."

### Positive Reinforcement

Children will be acknowledged for interacting in ways that are respectful, kind, helpful, and considerate. Children deserve positive feedback from those around them, and are more likely to repeat desired behaviours when they are shown appreciation for their positive interaction with others.

### Redirection

Children will be redirected to other areas of play to change the circumstances that are creating undesirable behaviour.

### Modifications and Adaptations:

Modifications and adaptations are available for all children. If an activity does not work for a child, alternatives are to be provided. Program planning needs to allow for flexibility and reasonable expectations as children have been in a structured environment all day and need to have time to relax, recharge, and have fun while in OSC programs.

## **INCLUSION POLICY**

St. Joseph's Early Learning Centre welcomes all children and is committed to providing developmentally appropriate early learning and development experiences that support the full access and participation of each and every child. We believe that each child is unique, and staff work in partnership with families and other professionals involved with the child, to provide the support every child needs to reach their full potential. We provide opportunities for all children to develop their emotional, social, physical and cognitive abilities.

This policy reinforces our commitment to providing equitable service to all children regardless of abilities, physical or health needs, gender, race, ethnic origin, nationality, national origin, religion or belief. All children, including those identified with diverse needs, are welcomed and valued.

St. Joseph's Early Learning Centre's aim is to provide inclusive care. This occurs when our programs support the individual strengths and needs of each child. All children are welcomed, supported, and valued, which allows them to participate meaningfully in all aspects of our childcare programs. In inclusive programs, children of all abilities have equitable access to quality childcare and are provided supportive opportunities to learn through play with other children in the program. All childcare providers work together as a team to collectively and reasonably meet the needs of all children, including children with diverse abilities and support needs, in their care. An inclusive childcare environment has connections to help families access early intervention and family services when needed.

This policy provides direction to all staff, students, and volunteers about the importance of inclusion and ways to best implement it, while fostering an environment that promotes and sustains high quality inclusive Early Childhood Education and Care by reducing barriers to child care programs.

---

In this policy the following terms are defined as:

- **Accessibility:** All sections of the population have access to quality services within reasonable reach, especially vulnerable or marginalized groups, such as ethnic minorities and Indigenous populations, women, children, people with diverse abilities and/or support needs, including in rural areas.
  
- **Care Plan:** Care plans are created by the childcare provider and a parent/guardian of the child requiring support. Aboriginal Supported Child Development (ASCD) and Supported Child Development (SCD) consultants may also help in the development of a care plan. The Childcare Licensing Regulation (CCLR) outlines the legislated (legal) requirements for a care plan, which includes:
  - The diagnoses relevant to the child’s requirement for support, as made by health care professionals.
  - The courses of action recommended by health care professionals to address the needs of the child requiring extra support.
  - The resources to be made available to the child requiring support, including any adaptation of the community care facility (physical environment of the child care site) necessary to ensure the child’s safety or comfort, and any modification to the program of activities necessary to enable the child to participate in or benefit from the program
 Care plans are created with the mindfulness of the child’s unique strengths and ideally include much more detail than required by the CCLR including proactive strategies.
  
- **Children with Diverse Abilities:** The term “diverse abilities” may be used in place of “disabilities” based on the personal preference of a child and their family. Diverse abilities are inclusive of all children and positively focuses on all children being different, but able.
  
- **Children with Support Needs:** Children who are experiencing, or at risk of, developmental delay or disability and require support beyond that required by children in general. The developmental delay or disability may be in one or more of the following areas: physical, cognitive, social, emotional, communicative, or behavioural. Children may be experiencing, or at risk of, developmental delay or disability as a result of neurobiological factors (such as genetic, metabolic, or other biological factors) or as a result of social/environmental factors.
  
- **Cultural Safety:** A transformation of relationships where the needs and voice of children, youth and their families take a central role. It is a theory and practice that considers power imbalances, institutional discrimination, colonization and colonial relationships as they apply to social policy and practice. Cultural safety involves actively exploring and challenging complex power relationships including the way that bias, stereotyping, discrimination and racism impacts how services are delivered and received.
  
- **Developmental Delay:** Children reach developmental milestones at their own pace, as delays may not be permanent for some. A developmental delay is a significant delay in achieving age-

expected “norms” or milestones within the domains of gross and fine motor skills, speech and language, social and personal skills, activities of daily living and/or cognition. There are many factors that may contribute to a developmental delay (e.g., biological, environmental), and can sometimes help to identify children with an increased risk of disabilities.

- **Equity/Equitable:** A value or goal that recognizes individuals and groups have different circumstances which may require different treatment. An equitable system strives to reduce barriers so that everyone may access resources, opportunities, power and responsibility to lead full and healthy lives. Thus, providing support when needed so that individuals and groups can participate fully in society.
- **Family:** A term that is inclusive of diverse family structures. A family is broadly recognized to ensure the inclusion of all families and family experiences, including the variety of relationships bonded by genetic relations, marital/legal status, cultural identity, and kinship systems. This broad identification acknowledges different uses of terminology, diverse household membership, and diverse social ties to caring for a child.
- **Family-centered:** “A set of values, attitudes, and approaches to services for children and youth and their families. Family-centered service recognizes that each family is unique; that the family is the constant in the child's life; and that they are the experts on the child's abilities and needs. The family works with service providers to make informed decisions about the services and supports the child and family receive. In family centered service, the strengths and needs of all family members are considered.”
- **Inclusion:** Supporting all people to participate fully within society regardless of their abilities. People of all abilities have equal access to, and the support needed to fully participate in a meaningful way.
- **Meaningful Participation:** A child’s role is valued by all those involved in the activity including the child themselves. Meaningful participation is more than being present in various environments and activities which is defined as integration. Children must be actively engaged, and their involvement must be more than an appearance of equity in activities and environments.
- **Inclusive Language:** is free from words and tones that reflect prejudiced, stereotyped, or discriminatory views of people. It ensures that people feel included and accepted by others. The use of inclusive language is key to inclusive childcare.
- **Person-first Language:** puts the person first. For example, in identifying children who are living with various conditions or disabilities, you would say “children with disabilities” - this focuses on the person first, not on their traits.

- **Identity-first Language:** refers to a person with a condition as a descriptor. Rather than referring to something that a person has (e.g. child with autism) this focuses on the core of the person’s identity (e.g. autistic child). People who prefer identity-first language may feel that their condition or disability is not something that has happened to them, rather it is a strong part of who they are.

As language evolves, preferred terms change. Not everyone will have the same preferences. For example, a “Deaf person” often prefers to be referred to that way rather than a “person who is Deaf” due to significance of the connection it implies to Deaf culture. It is important to talk openly with families and children to understand their preferred language.

Be considerate in the language you use. Chronic conditions, disabilities, and mental illness can be both visible and invisible.

---

## Access and Inclusive Environmental Considerations

### Physical Considerations

- All classrooms and learning areas are accessible to all children.
- Efforts to meet sensory needs are met with softened noise and lights, quiet spaces and active spaces.
- All play areas inside and out are accessible to all children.
- Wheelchair access is available and adequately maintained.
- Wide pathways between furniture to allow for a wheelchair/walker.
- Adaptations are made to equipment and furniture to reduce or remove barriers for children, such as adjusting table heights.

### Learning Experiences

- Learning experiences respond to the children’s unique needs (e.g. culture, interests, strengths, and passions).
- Accessible communication is visible (e.g. American Sign Language visuals, picture schedules, emotion/feeling images).
- Learning materials include people of diverse abilities and diverse cultures.
- Books reflect all children’s interests, strengths, and passions.
- Learning materials are visible and at the children’s level so that every child can access items independently.
- Adjustments are made to routines and transitions to make learning experiences positive for all children Social Learning Materials.

- Accessories and equipment span the interests and skills sets of all children.
- Play accessories represent diverse cultures.
- Accessories and equipment encourage solitary, parallel and cooperative play and promote social interactions among children of all abilities.

### **Multisensory Learning Materials**

- Multisensory learning materials are included in the center to encourage gross and fine motor skills, and to meet sensory needs (e.g. sensory putty, finger paints, textured objects, fidget toys, clay, small and heavy blocks, and sand)

### **Classroom Aesthetics and Things to Consider**

- Colours
- Lighting
- Textures
- Clusters
- Furniture
  - Heavy furniture
  - Removing rugs (or taping them down)
  - Spaces for eating
  - Developing quiet spaces
  - Toileting modifications
  - Areas for movement

### **Participation and Practice**

Programming and practice strategies are influenced by the BC Early Learning Framework, services and recommendations provided by Supported Child Development, recommendations, and collaboration other outside agencies, and are also guided by current proven best practices. These strategies can range from the curriculum and content offered at St. Joseph’s Early Learning Centre to actual ways staff interact and promote social inclusion of children with support needs. The activities offered at St. Joseph’s Early Learning Centre, such as free play, are essential to inclusion. Free play and group activities can promote different interactions among children. Free play activities that involve making a choice, such as building blocks, role playing materials, and art and craft materials, increase the opportunities for peer interaction. This allows children with support needs to choose which activities to participate in with peers. Group activities are also valuable but require more consideration to ensuring that all children are rested and alert to fully participate in the activity. By providing smaller group activities, children with support needs are better able to engage and be included. How we interact with children at St. Joseph’s Early Learning Centre is another key part of inclusion. Staff may promote peer interactions by helping children interact with their peers, facilitating play, and fostering relationships. This may involve encouraging fairness and equity in play among all children, as well as supporting children to encourage their peers with support needs to join their play. Staff share the values as outlined in the Covenant of

Care such as reinforcing positive behaviour and praising children while respecting the unique strengths and needs of all children.

### **Support**

All children and their families are supported with a family-centered approach. This involves understanding that the family is key to a child's safety and well-being. Staff should willingly engage and collaborate with families when making any decisions about supporting their children. Positive relationships between staff and parents/guardians help to create a link between home and childcare, while promoting the inclusion of all children.

### **Training and Education:**

Early childhood educators (ECEs) and childcare staff are central to the success of the planning and delivery of inclusive childcare.

- 14 Research Suggests that increased education leads to higher quality childcare, as educated childcare staff are better able to facilitate increased inclusion of all children regardless of their diverse abilities.
- Training and education about cultural competency and working with children with support needs can also improve inclusion of all children.
- ECEs and childcare staff who are experienced with facilitating an inclusive environment can improve inclusive child care, as they can mentor, support, and help other staff understand the benefits of inclusion by sharing their past and current experience with supporting children with support need.
- All staff should also be encouraged to share what they have learned from training and education opportunities.

### **Collaboration with Community Service Providers**

Staff at St. Joseph's Early Learning Centre work with parents, community service providers, and school staff to ensure support for child care programs is coordinated and complimentary.

- Each partner is respected for their knowledge and expertise with open and positive communication.
- Community service providers may include professionals from the Supported Child Development and Aboriginal Supported Child Development, Early Intervention Therapy, and other professionals on the child's support team.
- Reach out to your community service providers to learn about supports in helping families with their transition to kindergarten.

Admin may contact our local Ministry of Children and Family Development Children and Youth with Special Needs office to discuss what services may be available and for other useful information/support.

## **Transition Planning**

All team members involved in the care of the student are invited to participate and collaborate in the transition planning process to support continuity and communication of the Care Plan to ensure that the child's needs are being met.

---

### **St. Joseph's Early Learning Centre will:**

- Inform all employees this inclusion policy is in operation, and they are obligated to comply with the requirements and promote inclusion in all programs offered at St. Joseph's Early Learning Centre.
- St. Joseph's Early Learning Centre will inform all families we serve that this inclusion policy is in operation and they are welcome to inquire about the requirements for promoting inclusion in all child care programs.

**This Inclusion Policy is fully supported and guided by the senior leadership team. It will be monitored and reviewed annually to ensure that inclusion is continually promoted at St Joseph's Early Learning Centre.**

## **QUIET TIME POLICY**

As per licensing, we have a quiet time each afternoon in our full-day daycare program. This quiet time runs from 1:30-3:00pm. From 1:30-2:00pm, children lay on their mats while looking at books, 2:00 – 2:30 is rest time, and 2:30 – 3:00pm children may have quiet toys on their mats. If a child falls asleep on their own, or cannot manage in the afternoon without a nap, staff will not force any child to stay awake. Children who have outgrown their nap are encouraged to have quiet time without falling asleep.

## **SCREEN TIME POLICY**

St. Joseph's Early Learning Centre policy on screen time is as follows:

### **Movies and Television:**

There is no cable at the centre. Movies are only to be shown occasionally for special occasions, and on weather related indoor days. This amounts to less than once a month.

### **Tablets, Computer, and Device use:**

The centre does not have access to these devices for children's use at this time. These devices should be left at home and we do not allow the use of personal devices in our programs.

### Videos:

Educational videos found on websites such as YouTube are occasionally used for educational purposes and are supplementary to other teaching elements. They are kept to a minimum and are only used to enhance a lesson.

With this policy we do not anticipate that any classroom will exceed the 30 minutes daily allotted for screen time use. The majority of our curriculum and lesson planning does not allow for screen time, and it is used sparingly.

### **ACTIVE PLAY POLICY**

As a licensed centre, we understand the need to plan, encourage, and promote active play within our day for children at all ages and developmental levels. As such, we plan activities each day to encourage gross and fine motor skills both inside and outside our centre.

Activities are a balance of guided play and free play and occur rain or shine.

To adhere to the activity regulations, we document the following:

- Play space in which the activity has taken place
- The time and duration of the activity for each group
- The type of activity that has been planned for the day

All three are documented in our daily planning logs, which are maintained by each classroom.

### **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

**St. Joseph's Early Learning Centre strictly follows the Emergency Preparedness Plan implemented by St. Joseph's Elementary School. Copies are available in the Childcare office.**

#### **Introduction**

St. Joseph's School has a specific plan for the safety and well-being of our students in the event of a fire, earthquake or other natural disaster. This plan includes training for staff and students, fire and earthquake drills, school evacuation procedures, hazard reduction, and the storage of first aid supplies, food and water.

#### **Emergency Procedures**

In the event of an earthquake requiring the closure of the school, the following procedures will be followed:

- St. Joseph's Early Learning Centre and Child Care follows the Emergency Response Plan created and implemented by St. Joseph's Elementary School.
- Students will evacuate the building and assemble at the designated assembly area.

- No student will be allowed to leave with another person unless that individual is listed on the student's Emergency form.
- The school will care for children in the event of a critical situation, or if parents are unable to reach the school.

In the case of a major earthquake or disaster, parents are:

- To come to the school if they are able to offer assistance
- Not to call the school -we must have the line open for emergency calls.
- To park away from the school. The school access routes and street entrances must remain clear for emergency vehicles.
- To go to the Student Release station to pick-up their child or any other child for whom they are assuming responsibility.
- To turn to CFX 1070. Information and directions will be given over the radio.