



**CALEDONIA  
EARLY CARE AND  
LEARNING  
CENTRE  
SOCIETY**

]

**PARENT HANDBOOK**

# CALEDONIA EARLY CARE & LEARNING CENTRE SOCIETY

Welcome to the Caledonia Early Care and Learning Centre. This handbook has been prepared to offer you information, operational policies, and information on how your child's daily needs will be met. This will be your reference to refer back on throughout the year.

The Centre is operated by the Caledonia Early Care and Learning Centre Society, a non-profit organization, with the support of parent fees, a provincial subsidy (Child Care Operating Fund), and a student levy.

The Centre functions as a training environment for the Early Childhood Care and Learning (ECCL) students at the College of New Caledonia. The two programs are very closely related to each other. The ECCL students as well as the ECCL Faculty spend time in the room as well as in the observation booth to see theory being put into practice, as well as to gain hands on experience. The ECCL students complete course assignments, practicums, and volunteer time in the Centre.

## PARENT HANDBOOK

### MISSION STATEMENT

We believe a positive self-esteem is central to children's growth and development. This belief forms the foundation of our philosophy and is dependent upon a sound interactive partnership between children, parents, and caregivers.

### PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

Caledonia Early Care and Learning Centre is licensed and committed to providing exceptional childcare to the students and staff of the College of New Caledonia, as well as members of the Prince George community. We provide a play-based, child-focused early learning program for children; this fosters individualism, creativity, socialization, and problem solving. We provide an emergent curriculum through observations and documentation. Our knowledgeable, professional team of caregivers offer resources, and programming to challenge children and support them in a fun, nurturing and safe environment. Our program has a focus on natural play; providing natural resources and focusing on the outdoors.

### OUR ASPIRATIONS FOR CHILDREN

- Develop a positive self-esteem
- Express feelings and emotions
- Respect developmentally appropriate communication efforts
- Respect individual differences
- Support children in discovering choices, decisions, and solutions
- Be motivated life-long learners by encouraging a sense of wonder

### OUR GOALS

Encourage parent involvement in the programming

- Develop comfortable, ongoing communication with families
- Support families in developing and sustaining a healthy parent/child relationship
- To communicate openly regarding the individual child's developmental strengths and needs
- To provide a healthy, safe environment which meets children's physical needs
- To provide nutritious meals and snacks
- To provide children with opportunities to learn through play and the natural world
- To provide children with creative experiences in art, music, science, language, and sensory

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- To provide opportunities for the development of gross motor skills such as running, jumping, and climbing through indoor and outdoor play
- To allow children to explore their community through field trips, walks, and the participation of visitors
- To provide active supervision and age-appropriate discipline, which fosters children's positive self-esteem and communication
- To promote innovative responses to the community needs and the newest research in Early Care and Learning
- To promote and implement educational opportunities for parents, students, and staff

## **STAFFING**

Three (3) staff members are employed in the Early Care and Learning Centre. All staff members are licensed by the Provincial Child Care Facilities Licensing Board after completing their Basic Early Childhood Education Program. Some staff members complete their Post-Basic Early Childhood Program to be licensed as Infant/Toddler Educators. In addition, staff members have their First-Aid Training, Infant/Child CPR, clear criminal record checks, and Food Safe. All staff also participate in courses and workshops on an on-going basis.

## **LICENSING & INSPECTIONS**

As a licensed facility, the Centre must comply with the Community Care Facility Act, the Child Care Regulations, and the National Fire Code. We are also regulated by the Acts and Policies which govern a public college.

We are licensed for twenty-four (24) children, ranging from thirty (30) months to five (5) years of age, or school age. The Centre receives regular inspections by a Northern Interior Regional Licensing Officer. Parent may also request to see our inspection either at the Centre or the Northern Interior Health Unit.

## **INCLUSION**

We accept all children regardless of their developmental stage, culture, religion, and beliefs.

## **CELL PHONE POLICY**

The Caledonia Early Care and Learning Centre is a cell phone free zone. We ask that families have their cell phones put away before entering the room. While in the Centre, staff and parents/guardians focus on the children giving their full attention. The Centre does have a cell phone, this phone is used when outside of the Centre for emergencies, and also for us to keep in touch with parents. You are welcome to text us during the day to see how your child is doing. We will also send you texts and photos to keep you updated on your child's day.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA**

We have a Facebook page and are in the process of setting up a website. This is used to keep you updated on what is going on in the daycare. We only post photos of children that we have parental permission for. We are presently updating our policy.

## **REST TIME**

The child rest between 1:00pm and 2:30pm each day. This is required as part of a full day program. If your child(ren) feel(s) more comfortable having a stuffed toy or special blanket for his/her rest time, please bring it along for nap time. Please ensure to label the blanket and/or stuffed toy so there will be no confusion as to who the special item belongs to. At 1:30pm the children who are not sleeping and have had a quiet rest, will be given a box of quiet activities to enjoy on their mats until 2:30pm. The staff, use this quiet time to prepare more programming activities

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and snacks for the rest of the afternoon. Please try not to pick up your child during rest time as this disturbs the children that are trying to sleep.

## **CLOTHING**

All clothing must be labelled and appropriate for all play situations. Please keep an extra set of clothing in your child's cubby at the Centre. If your child uses clothing from the Centre, please return it as soon as possible.

**Please keep in mind that we value outside time very much, and strive to get the children outside as much as possible. Please keep this in mind when assisting your child in dressing for the day.**

## **PARENT PARTICIPATION**

With our Centre located right on campus, as well as in the middle of town, we encourage families to come visit and participate as much as possible. Communication and cooperation between the staff members and parents are important for the well-being of everyone involved at the Centre. The staff welcomes questions, suggestions, and concerns. If you ask a question and we do not have an immediate answer for you, please leave it with us, and we will be happy to find the answer to your questions/concerns and report back the following business day. Sometimes a few words when you arrive or depart are sufficient. If a more comprehensive conversation is needed, you're welcome to approach the Manager and he/she will arrange a meeting with you.

## **STUDENTS & OBSERVERS**

The Centre provides an opportunity for students in various programs such as Early Childhood Education, Nursing, Human Kinetics, School District Number 57, and CNC Adults Special Education Programs, to observe and complete their practicums, and have the same opportunity that exists for other professionals and students at other institutions. Student are under the supervision of staff members at all times, and it is mandatory for all students to have a completed criminal record check as well as a signed confidentiality agreement.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

Our Centre promotes community partnership by encouraging individuals who wish to volunteer their time in a recognized facility.

## **DUTY TO REPORT ABUSE**

Reporting suspected child abuse is a sensitive and difficulty issue. The law is designed to protect children because they are unable to protect themselves. Any person who has reasonable grounds to believe that a child or children are in need of protection is required, legally, by Section 7 of the *Family and Child Services Act* to report the matter to a child protection social worker. Failure to report in these circumstances is a criminal offense as per *Interior Ministry BC Handbook for Action on Child Abuse and Neglect 1988*.

It is essential that parents and guardians understand that all educators have a legal obligation to report suspected child abuse and it is not the responsibility of the caregivers to inform the families that such reports have been filed with the ministry. This is the responsibility of the police or the Child Protection Social Worker to communicate these issues with the individuals/families.

## **STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAYS**

The Centre is closed for two (2) days to create time for the entire staff to participate in professional development activities. Furthering the education of the child care givers is integral to their success. There will be sufficient notice

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given to all families who have children attending the Centre so that alternate childcare arrangements can be made for such days. The fees are not reduced for these days.

## **HOURS**

The Centre is open from 7:45am to 5:15pm Monday through Friday except for statutory holidays, (See Parent Agreement document for a list of these holidays).

## **FEES**

All fees are due in full by the enrolling parent(s)/guardian(s) on the first business day of each calendar month, one (1) month in advance of service, without being invoiced. The fee is due regardless of the number of days in the month, absenteeism due to illness, vacations, statutory holidays, or college closures. Parent fees are a large source of income for the Centre and it is important that these fees are paid on time. A receipt is given on a monthly basis and you are encouraged to keep them for income tax purposes. Fees can be paid with cash and/or cheques.

## **FAILURE TO PAY**

You are required to pay fees on time. A \$20 per day late charge will apply to any late payments, and your child(ren)'s space in the Centre may be compromised. Any outstanding fees are tracked, and parent/guardians will be notified by the Centre Manager. If the outstanding balance and any accrued late charges are not paid out in full, the file will be escalated and will be sent to collections. For students, your name will be flagged on the computer system and you will not receive your marks until the account has been paid in full. Once all late fees are paid, a parent may apply for re-admission.

## **SUBSIDY**

If you qualify for subsidy, your portion of the payment is due within the same time frame as stated under the Fees section above. Parents are responsible for any outstanding balance not covered by subsidy. If a valid subsidy authorization is not on file, you will be responsible for the full month's fees. Once the new authorization has been received you will be credited or reimbursed. If your subsidy has not been approved and your parent/guardian portion is yet to be determined, or if you are unable to pay, please contact Kathy Reed at 250-561 5834 to make payment arrangement. Child Care Subsidy Centre can be reached at 1.888.338.6622 or on the web at [www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare](http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare).

## **UPDATING OF FORMS**

It is parents' and guardian's responsibility to update all registration forms. Students are responsible for updating their timetables. Having updated and current contact information is critical. In an emergency, action is slowed down if the staff cannot locate the parent, doctor, or alternate contact person.

## **ARRIVING & DEPARTING**

Please arrange for your departure from home to allow time to feed your child breakfast. The first hour at day care is a busy time with the arrival of many children, and caregivers are not easily available to feed hungry children. Please keep in mind that a child who is hungry will be very easily distressed and unsettled for the morning routine. When you arrive in the morning please help your child settle before you leave. Please sign your child in and out each day. Please make sure a staff member is aware your child has arrived at the Centre for the day. We ask your child be at the Centre by 9:30am and to notify the Centre if the child is going to be away. You are responsible for

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your child while you are in the Centre. The Centre closes promptly at 5:15pm. Please arrive by no later than 5:05pm so that you can talk with the educators and help your child depart by 5:15pm.

## LATE PICK UP

All families and authorized pickup persons must pick up by 5:15pm each day. If a child is not picked up by 5:15pm and the authorized persons or enrolling parents have not contacted the Centre, the staff will try to contact the family and then someone from the emergency contact list. If all efforts are unsuccessful by 6:15pm, the staff will call the *Ministry for children and families*. The Centre staff will NEVER send a child or children home in a taxi. If late pickup is a repeated problem, the Manager and the enrolling parents or guardians will be required to address the problem directly. If late pickups continue after this time, and cannot be resolved, the one (1) months' notice may be given and daycare services may be terminated.

## ALLEGED IMPAIRED AUTHORIZATION PICK UP

It is the staff's legal responsibility to the extent that this is possible not to release a child to an authorized person who is unable to adequately care for a child or children. If a staff member believes that the child or children will be at risk, the staff person in charge will offer to call a relative, friend, or taxi to pick up the person and the child or children. The staff will contact the *Ministry for Children and Families*. If the person is driving a vehicle, the staff person will explain that driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol is against the law and it is the staff members' obligation to ensure the safety and well-being of the child or children as well as the adult. If the presumed impaired person chooses to get in the car with or without the child or children, the staff member will immediately notify the authorities.

## WITHDRAWAL

When you are planning to withdraw your child from the Centre, please remember that one (1) calendar months' notice is mandatory. Failure to do so will result in being charged for the months' fees in Lieu of the notice.

## TERMINATION OF SERVICES

We are committed to providing a caring and supportive environment for all children. A family's termination of services may be required if:

- Fees for childcare services are not paid according to the Financial Policies in the Parent Agreement and suitable arrangements cannot be agreed upon.
- The family does not abide by the expectations set forth in the Parent Agreement and successful resolution of the differences are not achieved.
- If the parents cannot come to a Parenting Time (previously called 'Custody') agreement.
- A family member harasses, threatens, abuses, or commits an aggressive or violent act toward staff, children, or other families involved in the program of the Centre.
- Is unable to satisfactorily resolve problems of late pick up with a family.
- The Centre does not have the resources available to meet the child's needs.
- The child's behaviour is severely disruptive or physically threatening to the well-being and safety of other children or staff.
- Additional supports to accommodate the child are unavailable. Termination of services is a last resort measure. Steps will be taken to accommodate the child's needs. Such steps include;
- The staff will complete observations on all children. If a child is not adjusting well, these alterations will be discussed with the enrolling parents or guardians. Programs will be planned and implemented to support the child. In the event that the child is not responding, the family will be consulted and other options may

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be explored at that time. The Manager will determine whether the childcare service can or cannot be continued from that point on.

## GUIDANCE POLICY

**Children's behavior is influenced by their overall development, their environment, and their caregivers. Each child differs in terms of his/her activity level, distractibility, and sensitivity. Children must learn to develop socially acceptable and appropriate behavior as they grow to maturity. The staff work together cooperatively to ensure that our philosophy and interactions with the children remain positive and consistent.**

### Purpose of this Policy

This policy is the guideline that Caledonia ECEL childcare educators will follow to assist children in developing self-regulation, self-confidence, and sensitivity in their interactions with others. Guidance is required to ensure order, prevent injury, and ensure a child's activities are not infringing on the rights of others.

### Guidance Strategies

It is important that the staff 'set the stage' for a positive atmosphere and maximize opportunities for desirable behavior. When establishing limits, guidelines and guiding children's behaviour we keep in mind that children are learning society's rules and how to get along with one another. We take into consideration the child's age, developmental level, life experiences and cultural or ethnic heritage. The children are always under the direct care and supervision of qualified early childhood educators. The strategies we may use are:

1. Explaining to the children what behavior is acceptable and explaining the reason for the limits, doing so in a positive way;
2. Focusing on the child's behavior, rather than on the child;
3. Allowing the children time to respond to the expectations;
4. Reinforcing appropriate behavior;
5. Being willing to listen and respond in a fair and supportive manner.
6. Observing children in order to anticipate potential difficulties.
7. Including the children in the problem solving process.

### Intervention Strategies

One or more of the following strategies will be used to help create a positive climate and minimize problems in a supportive, rather than punitive way:

1. By establishing eye contact and calling the child's name in a calm controlled voice to gain a child's attention;
2. By remaining near the child in situations where he/she may be losing self-control;
3. Children will be reminded of limits taking their feelings into consideration.
4. For younger children or children with limited attention span and verbal abilities, we will attempt to change the behavior by distracting or diverting the child.

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5. Verbal and/or physical assistance will be shown by modeling problem solving if a child is discouraged or frustrated.
6. Children will be offered choices in a non-threatening and non-punitive way to assist them in meeting expectations or to reinforce limits.
7. We will clarify the inevitable or unavoidable outcome of the behavior to the child.
8. If the child is unable to resolve a problem or take responsibility for their actions, they will be re-directed to another activity, or in special circumstances, be limited in the use of a piece of equipment.
9. If all else fails, the child will be removed from the situation in a way that ensures that the 'time away' is a positive learning experience:
  - (a) Prior to the use of 'time away' the child will be given an explanation of what it means and what it involves.
  - (b) The 'time away' place will be located in the cubby area, where they can still be supervised.
  - (c) The child will be allowed to determine when he/she can return to the activity.

## **Practices Which Are Unacceptable in the daycare**

**Caledonia ECEL Centre considers the following practices unacceptable and will not tolerate their use:**

- \*corporal punishment i.e. Shoving, hitting, shaking, spanking**
- \*harsh, belittling, or degrading treatment**
- \*confinement, unsupervised separation from others, physical restraint as punishment**
- \*depriving children of meals, snacks, rest or necessary use of the bathroom.**

## **NUTRITION POLICY**

**We are a NUT AWARE CENTRE!**

**This means we do not bring peanuts and other nuts in to the Centre. We have a child with a severe allergy.**

Caledonia ECEL Centre will provide two snacks and drinks for children at the daycare to maintain their energy, health and state of well-being. We follow Canada's Food Guide guidelines when planning our menus.

No child will go without nourishment for longer than three hours. We will offer our two snack times to all children in attendance at the times identified in the daily schedule. Morning snack starts at 9:10 am, Afternoon snack starts at 3 pm and Lunch starts at 11:45 am for the younger children and 12:00 pm for the older children. This allows more time for the younger children to eat. Snack and meals are flexible to allow for the children's hunger and nutritional requirements.

When weather permits we will eat snack outside. This allows for outside eating experiences for the children.

Only water will be offered between meals as a beverage. We have a "no juice" policy including fruit juice, fruit punch, Kool aid and soft drinks. If you send these with your child, they will be returned home. We will ensure that the food and drink given to a child is sufficient in quantity and quality to meet the developmental needs of the child, with regard to

1. The child's age,
2. The number of hours the child is under the care of the Caledonia ECAL Centre,

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## 3. The child's food preferences and cultural background.

Special celebrations will focus on non-food activities. We teach children that not all celebrations require candy or treats. For children with special dietary needs, or religious, cultural food practices we will work with the parent to decide on a feeding plan that may include the parent bringing all food for the child or providing a list of food the child can eat at the daycare Centre.

### **CANDY & CHIPS**

We ask that juice, candy, gum, fruit gummies, chips, chocolate bars, etc. are left at home. If these items are sent in a child's lunch, they will be sent back home at the end of the day.

Meal times will be a calm and pleasant experiences, focusing on the social interactions of the children between the other children and staff. Children will be encouraged to have discussions about food, healthy food choices and foods from other cultures.

We endeavor to maintain high standards of cleanliness in all areas and the following guidelines will be followed:

#### **Guidelines for cleanliness**

All persons handling food within the daycare are required to wash their hands thoroughly using warm water and soap before and after handling food.

Children wash their hands before eating.

All food for consumption is prepared in the kitchen.

All food is covered once prepared and while waiting to be given to the children e.g.; paper towels, cling film. All meals and drinks for children will be kept refrigerated until ready for use and returned to the refrigerator if unused.

Leftover food from meals, unless in an unopened container, is to be discarded.

Soiled cutlery, dishes, mugs etc. are washed in the dishwasher, large items will be washed in the sink using hot water and dishwashing liquid, to disinfect the dishes we will use bleach water and then rinse off with hot water before drying and being stored away in the appropriate place.

All food scraps are placed in the waste bin in the kitchen area. This bin is to be lined with a plastic liner. This bin is emptied every night.

The bowls, utensils, plates, mugs etc. in the kitchen area are for purpose of food preparation and serving only. They are not to be used for play unless supervised by a teacher for the purpose of baking or cooking with the children.

**Children's food will be checked to make sure it does not contain any peanut, almonds, or other nuts and given only to the child whose name is on the packaging.**

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A snack menu is kept in the kitchen, on the fridge and is also posted each day on the whiteboard. This contains a record of any food given to the children at the Centre. This record only applies to snacks which have NOT been supplied by the parent or caregiver.

Water is available for the children to drink throughout the day. We also provide an option of milk at snack time. Children are encouraged to have a drink with their snacks and meals.

All snacks and meals are served at the snack table. Children are to remain seated while eating. The children are encouraged to clean up after themselves.

**FOOD WILL NOT BE GIVEN AS A REWARD OR WITHHELD AS PUNISHMENT.**

## OUR DAILY SCHEDULE

7:45	Centre opens/ free play/art/play dough/blocks/dramatic play etc.
9:10	Snack
9:45	Bathroom for younger children
10:00	Children help put out beds
10:15	Circle time
10:35	bathroom time
10:45	outside time (or gross motor time inside, if weather is bad)
11:30	clean up time, bathroom time for younger children
11:45	Lunch for younger children. Clean up for older children
12:00	Lunch for older children
12:30	Bathroom time/stories/puzzles
12:45	Story time
1:00	Rest time
1:30	Nap toys/fine motor toys,
2:30	Wake up time (children wake up on their own. Put away blankets and beds)
3:00	Snack
3:30	small group time activity e.g. science
3:45	Bathroom time, outside time (or free play time inside if weather is bad)
5:00	clean up time
5:15	Centre closed