



Before and After School Program Parent Handbook

Revised: May, 2011

Elmsdale Location
583 Highway #2
Elmsdale, Nova Scotia
883-1835
elmwoodcc@eastlink.ca

Welcome!

I would like to welcome you and your child to the Elmwood Child Care Centre Before and After School Program. As an Early Childhood Educator, starting my career in 1984, my philosophy is basic to the needs of the children. The Before and After School Program offered is a reflection of my philosophy.

Elmwood Child Care Centre has been serving the communities of East Hants and surrounding area since 1996. The Elmsdale location expanded from Elmwood Dr. to Hwy#2 in 2004 and the Lantz location opened in the fall of 2007. Each centre is a government approved licensed child care centre under the Department of Community Services, following the guidelines and regulations of the Nova Scotia Daycare Act. The Elmsdale location is licensed for 30 children.

At Elmwood Child Care Centre, we are committed to providing the very best care and education possible. The quality of the program offered at Elmwood Child Care Centre is the result of many years of experience and a strong commitment to meet the needs of children and their families.

Elmwood Child Care Centre staff look forward to having a fun and successful experience with your child in the Before and After School Program.

Sincerely,

Florence MacArthur
Director

Elmwood Child Care Centre provides:

- A Before and After School Program for Elmsdale District School, school aged children. The program focus is totally child centered. The foundation being the provision of a safe, stimulating environment designed to meet the needs of each child.
- Social, emotional and intellectual stimulation through concept building, sensory stimulation, creative program solving and development of self help skills.
- Nutritionally sound and well balanced snacks and lunches (full day) that provides the daily nutritional requirements of the children.
- Fun and interesting activities for school aged children.
- The children also have ample opportunity to socialize, do their homework and play.
- homework support for students.

Before School Program

- The Before School Program is available each morning starting at 7:00 am.
- Children will be put on the bus every morning by staff. Staff will remain with the children until they are safely on the bus.

After School Program

- The After School Program is available every day after school. Staff will greet the children off the bus stop each day.
- Homework support is offered each day. It will still be the responsibility of parents and guardians to sign your child's agenda each day. Staff will not have the responsibility of signing students' agendas. Parents will be informed if difficulty arises in homework.
- A variety of activities are available each day. These activities will include cooperative games, literacy, science, outdoor play and a variety of creative and fun arts and crafts.
- The After School Program is offered until 5:45 pm each day

Behavior Guidance Policy

- At Elmwood Child Care Centre, we recognize that children have different personalities and developmental levels.
- Staff will consider the following techniques for positively guiding children in learning appropriate behavior. Staff will use their professional judgment in handling situations.
- Adopt a positive attitude towards the children which include enjoyment of and respect for the children as individuals
- Set clear , concise, fair and consistent limits

Redirect inappropriate behavior, telling a child what can be done rather than what cannot be done

- Reinforce positive behavior
- Initiate a brief ‘Time Out’ (one minute per age of the child).Children will not be isolated, but may be removed from an activity for a brief period of quiet time.
- Staff, volunteers and care providers do not offer food to reinforce positive behaviors
- Staff, volunteers and care providers do not withhold food as a consequence for inappropriate behavior
- Food is not to be used as a reward for completing a task or finishing a meal (ie: dessert will not be withheld if the child does not finish the main meal.

Children in the After School Program are expected to:

- Speak honestly
- Avoid hurting others; treat others the way you want to be treated
- Take charge of themselves – they are responsible for themselves
- Show respect – every person is important
- Care for others and the centre

If inappropriate behavior continues, you will be asked to discuss the matter with your child.

- This policy is consistent with the Nova Scotia Dept. of Community Services Behavior Guidance Policy Manual posted on the Parent Dept. of Community Services Information Bulletin Board.

Full day Policy

- The centre provides full day childcare for children who attend the Before and After Program when school is cancelled.
- Full day care is also available on in-service days, storm days, and March break and over the summer months.
- The full day program will operate from 7:00am to 5:45 pm.
- Two snacks and a lunch will be provided on these days.
- If there is an early dismissal of school, the children may come directly to the centre.
- Please put the centre down as an emergency contact for school early dismissal.
- Please make sure your child clearly understands your instructions or plan in the event of early closure.

Payment Policy

- Payment arrangements will be as per your financial agreement.
- Fees will be paid for the days that were agreed upon during registration ,
- which included absent days, illness, storm days or vacation days.
- If fees are not paid on time, the Director will be obligated to ask you to remove your child from the program.
- Please do not put the Director in the uncomfortable position of asking for late or overdue payments.

Cost per day:

Before school only	\$5.00
After school only	\$13.00
Before & After school	\$18.00
Full Day	\$29.00

Portable subsidies are available for families who qualify from the Dept. of Community Services. Inquiries can be made to the Director.

- Payment can be made by cheque or cash. When making your payment, please put your payment in the envelopes provided by the centre with your child's name, amount of payment and the dates that your payment is for.
- Please have a staff member initial your envelope to verify the deposit. Deposit boxes are located in each classroom.
- Payments can be made weekly or monthly. If you choose to pay monthly, payment is due the **1st day of each month** for that month. If you choose to pay weekly, payment is due at the **beginning of each week**.
- Post-dated cheques are accepted. Cheques are made payable to "Elmwood Child Care Centre".
- There will be a \$30.00 NSF fee for cheques returned, should a second cheque be returned we will require all future payments be made in cash.
- In order to prevent financial loss, parents are required to give 10 days notice of withdrawal.
- Receipts – Will be issued with each payment. Tax receipts will be issued for income tax purposes at the end of January.

Holiday's

The Centre is CLOSED on the following days:

- Labour Day
- Thanksgiving
- Remembrance Day
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day
- New Years Eve(early closure @ 12pm)
- Good Friday
- Easter Monday
- Victoria Day
- Canada Day
- Civic Holiday(August)

Christmas Policy

- The Elmsdale location will not be open over the holiday season.
- If your child needs care during the week (Dec 24-31) we will accommodate them in our Lantz Location.
- Full day rates will apply.
- If your child does not attend during this week, no fees will be charged to your account.
- January invoices will begin on January 2nd for the school group only.

Summer Policy

The Elmsdale location will be closed during the summer months of July and August. If you require care we will accommodate you at our Lantz Location.

In order to continue to operate the After School Program and meet the needs of all parents, the following has been put into place:

- Requests for summer child care and the following school year are to be given to the Director by May 1st.
- If your child is withdrawn for the months of July and August, a non – refundable **Holding fee** of \$50 per child will be required to hold your space to September 1st.
- **Fees need to be paid in FULL on or before your last day in attendance.**
- **Accounts must be paid in full by June 30th**
- If you withdraw your child and do not pay the holding fee by June 30th, your child's name will go back on the waiting list and enrollment **will not** be guaranteed for the following school year.
- Limited part- time spaces may be available during the months of July and August. These requests must be made to the Director prior to June 1st. Spaces will be allocated at the discretion of the Director.
- Every effort will be made to accommodate each family.

Late Fee Policy

- The centre closes at 5:45 pm.
- Please arrive at the centre before that time so you will have time to discuss your child's day and prepare for departure in a timely matter. children need to exit the building at closing.
- A late fee will be applied if you are late. It is the policy of Elmwood Child Care Centre to charge a late fee of \$5 for the first 10 minutes and \$5 for every 5 minutes late thereafter.
- You will be asked to fill out a late fee slip and payment is to go directly to the staff that had to remain late.
- In case of constant late departures, parents may be asked to seek alternative child care arrangements.

Extreme Weather or Power Outage Policy:

- Over the years, Elmwood Child Care Centre has always offered childcare on storm days and is dedicated to still doing so. All efforts will be made to open, however, with the extreme weather and circumstances beyond our control the centre may not be able to open.
- Parents of Before and After School children who attend on full days will be notified by phone if the centre is not able to open on these days.
- If you do not receive a phone call, the centre is open.
- If you are unsure, please call the centre at 883-1835.
- Payment is still required if centre has to be closed.
- Due to liability, the centre will not open due to power outage. If there is a power outage after the centre is open, Nova Scotia Power will be contacted to see how long before power can be restored. If power is not expected to be restored within one hour, the centre will close. All families will be notified about a cancellation by phone.
- Please have alternative care arrangements for these emergency situations.

School Suspension Policy

If a child is suspended from Elmsdale District School for any reason that child will not be allowed to attend the after school program during the suspension period.

Illness / Exclusion Policy

- The centre expects children who are ill to be kept at home. If your child becomes ill while at the After School Program, your child will be isolated and supervised until you arrange for pick-up.
- In the case of a child who has become sick during school hours, they will not be accepted in the After School Program.
- In case of an emergency such as cuts requiring stitches, suspected broken bones or head injuries, parents will be notified and depending on the severity of the injury, 911 may be called.

As stated in the Prevention of Spreading of Communicable Diseases Guidelines, children will be excluded from the centre if they have any of the following:

- Fever -38C or 101 F
- Diarrhea –defined as very loose bowel movement twice within one hour
- Vomiting
- Persistent cough
- Breathing difficulty
- Rash with fever
- Children must be well enough to participate fully in the after school program, such as outdoor play.

The Department of Community Services and Public Health Department have issued very specific procedures on this matter.

The centre is bound by these regulations

As per their directives:

- Children must be symptom free for 24 hours
- Staff are required to check children on arrival for signs of illness
- Children with symptoms that may spread disease will not be permitted to stay at the centre.
- You will be called to pick up your child

- Parents are asked to call the centre before 9:00 am stating the reason for absence and symptoms if your child is ill. Staff need to keep the reasons on file
- If your child is too ill to go to school, they will not be admitted into the after school program during the afternoon hours. Please remember to call the centre if your child will not be attending.
- Please notify the centre if your child will not be coming after school.
- When your child returns to the centre following illness, inform your child's teacher if your child is on any medication, eating needs, sleep needs or any lingering symptoms.
- A copy of Strategies for Prevention of Spreading of Communicable Disease from the Dept. of Community Services is posted on your Parent Dept. of Community Services Bulletin board. Also posted is the centre's exclusion policy.

Medication Policy

- All medicines must be prescribed by a doctor. This means a pharmacist's label must be attached to such drugs as cough medicines, decongestions, and fever control showing that your doctor had prescribed them for your child.
- No medicine will be given if it has been prescribed to another family medicine.
- No outdated medicines will be given.
- A medication form must be filled out and signed by the parent/guardian and staff. These forms are available from your child's teacher.
- Please do not leave medication in your child's bag.

Nutrition Policy

- Elmwood Child Care Centre offers a 4 week rotation menu which has been approved by a Nutritionist. Snacks and lunch are based on Canada's Food Guide and follow the standards for food and nutrition in regulated child care settings.
- The centre has to follow the standards for Food Safety when purchasing or receiving food donations from an outside source, such as a caterer or parent. The food **must be** from an establishment permitted by the **Department of Agriculture** and comply with the food and beverage nutrient criteria. All foods need to include a list of ingredients and any special instructions for preparation and storage.
- Staff are responsive to the children's cues and will provide snacks and meals outside the regular schedule as required. Also, all meals times are very relaxed and provide a wonderful time for social interactions. Staff will always sit and eat

with the children during meal times and encourage the children to serve themselves. Children are never forced to finish food that has been served and food is never withheld for inappropriate behavior.

- When medical, religious or cultural beliefs require a child to bring food from home, foods must be labeled with the child's name and refrigerated if needed.
- Staff will encourage children to respond to hunger and feelings of fullness and children are not forced to finish food that has been served.
- Staff will create a relaxing and enjoyable meal environment for the children.

A copy of the menu is posted on the bulletin board in the entrance.

Breastfeeding Policy

Elmwood Child Care is committed to providing ongoing support to breastfeeding mothers. Breastfeeding has been shown to be the superior form of infant nutrition, providing a multitude of health benefits to both infant and mother. Breastfeeding mothers, including employees, shall be provided a private and sanitary place to breastfeed their babies or express milk. A comfortable space will be provided for all nursing mothers.

The centre has information available on breastfeeding, including the names of area resources should questions or problems arise. In addition, positive promotion of breastfeeding and nutrition will be on display in the centre.

Notes of Interest

- Please call the centre if your child will not be attending before and after school. If your child does not get off the bus as scheduled, the school will be called immediately, then parents.
- Water bottles are permitted. Please label it with your child's name.
- All shoes, boots and clothing are to be labeled to prevent loss. The centre is not responsible for any lost items. A lost and found box will be available for items found.
- Electronic toys and toys from home are not allowed at the centre.
- An indoor pair of shoes is required.
- All children will be signed in and out by staff.
- Please check your child's bag regularly for notices, book orders, receipts, etc.

- **The following items of interest are posted on the DCS Bulletin Board in the entrance of the centre:** A copy of the Daycare Act and Regulations, a copy of our Parent Handbook, The license for the centre, a copy of of the centres most recent inspection by the Department of Community Services and The Department of Agriculture, a copy of our Behaviour Guidance Policy, a copy of our Menu, recent minutes from our Parent Committee Meeting and a list of the committee members. Also, notification of funding provided by the Minister of Community services.
- Copies of the daily routine and program are posted in each individual classroom

We look forward to having a great year with your child!!