



Morning Preschool Program Parent Handbook

Revised : September,2011

Elmsdale Location
583 Highway No. 2
Elmsdale, NS

883-1835

Lantz Location
1208 Highway No. 2
Lantz, NS

883-1066

Welcome

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

Elmwood Child Care Centre has been serving the community of Elmsdale and the surrounding area since 1996. The Elmsdale location expanded from Elmwood Drive to Hwy #2 in 2004 and the Lantz location opened in the late 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. 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 looks forward to having a fun and successful experience with your child in the Morning Preschool Program.

Sincerely,

Florence MacArthur
Owner / Director

Program

- Our program provides 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 are provided and meet the daily nutritional requirements of the children and dietary standards of the Nova Scotia Daycare Act and Regulations.
- We provide a safe and comfortable environment, with companions and friends, where social interactions and creative experiences can be explored by all children.

Pre-School Program Description

- The pre-school program is available each morning starting at 8:30 am to 11:30 pm .There are 24 children enrolled each morning with 2 teachers (12-1 ratio).
- Our three hour program consists of a free play time where developmentally appropriate activities are available for the preschools to actively participate in. These activities will introduce and reinforce developmental skills on an individual level.
- A snack time will be provided. Our menu is posted on the parent bulletin board in the entrance .
- A group circle time will consist of a variety of children's songs, stories, finger play, music and movement. The preschoolers will be encouraged to actively participate in discussion of the weather, calendar and our theme.
- Activity and craft time will be based on the program topic and seasonal activities. The program is also designed to be flexible to include individual and/or group feedback for activities.

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.

- 1) Adopt a positive attitude towards the children which include enjoyment of and respect for the children as individuals
- 2) Set clear , concise, fair and consistent limits
- 3) Redirect inappropriate behavior, telling a child what can be done rather than what cannot be done
- 4) Reinforce positive behavior
- 5) 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.
- 6) Staff, volunteers and care providers do not offer food to reinforce positive behaviorsStaff, volunteers and care providers do not withhold food as a consequence for inappropriate behavior
- 7) 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.

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.

Payment Policy

- Fees will be paid for those days that were agreed upon during registration. In order to prevent financial loss to the centre, space cannot be held without payment for 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.
- Payment arrangements will be as per your financial agreement executed during registration. No exceptions will be given for alternate payment. Please do not put the Director in the uncomfortable position of asking for late or overdue payments.

Cost - **\$13.00 per morning**

- Payment is STILL required if your child does not attend due to illness, vacation, storm days or holidays.
- 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. 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.

School Cancellation Policy

The Preschool Program will operate with the Elmsdale District School in Elmsdale and Maple Ridge Elementary in Lantz. **When there is no school, there is no preschool.**

- Preschool will not be offered on in-service days and over the March Break. Parents of the morning Preschool Program are **not** charged a fee if your child is scheduled to attend on an in-service day.

- There will be no Preschool Program if school is canceled due to the weather. **Please listen to your local radio station to see if there is school on storm days.**
- If schools are closed in Colchester East Hants or Chignecto Regional School Board, then there will be no Preschool. There may be a number of cancellations due to the weather and unfortunately, parents **will be** charged a fee if preschool is cancelled due to the weather. This is to maintain the budgeted operating costs of the centre.

Holidays

The Centre is **closed** on the following holidays:

**Thanksgiving,
Remembrance Day,
Good Friday,
Easter Monday & Victoria Day**

Note:

- There will be no morning preschool when school finishes for Christmas Break and it will begin again when school starts after the New Year (no fees will be charged to parents of the morning preschool program for the Christmas closure).
- There will also be no Morning Preschool during the week of March Break.
- No fees will be charged for this week.

Power Outage Policy

- Due to liability, the centre will not open if there is no power.
- If there is a power outage before the centre is open, Nova Scotia Power will be contacted to see how long before power can be restored.
- If power is not going to be restored within one hour, the centre will not open for that day.
- All families will be notified about a cancellation due to a power outage by phone. To prevent financial loss to the centre, fees will be charged in the unforeseen event of a power outage.

Medication Policy

- All medicines must be prescribed by your child's 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 member.
- No outdated medicines will be given.
- A medication form must be filled out and signed by the parent/carer and staff. These forms are available from your child's teacher.
- Please do not leave medication in your child's bag. Medication is stored in a locked area out of reach of the children.

Illness/ Exclusion Policy

The centre expects children who are ill to be kept at home.

- If your child becomes ill while at daycare, your child will be isolated and supervised until you arrange for pick-up.
- 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 daily 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 is required to keep a record of illness on their attendance sheets.
- 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 Department of Community Bulletin Board. Also posted is the centre's exclusion policy.

Inclusion Policy

Elmwood Child Care Centre has developed an Inclusion Policy. This policy is posted on the Department of Community Services Bulletin Board located in the main entrance.

Nutrition Policy

- Elmwood Child Care Centre offers a 4 week rotation menu which has been approved by a Nutritionist. Snacks are based on Canada's Food Guide. A Morning Snack is offered each day. A copy of the menu is posted in each classroom.
- When the centre purchases or receives donations of food or beverage from an outside source, such as a caterer or parent, the food MUST be from an establishment permitted by the dept. of Agriculture and comply with the Food and Beverage Nutrient Criteria. The centre must ensure that the product includes a list of ingredients and any special preparation , storage or serving instructions are clearly labeled.
- 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 are responsive to the children's cues around hunger and provide snacks and meals outside of the regular schedule as required.
- Staff will create a relaxing and enjoyable meal environment for the children.

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.

Staff Concern

- In cases of any concern from parents about any staff member the parents will discuss the matter directly with the Director.
- If the concern continues, a meeting will then be set up among the parents, staff and director.

Staff of Elmwood Child Care

Owner /Director

The Director manages all aspects of the Centre, executing the Policies of the Elmwood Child Care Centre.

- The Director is responsible for the hiring, supervision, evaluation and dismissal of staff.
- The Director is responsible for managing all financial aspects of the centre, including invoicing parents for monthly fees.
- The Director is responsible for ensuring that the Centre conforms to all licensing requirements as established by the Nova Scotia Department of Community Services.
- The Director is responsible for supervising and monitoring classroom programs.
- The Director represents Elmwood Child Care Centre at professional, advocacy and other meetings within the community

Assistant Directors

- Each location has an Assistant Director
- The Assistant Director is to undertake such other duties and responsibilities of the Director in her absence
- The Assistant Director is to maintain an effective working relationship with Director and staff
- The Assistant Director is to support and direct staff as agreed by the Director
- The Assistant Director also works in the Morning Preschool/After School Program as an Early Childhood Educator
- The Assistant Director represents Elmwood Child Care Centre at professional, advocacy and other meetings within the community.

Teaching staff

- The teaching staff is responsible for the day-to-day education and care of the children.
- The teaching staff is responsible for planning and implementing activities that are developmentally appropriate and are based on the needs and/or interests of the children, setting realistic behavior expectations for each child, and maintaining a safe and healthy environment.
- The teaching staff complete semi-annual Progress Reports(Humanics National Child Assessment Forms) for each child and facilitate Parent/Teacher meetings for the purpose of discussing the children's development.(held each May)

- All permanent teaching staff is trained in Early Childhood Education or Equilivant and maintains a valid First Aid/CPR certificate.

Support Staff

- The centre employs a part time cook .The cook is responsible for preparation of lunch and snack foods, in accordance with Centre policies. The cook is required to maintain the Food-Handlers course, as recommended by the provincial Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, the government body which inspects and licenses our food services.
- The Centre employs a part-time bookkeeper who works with the Director on matters related to payroll, the monthly, quarterly and year-end financial statements, monthly parent fee invoices and annual receipts, and accounts payable.
- The Centre employs an evening cleaner to maintain the cleanliness at both locations
- The Centre maintains a list of substitute teachers to work in the classrooms in the event of a staff absence.
- The centre employs support teachers (funded by the Dept. of Community Services) to provide support to the classroom teachers.
- Elmwood Child Care Centre is also pleased to support the field of Early Childhood Education by providing practicum opportunities for Student teachers.
- Any new students coming to the centre will be introduced in your monthly newsletter.

Notes of Interest

- Please call the centre if your child will not be attending preschool.
- 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.
- Please ensure your child had comfortable clothing in which she/he can participate freely in all aspects of the program. Every effort is made to protect your child's clothing; however, sometimes clothing becomes soiled, lost or misplaced. Please label your child's clothing and do not wear any "good clothes" that may get ruined from glue or paint.
- A complete change of clothes and indoor shoes is needed each day. They can be brought daily in a backpack. If your child has an accident, soiled clothes will be sent home in a plastic bag in their backpack.
- All children will be signed in and out by staff.
- Please check your child's can regularly for notices, book orders, receipts, etc.

- Each child will receive a monthly calendar to keep you informed on the Preschool Program. Please pay close attention to your child's days in case preschool is cancelled due to a school in-service day.
- **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.
- You can order children's books from the monthly Book Orders offered by Scholastic Canada. They offer books at a very reasonable price and the centre receives bonus coupons to purchase books and toys for the centre. Cash payments only.
- Each Preschool Program will have a Christmas party in December and a year end Graduation in June. Notices on these events will be in the children's monthly newsletter.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO PROVIDING YOU WITH A QUALITY PRESCHOOL PROGRAM!