

Noah's Ark Children's Centre



Parent Handbook

Noah's Ark Children's Centre
Parent Handbook–Revised January 2007

[This handbook supercedes all previously issued handbooks and may be changed without notice]

PHILOSOPHY AND PROGRAM STATEMENT

Noah's Ark Children's Centre strives to provide loving care with a Christian emphasis for children in our community.

Noah's Ark Children's Centre believes that each child is a creation of God. We offer children a warm, loving, positive environment appropriate to his or her individual level of development. Through play and learning experiences, we nurture and stimulate the child's needs: physically, emotionally, intellectually, socially, and spiritually.

Noah's Ark Children's Centre is a non-profit organization operating as a ministry of Mountain View Christian Church. A church and parent board of directors run the centre. The centre is licenced by the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services and is inspected annually.

Noah's Ark Children's Centre is a Christian-based centre and teaches the children of Jesus through Bible stories and activities. Christian values are modelled by the staff.

At Noah's Ark Children's Centre we strive to build a partnership with families, schools, students and community agencies to build a dynamic team that is committed to excellence.

Welcome to Noah's Ark!

ORIENTATION

Parents shall tour the centre, by appointment, before their child is enrolled. During the tour, parents can visit classrooms, staff, and view the menus and program plans. The pre-enrollment visit is a good opportunity to ask questions and raise concerns. After the tour, the parents will be given a registration package and a quick overview of its contents. It is optional for parents to bring their child with them during the tour but the centre encourages the child to come visit so that he or she will be somewhat familiar with the surroundings and staff if they should enrol. The centre also encourages a play visit. This visit allows the child to participate in the program which helps ease the transition to daycare.

REGISTRATION PROCEDURE

If a parent is interested in enrolling their child into the centre they are given a registration package. This package includes a registration form, a financial terms agreement, a brief health record form, a trip form and an immunization record sheet. There is a \$15.00 registration fee. All the above forms, the registration fee, and the first week's fee (cash payment) are due the first day the child begins at the centre. A child cannot be enrolled without these items.

There is a four-week evaluation period once a child enrolls. If for any reason the parent or staff does not feel this is an appropriate centre for the child, the director, parent, and teacher will meet to discuss it. Either the director or the parent may terminate the enrolment at this time without the usual two week notice.

If the child has special needs, the parent shall give the centre all pertinent information so the child has the best possible program. If the child needs a resource teacher or a support facilitator, the centre shall see to it that this is in place before the child attends the centre.

AVAILABLE PROGRAMS

| Program Name | Age | Teacher-Child Ratio¹ | Hours of Operation |
|--|----------------------------|--|---------------------------|
| Toddler | 18-30 months | 1:5 | 7:30 – 5:30 |
| Preschool | 30 months – 5 years | 1:8 | 7:00 – 5:45 |
| School Age | 6 – 12 years | 1:15 | 7:00 – 5:45 |
| Each child may attend the centre <i>no more than 9 hours per day.</i> | | | |

Program Information

Daily program plans, themes and calendars shall be posted on the bulletin board near your child's classroom. Toy donations which fit the program or theme and are in good condition are welcome, as this enhances the children's learning and play.

Toddler Program

Parents of children in the Toddler Program shall supply the following:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| diaper bag | changes of clothes |
| diapers & pull-ups (only if they open on the sides) | bottles |
| diaper cream | soothers |
| | favourite sleep toy or blanket |

All of these items must be labelled with the child's name. Bottles will be sent home each night. The centre does not clean and sanitise bottles or soothers.

Parents of toddlers must arrive in enough time to make certain the child's outerwear is off and the child is settled. Please allow enough time at the end of the day to dress your toddler for the trip home.

Preschool Program

Each child should bring their belongings in their own backpack. They should also bring an extra set of clothing (more than one set if the child is toilet-training), and appropriate clothing for the weather. Please label your child's clothes with their name. Children in preschool program may bring a small soft toy or blanket that they may use during sleep time. Please leave all other toys at home.

¹Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services Requirements

School Age Program

There will be an emphasis on outdoor and gross motor activities as well as an increasing level of responsibility and independence for the children. There are plenty of opportunities for excursions, small groups, crafts, movies, outdoor time, homework, and anything that should be of interest to the school age children. On trip days and school breaks, parents of children in the school age group must send a packed lunch from home.

Menus, Allergies and Food Restrictions

Menus are posted on the wall next to the kitchen door. Children are encouraged to try foods that are offered but are not required to eat them. If staff find that the child's appetite has changed or there are problems with eating, the staff will inform the parent. A list of children's allergy and food restrictions are posted in the kitchen and in each classroom. Allergies that require special food will be discussed with staff. It is the parent's responsibility to buy the foods necessary if it is a daily need.

FIELD TRIPS AND OFF SITE ACTIVITIES

Parents will be notified of field trips by newsletter, postings on the classroom doors and calendars. Parents may volunteer on some trips and may need to pay an entrance fee when they volunteer.

In the registration package, there is a trip form which must be filled out completely, signed and returned with the registration package. This form goes with the child's teacher on any off-premise trip they take. Please be sure that the centre has all up to date personal information for your child should an emergency occur.

Depending on the type of trip planned, the class will use the daycare van or, if it is a trip for the entire centre, a Laidlaw school bus will be rented.

ARRIVAL TO THE CENTRE

Children must be at the centre by 9:30 AM. Children will be brought into the classroom by the parent. At this time, the parent shall inform the staff of any changes that day in the child's pick up or departure, medication, etc. These changes will be written in the communication book. Parents will take their child to their cubby, help with their outerwear, hang up their backpack, put on their shoes, etc. A phone call is expected if the child will be late or arriving after the 9:30 am cut-off time, otherwise he/she will not be allowed to stay.

DEPARTURE AND RELEASE OF CHILDREN FROM PROGRAM

Parents must come into the centre or playground to pick up their child. It is the parent's responsibility to dress their child to leave. Staff will not allow a child to leave without a parent escort. If a staff member has not met the parents they will ask for picture identification to ensure they have the correct adult. Staff will not lift a toddler to the parent over the fence.

On the registration form, there is a section which specifies to whom the staff may release a child. When an adult arrives to pick up the child, staff will look for the name on the release form, request identification and then release the child. If a person not on the list arrives to pick up a

child, staff will attempt to call the parent for confirmation. If staff is unable to reach a parent, the child will not be released.

Parking is in the rear parking lot only. The centre asks that you turn your car off at arrival and departure times. Please do not park in the space marked for the centre's van. All doors to the building are locked except playground doors.

Arrival and Departure Points

Toddlers are to enter the centre through the playground, and into the building via the wooden wheelchair ramp.

Preschool children are to enter through the playground and up the concrete ramp. Once inside, they are to go to the basement. Their cubbies are located in the basement classroom.

School age children will exit the program through the playground.

With the exception of emergencies, all children will exit the building through the playground.

LATE PICK UP

The centre closes at 5:45 pm. There is a late charge of **\$5.00** every **5 minutes** a parent is late, until 6 pm, when the late charge increases to **\$15.00** for every 5 minutes. The money will be given directly to the staff working by the next evening. These amounts are not tax-deductable and receipts will not be issued.

If a parent is extremely late and no phone call is received, the staff will follow this protocol: Parents will be charged late fees up to 7:30 pm.

At 6 pm parents will be phoned at work or at home, including cell phones, if available. Then all other emergency phone numbers will be tried to request the child be picked up. The supervisor will be notified and will relieve the staff if requested.

If no one is reached by 7 pm, or no one is available to pick up the child, then the centre will phone the Children's Aid Society. Staff will then notify the supervisor of what action was taken. All documents of phone calls, names, numbers as well as parents address, both home and work will be given to CAS. A message on the parent's phone and/or a note on the centre door will be left by the worker. Once CAS has the child in custody, Noah's Ark Children's Centre staff will no longer be responsible for the child. Parents will at that time have to contact the Children's Aid Society.

FEE PAYMENTS

Fees are due each week, cheque or cash, the first day of the week that the child is at the centre. Parents may pay by postdated cheques for Monday of each week or the first day of the week the child is attending. Debit cards and Visa are not accepted. For cash payments, staff shall write a receipt and place the payment in the cash box in the classroom. A written receipt is only given for cash payments. A final tax receipt will be issued at the end of the year.

Rates

| Program Name | Age | Full Day | Part Day ² | Full Week |
|------------------------------------|---|----------|---|-----------|
| Toddler | 18–30 months | \$40 | \$28 | \$200 |
| Preschool (Juniors and Seniors) | 30 months – 5 years | \$30 | \$20 | \$150 |
| School Age | grade 1 – age 12 years | \$23 | Before School: \$6 After School: \$11.50 After full day kindergarten: \$12 | \$115 |
| Van Rides | \$3.75 per ride (to be paid one week in advance). When three children from the same family ride the van, the 3 rd child is free if the total of the weekly rides is 20 or more, and all children attend the same school. | | | |

Van fees are due a week ahead of time. Van fees will be the same each week. Parents will be charged for all normally occurring rides even if the child does not ride. If parents need transportation when school starts, they must let the centre know as soon as possible which school the child will be attending so the driver is able to make a schedule. The centre will do its best at accommodating as many as possible. There are a limited number of schools the van can get to within the allotted time. If a parent is not particular about whether the child attends a.m. or p.m. kindergarten, it may be easier to fit the child into the schedule. There are conflicts which can sometimes be solved by working with the school. If the school is willing to let the child come or go 5 minutes earlier or later than their appointed time it can make the difference needed. However, the school will need parental consent for this to occur.

If for any reason, a child will not be riding the van on a day they normally would be, the centre's staff needs to be made aware of that well in advance so they can inform the driver. If the driver goes to pick up the child and the centre has not been notified, parents will be charged twice for the ride. Waiting and phoning about the child not there means that the driver is late for all the other schools he/she goes to that day.

SCHOOL AGE VAN

All children going on the van must be at the centre on time for the van. If there are behaviour issues on the van and repeated problems, termination of van services will result.

²Maximum four hours. Includes Lunch. Half-day programs run from 8 - 12 pm or 8:30 to 12:30 pm only.

FEE PAYMENT POLICY RELATING TO ILLNESS

There is no reduction in fees for days that the child may be absent. Parents will pay for all scheduled days. This is the policy for van rides as well.

STATUTORY HOLIDAYS

The centre is closed for the following statutory holidays. Fees (including van fees) are still charged for these days.

| | | | |
|----------------|---------------|---------------|------------------|
| New Year's Day | Good Friday | Easter Monday | Victoria Day |
| Canada Day | Civic Holiday | Labour Day | Thanksgiving Day |
| Christmas Day | Boxing Day | | |

FEE PAYMENT POLICY RELATING TO VACATION

Once a child has attended the centre for three full months, parents are entitled to two weeks holidays for which fees do not need to be paid. Two weeks are allowed per year, and the year is counted from the date of enrolment. If a parent decides to take more than two weeks, they are responsible to pay for those weeks.

WITHDRAWALS FROM THE PROGRAM

A two week written notice must be given when parents are planning to withdraw their child from the program. Parents who are subsidised must give two weeks notice in writing to the centre and also notify their subsidy worker of the child's withdrawal date. Parents who withdraw their child without notice shall be charged for two weeks' fees.

MEDICATION AND ILLNESS

The staff shall administer medicine only as needed. The centre prefers prescription medicine in the original container with the child's name on it. If it is an over-the-counter medication staff reserves the right not to administer it. The medication must be new and not past the expiry date. This includes inhalers. Please remember if your child is too sick to participate in the program and is contagious, please do not bring him/her to the centre.

The parent shall fill out a medication form and indicate the days needed. This shall be posted on the back of the kitchen door or on the medicine cabinet. The staff who administered the medication shall sign the form daily.

The following rules are the sick policy of the centre and shall be followed accordingly. The rules are implemented for the safety of the child and the safety of all children in the centre.

The child will stay home for a minimum of twenty-four hours after the last symptom when:

- The child has a fever
- The child has diarrhea or vomits

Please do not send the child back until the illness has completely stopped and the child has not had symptoms for at least one day. This may take longer than two days.

Please use your discretion when your child has the following symptoms:

- Constant runny, green discharge from the nose
- Child appears ill or lethargic, complains of headache or stomach ache

If a child has a communicable illness or condition, ie Chicken Pox, lice, etc, the parent must notify the centre immediately. The centre will the notify other parents that a communicable condition has been found in a child attending the centre. Parents and the centre will follow the rules of the Public Health Department.

If a child becomes ill while at the centre, the parents will be called to pick up the child immediately. Emergency numbers shall be contacted if parents do not respond within one hour of a phone call. If the child is not well before he/she arrives at the centre, we ask that you please find alternate care for that day.

Parents shall give the teacher, on a written note, the day, month and date of any new immunization needles.

EMERGENCY CLOSURES

If the centre must close due to mechanical failure, the supervisor and staff will attempt to notify parents before 7:30 am. In the event of an emergency during the day where the children need to leave the building, the children and staff will walk to Ridgemount School on Hester Street. Parents shall be called from the school to pick up the child.

SNOW DAY CLOSURES

If the Board of Education is not open the centre shall be closed. If the Board of Education is open but not offering transportation, the centre van shall not offer transportation.

In the event of a closure, please tune in to CHML 900, or CH News (channel 11) for closure announcements.

If the school board closes due to a snowstorm during the day, it will be the responsibility of the school age parents to pick up their child from the school. The centre's van will not be running. It is the parent's responsibility to make sure the centre has current phone numbers and emergency contacts.

GUIDING CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOUR

At Noah's Ark Children's Centre, children will be disciplined in a positive manner at a level that is appropriate to their age level and to their actions, in order to promote self-discipline, ensure the health, safety, and respect for the rights of others. Spanking and other forms of corporal punishment are not permitted.

Each child is unique, and once staff learn how the child deals with situations, the staff will have a better idea of how the child can learn. If problem behaviour continues, staff will discuss it with the parent(s) and together form a plan of action to help the child.

Regular staff intervention will be in the form of praise, hugging, encouraging comments and reminders to children showing acceptable behaviour. This will be shown on a frequent level.

Staff will use kind, supportive voices, model acceptable behaviour, and not discuss the children's misbehaviour in front of him/her. Shortly after misbehaviour, the staff member will find an opportunity to praise a child for an acceptable behaviour.

Young children will be redirected and shown how to take turns, request items and be gentle with other children. This will take time and the teacher will frequently talk to the parent to see how they work with the child at home.

School age children who misbehave will be warned about their behaviour. At each warning the staff will speak to the child about what is happening and what words or actions need to be done. Continued defiance and misbehaviour can result in suspension from the program.

A time out will be used as a last measure. Time out will last no longer than three minutes. A time out will be used if a child repeats an undesired behaviour shortly after being warned, or if the child is unable to control his/her temper and needs to be away from others for the safety of all. The teacher will ask the child each time if he/she are ready to talk about what just occurred. Once the child is calm, the teacher, in a calm and positive manner will discuss why the behaviour was not acceptable and what the child can do or say next time the situation occurs.

If, for any reason, a child physically harms a teacher whether it be hitting, biting, slapping, kicking, etc, the child will be suspended from the centre for one day for the first offence. If it occurs a second time, he/she will be suspended for two days. Upon a third time, the supervisor will speak to the parent(s) and the child will be released from the centre. There will be no exceptions and no tolerance for violent behaviour.

SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

Any staff member or person who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been abused or neglected must report the suspected abuse to the appropriate Children's Aid Society (CAS). It must be reported to CAS by the staff member on the day the suspicion is noticed. The supervisor will also be notified of the action taken. The Children's Aid Society will commence an investigation and will contact the family, usually within 24 hours. CAS will usually ask the teacher who reported the suspicion not to inform the family that a report has been made.

THE PARENT

There are many ways a parent can become a part of their child's centre even if he/she works all day. This is the child's centre and the centre wants the parent to feel that they have a role in it as well.

The centre needs parents on Parent Advisory and Fundraising committees. The more people helping means more things happen at the centre. The centre may need parents to volunteer on trips. If it cannot be the parent, the centre welcomes aunts, uncles, and grandparents. This keeps

the family involved. Each month, the classes have themes which they explore. Many parents have special talents whether at their jobs, creatively, musically, or just having items they could donate or loan to increase the children's learning of a theme.

Each year the centre evaluates the classrooms and a wish list of many items, often household items are requested. Parents can help just by donating a few items.

The centre asks that parents adhere to the policies and procedures of the centre. Parents and others who intend to volunteer must provide a police record check. The police department charges for this service, but a reduced-rate volunteer check is available if you provide a letter from the centre. Please ask the director for more information.

PARENT EDUCATION

There is a parent information board located in the hallway outside the classroom for parents, both seasonal and ongoing. There are constantly new items being added for neighbourhood events as well as parent groups in the region. There are also information pamphlets posted that may be of interest to parents, newspaper clippings, inspirational thoughts, health issues, etc.

CONCERNS

If a parent has concerns regarding their child, they should feel free to speak to their child's teacher. If they wish to do this in private, they should let the teacher know and he/she will arrange a date to meet privately in the centre.

If a parent has concerns regarding a staff member or anything regarding the centre, they should phone the supervisor and arrange a time for all to speak privately or they may choose to phone and discuss the issue with the director.

If a parent has concerns about finances, they should let the staff know and he/she will have the bookkeeper phone them at a convenient time. The bookkeeper is part-time and not always available for drop in visits. Parents may also leave a note for the bookkeeper in the payment box. Staff cannot answer any questions with regards to a parent's account.

NEW STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Parents will be notified of any new persons hired at the centre. New staff will be identified in the newsletter and/or posted on the classroom door. Parents need to know that the new person could be male or female and that they have gone through an orientation before entering the classroom. Volunteers and students are not permitted to take children out of the classroom, or away from the centre; nor are they alone with children at any time.

New staff (paid, volunteer, interns, and co-op students) receive orientation which covers the following:

Philosophy of the Centre
Review of Current Criminal Record Check

Job Descriptions
Behaviour Management

Agreement of Confidentiality
Fire Drill Procedures
Health & Sanitary Procedures
Daily Health Assessments

Accident/incident Reports
Playground Policies
Suspected Child Abuse
Serious Occurrence Procedures

Staff will only be permitted to work after the above items have been discussed and understood.

Welcome to Noah's Ark Children's Centre

We hope that your questions have been answered. If you have any further questions or comments please contact us at one of the numbers below:

Contact Numbers

Daycare Centre: 905-389-2204

Email: info@noahskids.ca

Website: www.noahskids.ca