

HALFMOON BAY CHILD CARE CENTRE

Learning through Play



PARENT HANDBOOK

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Halfmoon Bay Childcare Centre Society

The Halfmoon Bay Childcare Centre Society was established in 1989. Our mission is to provide quality, affordable, flexible childcare for our community.

A volunteer board of directors made up of the parents governs our society. In collaboration with the childcare staff, the board reviews the purpose and direction of the program, fulfills all legal requirements of the society, establishes and reviews policies and procedures of the program and manages the finances of the program. The board and staff meet once a month during the school year (no meetings in July and August) to do the work of the society.

We hold an Annual General Meeting yearly to give our reports and elect new officers if necessary. All families are required to send one representative to the AGM in October.

Philosophy Statement

It is our belief that every child is a unique individual, who develops at his or her own rate with individual needs that must be respected and met.

We provide high quality care for children by offering a safe, creative, developmentally challenging, and nurturing environment, which will stimulate the physical, emotional, social and intellectual growth of each child.

We base our programming on the interests of the children and the teachers as we learn together, challenge our ideas and understanding about the world around us. We prioritize the development of relationships with strong social and interpersonal skills as we investigate with natural and inventive materials, and encourage development of large and small while keeping in mind that it is through play that children learn.

We believe in respect, inclusion, dignity and safety for all of the children, families and staff in our centre. We develop these beliefs through caring, meaningful relationships and open communication and support them with our policies.

Staff

Our teaching staff are all highly qualified educators with extensive experience working with children. They are all certified ECE educators or ECE assistants with valid First Aid Certification and most have Food Safe Certification as well.

Participation Policy

As with all non-profit organizations, we rely on volunteers and our community to help our centre to be the best that it can be for all the children to facilitate and enrich their learning experiences. The board itself is made up of volunteers from the parent population and we require an active board to stay operational. It's a great way to get involved and be a part of the decisions that happen at the centre.

Occasionally, we will send out requests for volunteers to help with specific tasks and greatly appreciate any help you can provide.

- **One member from each family is required to attend the Annual General Meeting in October** (exact date will be provided in the fall and childcare can be provided for those who need it upon request)

All families will sign an agreement with the manager of the HMB Childcare Centre acknowledging that they have read and accept the parent handbook.

Agreements must be handed in with the postdated cheques for the whole school year (Sept.-June) on the first day of the child's enrollment or during registration.

Days and Hours of Operation

The childcare centre is open from September - June for the regular season

8:00am - 5:45pm

We are open during Spring Break and when the Elementary schools have Pro-D days.

Summer Fun runs for 6 weeks in in the summer over July and the first half of August. Summer Hours are usually 8am- 5:45pm but are subject to change.

Centre Closures

The centre will be closed for all Stat Holidays and will close with the school for Winter Break in December. We close for the last two weeks in August every year just after the summer fun program.

We will also be closed for two separate staff training days during the year to attend conferences together and meet our licensing training requirements. Families affected will be notified well in advance and offered an alternative day.

Daily Programming

Our program is for 3 -5 year olds (30 month old children can attend when space is available)

8:00 am Centre opens and children engage in free play - choice of art, water play, puzzles, play dough, table & floor toys, etc.

9:30 am Clean-up and Circle-time

10:15 am Morning Snack followed by Quiet Time

11:15 am Outside Time

12:15 pm Lunch Time

12:45 pm Quiet Time and quiet activities

1:30 pm Outside and Afternoon activities

3:00 pm Circle Time & Snack

3:30 pm Small group activities & Outside time

***5:45 pm** Daycare Program ends and centre closes

*Please be on time for your pick-up time as there is a \$1/min late fee

Our daily program follows a basic routine that offers both structured and unstructured activities throughout the day. The program is kept flexible enough to meet the needs of the individual as well as the group. We offer a wide variety of creative learning experiences in both inside and outside classroom settings based on the interests of the group in our centre. Some of the areas of exploration include nature, music, story telling and writing, movement, construction, science, puzzles and logic, cooking, construction and dramatic play.

Arrival and Departure

When you arrive, you are required to sign your child in on the sign in board. Please take this opportunity to let the teachers know anything that will help set your child up for a successful day. Please contact the centre if your child will be coming in late or will be absent.

At pick -up you are required to sign out on the same board. Please check-in with the teachers about your child's day and please be on time.

Late Pick-Up Policy

Please note that families who are picking up their children late will be charged **\$1/minute for every minute they are past their scheduled pick-up time.**

The staff will hand any late parent a form that indicates how many minutes late the families are and ask the parent to sign the form. We have to pay overtime when families are late and it is a cost we cannot afford.

In the event that a parent cannot be contacted at closing time, and staff have not received a phone call, we will begin contacting the emergency numbers that have been provided. If both the parents and emergency contacts cannot be reached after 60 minutes, our last resort will be to contact Child and Family Services to pick up the child. *This is a licensing requirement.*

Guidance Policy

The physical and emotional well being of each child is of paramount importance. The staff use positive guidance techniques to help the children manage their emotions, learn acceptable limits and acquire the skills necessary for healthy group living.

It is important to us that the children be allowed to learn the skills they need to resolve conflicts in socially acceptable ways, to the child's own satisfaction, and without loss of dignity. We wish to facilitate the child's development of self-control, self-confidence, and ultimately self-discipline. To this end we actively encourage verbal expression of feelings and assertion of felt needs. Hitting, biting and other forms of physical, emotional and verbal abuse are not permitted.

Nutrition Policy

The children need to bring enough food in their lunch kits for morning snack, lunch and afternoon snack (if applicable).

We encourage parents to provide their children with meals and snacks that are wholesome and nutritious, as this will allow the child the freedom to choose what to eat and when. This also helps to foster a sense of independence and encourages healthy eating habits. If a child runs out of food we will supply crackers or another health snack and will let the parents know that more food may be necessary.

A child's energy level is dependent on the food that they eat, and that regular meals and snacks are important for optimal health. We provide filtered water whenever needed. We respectfully ask parents to please refrain from sending sugary treats to daycare. If parents really think that their child needs a sweet treat, we ask them to save it for home or for the car ride home.

Health Policy

Children with the following symptoms need to be kept at home.

- Fever
- Undiagnosed rash
- Runny Infectious Mucus
- Chronic or persistent coughing or sneezing
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- Sore throat
- Communicable or contagious condition (i.e.. Chickenpox, pink eye, ring worm)

Please keep in mind that it is **24hrs after the last incident of fever, and 48hrs after the last bout of vomiting and/or diarrhea before your child can come back to school.**

If a child contracts a communicable disease, we ask parents to please notify the centre staff as soon as possible so the other families (and if necessary the Public Health Nurse) can be alerted. A doctor's written health clearance may be required before a child returns following a communicable illness.

If a child arrives in the program with signs of illness, a staff member will contact the parent to come and pick him or her up. If the parent cannot be reached, staff will then call the emergency number on the consent form, so we ask that parent's make sure that each contact person is aware of this procedure.

Please note: that children who are not well enough to participate in all program activities, both indoor and outdoor, should be kept at home.

If a child is on medication, only current prescription drugs will be administered and only from the original bottle or tube with the instructions from the physician. These medications must be handed to staff on arrival, and will be kept refrigerated in a childproof container and a medication form needs to be filled out before staff can administer any medication.

Outside/Physical Activity and Screen Time

In accordance with the standards of practice and recommended physical activity guidelines, we are outside engaged in physical activity for at least 2 hours a day including hiking in the forest, riding bicycles and tricycles, and playing teacher led games to move our bodies. Please make sure that your child has weather appropriate shoes/boots and clothing. We also engage in lots of physical activity indoors throughout our days including dancing, yoga, climbing, obstacle courses, and action songs and games.

The recommended amount of screen time for children 3-5 is less than 30mins a day, so in accordance with this, we do not provide any screen time throughout the day at the centre.

What Your Child Needs to Bring Daily

Each day is spent participating in a variety of art and play activities both indoors and out. Children should wear washable, comfortable clothing appropriate for the weather. We ask parents to please send the following along with your child each day.

- 2 changes of clothing including shirt, pants, underpants, socks and sweater.
- Appropriate outdoor clothing, as we like to try to go outside rain or shine.
- Slippers or indoor shoes
- Disposable diapers (if necessary).
- Earthquake package: A large ziplock bag with a change of clothes, a small comfort toy and fruit leather type of food that your child likes.
- While children are toilet training, please be sure to send in three or four pairs of training pants (or pull-ups/diaper), pants/shorts and socks each day.
- In the winter, please ensure that your child has a hat, mitts and warm outer clothing.
- In summer, please send a sunhat, bathing suit, towel, sunscreen, and life jacket for beach trips (we will notify in advance) if they have one.

We would like to ask that parents encourage their children not to bring toys from home.

Often these toys go missing throughout the course of the day and at pick-up time the child is quite upset and doesn't want to leave without their special toys. We have found that it is best that these toys remain at home, or in the car for the ride home.

If a child does, however, have a very special cuddly toy, blanket, etc. that might ease with difficult transitions or that they need at naptime, the staff encourages the parents to send it along to keep in their bag until needed.

Getting Prepared

Staying positive:

Say encouraging things about coming to the centre without overselling the experience or using it as a threat. Avoid framing the experience as something that the child "only" has to do for a certain period of time before you come back. Remember that each child is going to react in his or her unique way to the new experience and if we all work together to frame this new adventure as the exciting one that it is, the transition is more graceful.

After daycare begins:

Be prepared for changes in your child's behaviour. New behaviours are common, such as; needing more rest, disturbed sleep, temper tantrums, or regressing to the habits of a younger child. It is common for a child to have an occasional bathroom accident when new to a group centre because they are so busy playing and may be reluctant to try a new bathroom. This will pass so don't worry and throw in extra clothes if your child is new to toileting.

How to encourage your child:

Be loving and supportive on the first few days of daycare. It is normal for your child to stand on the sidelines, refuse to give or take turns, cry or cling to you when you try to leave. If you find the behaviour troubling, speak with the teacher. We are all working together to give your child a confident, enjoyable start to school.

Appear calm and unconcerned, even if you do not feel this way. Help your child feel secure and comfortable by returning for him or her on time. It is often much more difficult as a parent to leave than for the child to stay. We never leave a child in distress and if we have tried everything to console a child and nothing has worked, we will phone and work with you on a game plan to meet your child's needs.

Communication

We value an open flow of communication between the families and the teaching staff. The teachers will often share stories about your child and their day with you at drop-off or at pick-up time in an effort to involve you in the community of learning at the centre. Please feel free to share any concerns or anecdotes with us as well.

Email is the primary method of communication for important messages. Please check and read any emails that are sent out. Please be sure to check your email the night before your child attends or on snowy days and keep us updated on any changes in email (and other numbers/address details) as email will be our first form of communication about closures and illness.

Regular Attendance

Our program fees are charged on a **full day** basis.

Fees are calculated by the space you book for your child and must be paid in full, regardless of sickness or days missed. You are paying for their spot in the program whether the child is in attendance or not.

Reimbursements, credits and make-up days will not be issued in such cases of illness, family holidays or appointments. Reimbursements, credits and make-up days will not be issued for circumstances such as power outages or inclement weather.

Change in Regular Attendance: If at some point during the year, you need to change your child's regular attendance schedule, new post dated checks will be required upon confirmation of your new schedule. **A month notice is required.** We cannot swap days to accommodate missed days. A change in attendance refers to adding new or removing existing days from your child's attendance.

Billing

Fees are due the first day of each month and post-dated cheques for September-June are required upon registration. Deposits will be made by the 6th of each month.

Cheques should be made payable to Halfmoon Bay Childcare Centre Society or HMBCCS, **dated the first day of each month.** Please also write the month in the memo section at the bottom of the cheque. **There's a \$20.00 charge on all N.S.F. cheques.**

If you are unable to provide cheques and would like to **pay by e-transfer**, please e-transfer the full months fees no later than the 6th of each month to

hmbchildcarecentre@gmail.com

password question: what is my child's name? Answer: (your child's name)

The Summer Program is billed separately for the 6-week period

Annual Membership

As a non-profit society, we are required to charge a minimum membership fee per year. Membership is \$5.00 per family per year collected in September each year. Families registering after Sept. will pay fees along with their registration.

Registration Fees

A registration fee is required for all new children. Registration fees are charged to cover enrolment procedures, update information, scheduling, orientation information and part of the printing cost for the year. All registration fees are non-refundable.

Registration fee for 1 child in the program: \$15 Family registration rate for 2 or more children: \$25.00

Drop -in Fees

Drop-in fees are due at sign-in on the day of the drop-in day or ahead of time. Drop-in spaces are available upon request when spaces are available.

Unpaid Program Fees

Outstanding fees must be paid within 60 days of the first of the month. If payment is not received within this time frame, alternative childcare arrangements must be made.

Families will not be able to use the services provided by Halfmoon Bay Childcare Centre until their accounts are up to date.

We recognize the challenges that arise in families. Please speak to the manager of the centre if strenuous circumstances arise.

Repayment of Pre-paid Fees

We require one-month notice for suspension or cancellation of fees due to withdrawal from the program.

Subsidy

BC Child Care Subsidy is income tested and available to all BC families who are eligible based on their income. Special needs subsidy is geared to assist families whose children require extra support.

When families receive a subsidy they are responsible for:

- Having their subsidy in place before they start into our programs.
- Paying the difference between the program fees and the subsidy rate.
- Keeping track of when their subsidy expires.
- Renewing their subsidy when it expires.

Families are responsible for the program fees. If subsidy payments are not paid for any reason, families will be required to pay the full amount.

Daycare Program Fees

Annual membership fee of **\$5.00** is due each **September**

Registration fee of **\$15.00** is due when you register with your paperwork.

A **\$200.00** deposit is also due after a visit and registration paperwork is complete to secure your spot. It will go towards your June fees.

The summer program is registered, secured with a deposit, and paid for separately in the spring. A \$200 deposit is required for summer registration separately at the time of sign up for the summer each year.

*** Hours 8am-5:45 pm ***

\$46 per day

Full Time monthly amounts

1 day	\$184
2 days	\$368
3 days	\$552
4 days	\$736
5 days	\$920

Enrollment and Waiting List Policy

The Halfmoon Bay Childcare Centre Society's daycare maintains a waiting list for children. When there are vacancies, new children will be accepted.

Priority for admission and readmission are as follows:

1. Children currently enrolled part-time and increasing to full-time.
2. Siblings of children already enrolled.
3. Children who want re-admission to the program.
4. Children applying for admission for the first time.

The Manager will contact the parents/guardians on the waiting list to ensure that they are still requesting a space. No family will be discriminated against on the basis of race, language, socio-economic status, gender or sexual orientation.

Power Outages & Inclement Weather

Licensing requires that in the winter months the daycare can only remain open for 2 hours after a Power Out. We will phone all parents or emergency contacts to pick-up the children in the event of a power outage that will be longer than 2 hours.

In the event of extreme weather conditions, please check the voicemail, your email, and facebook. We will notify families through these channels if we are unable to open the centre due to snow or other inclement weather. If Halfmoon Bay Elementary School is closed or the buses cannot run, we will certainly be closed.

Each situation is individual and treated as such, e.g. certain geographical areas maybe affected and not others, teachers may not be able to drive safely from where they live. For all these situations we ask for your patience as we try to stay open whenever safely possible. But we will not risk the safety of the staff or your families.

We ask that every family have an Emergency Back Up Plan for themselves, so they are prepared to handle the rare occasion of us being closed with short notice.

Centre Emergency Evacuation Procedures

Fire drills and Earthquake drills are practiced once a month to prepare for emergencies. The children are told in advance when the drill will take place and why. In case of an emergency evacuation from the site, or offsite, staff will have a portable record that includes each child's emergency cards. A sign will be posted at the daycare (if possible) to show where we have been relocated and we will begin contacting families as soon as we are able.