

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 monthly during the school year (no meetings in July and August).

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

Philosophy Statement

It is our belief that every child is a unique individual, who develops at their 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, to facilitate the physical, emotional, social and intellectual growth of each child. We weave the Early Learning Framework into all areas of programming and our approach to education in our centre.

We base our programming on the interests of the children and the teachers as we learn together 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. We encourage children's development 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 daycare board of directors board is made up of parent volunteers and we require an active board to stay operational. Being a board member is a great way to get involved and be a part of the decisions that are made at the centre. Please let us know if you are interested in becoming a member of our board of directors.

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

Our AGM is held virtually (via Zoom) in November every year - exact date TBA

- **One member from each family is required to attend the AGM**

All families will sign an agreement with the manager of the HMB Childcare Centre acknowledging that they have read and accept the contents of the Parent Handbook during registration orientation meetings scheduled with the manager prior to attending.

Days and Hours of Operation

The childcare centre is open year-round. **Monday - Friday 8:00am - 3:30pm**

Centre Closures

The centre will close with the SD46 for Winter Break in December and the last week in August for deep cleaning and turnaround for fall. The first two weeks in July every year staff take vacation and the centre will reopen following this closure. July's fees will be adjusted accordingly.

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.

If there are centre closures due to staff illness or inclement weather, families will not be reimbursed for those days.

Daily Programming

Our program is for 3 -5 year olds

***8:00-8:30am** * sign-in takes place in the gazebo outside or just inside the door

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

10:00 am Clean-up and Circle-time

10:30 am Morning Snack followed by Quiet Time

- please make sure that your child has had breakfast before coming and/or send an item to eat right as they arrive

11:15 am Outside Time

12:30/1:00 pm Lunch Time

1:00 pm Quiet Time and quiet activities

1:30 pm Circle and Afternoon activities

2:30 pm Small group activities & Outside time

3:00-3:30pm sign-out takes place outside in the gazebo

Centre closes at 3:30pm

***Please be on time to your pick-up your child * see Late Policy pg 8**

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 both indoors and outdoors based on the interests of the children. Some of the areas of exploration include nature, music, story telling and writing, movement, construction, science, puzzles and logic, construction and dramatic play.

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. To encourage self-help skills, please ensure clothing is easy for your child to get on and off. **We will be spending a lot of time outdoors.**

Children must be toilet trained before attending. We understand that toileting accidents happen during this transitional time and request that you pack extra clothes to allow for accidents if your child is newly toilet trained. We are always available to help all children in the washroom where needed.

We ask parents to please send the following along with your child EACH DAY:

- Insulated lunch kit containing lunch, snacks, water bottle, and freezer packs - we are unable to refrigerate children's lunches
- **2-3 changes of clothing including shirt, pants, underpants, socks and sweater**
- Slippers or indoor shoes - easy to get on/off and suitable to worn outside in case of an emergency
- Appropriate outdoor clothing, as we go outside in all weather.
Please always provide:
 - Rainy weather: rain pants/jacket, layered clothing and waterproof boots
 - Winter weather: warm winter jacket, snow pants, mitts/gloves, toque
 - Warm summer weather: sunhat, sunscreen, and hoodie or light jacket
- **Please sunscreen your child prior to dropping off, we will reapply in the afternoon.**

We will have to insist that no toys from home come to the centre.

Gradual Entry

To support your child's entry into the program, we will have a Gradual Entry schedule as follows:

Day 1: 8am-12:30pm

Day 2: 8am-2pm

Day3&onwards: 8am-3:30 regular hours

Parents can choose to continue a more gradual entry beyond this if they feel it's in their child's interest, but this is the schedule we will have everyone to start.

Communication

We value open and frequent flow of communication between families and teaching staff. The teachers will often share information about your child's 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 talk to us in person, via email, or by phone to share any concerns or information that might impact your child's day (ie. didn't sleep well, no breakfast, moving, or any big changes).

We will take photos of your child to use in house for photo documentation and to send home to families. **These photos must not be shared on any social media sites or any public forum.**

Email is the primary method of communication for important messages - ensure we have the email that you check regularly and let us know of any contact information changes.

Please promptly read any emails that are sent out. Please be sure to check your email the night before and in the morning your child attends, or on snowy days as email is our form communication about all closures.

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 successful.

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 just send extra clothes for them.

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 happy, even if you do not feel this way. Help your child feel secure and comfortable by returning for them 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.

Arrival and Departure

Sign-in and Sign-Out takes place outside in the gazebo. Please let the centre know if your child will be absent or will arrive later than 9:30am.

Please take this opportunity to let the teachers know anything that will help set your child up for a successful day. Even seemingly small details like if they slept well, weren't hungry for breakfast etc. This will help us navigate the day and support them fully.

Although staff may be present at the centre prior to scheduled opening and after scheduled closing, staff needs this time to prepare for the day, for daily clean up and administrative tasks—please do not impose upon this time.

Child Care Regulations require that Staff can only release a child to the parent(s) and others listed on the child's registration form. Staff may request picture identification, log the information and may call to verify. It is advisable to review and update your registration when there is a change. You must inform us of any changes to information on your child's registration form, for example: Custody Agreements, orders, contacts, addresses, phone numbers, place of employment/school. Should someone other than those persons listed on the consent form need to pick up a child, with advance notice in writing, the parent must inform the daycare staff of the change. The person picking up the child will be asked to provide government issued photo identification and the person will be expected to sign the child out. Under no circumstances will a child be released to an unauthorized person.

Late Pick-Up Policy

Pick-up time is 3:30pm Anyone who comes to pick-up late will be charged \$40.00 for each 30-minute interval after 3:30pm or portion thereof.

We now have a Three Strike system for children being picked up late (after 3:30pm). **So please ensure that your child is picked-up on time.** Repeated late pick-ups may result in the loss of your childcare space.

Also, a reminder only adults can write on the sign-in/sign-out sheet. This sheet is a legal document and must be treated as such. Please don't allow your children to write on it.

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 you provided. If the parents and emergency contacts cannot be reached after 60 minutes, our last resort will be to call Child and Family Services to pick up the child. ***This is a licensing requirement.***

Intoxicated or Unfit Parent or Guardian

As licensed childcare providers, by law, our staff is tasked with monitoring and maintaining the welfare of all the children in our care. This includes, if necessary, protection from an intoxicated or emotionally unfit Parent / Guardian.

Should a Parent or guardian arrive intoxicated or appear incapable of providing care the staff will:

- Offer to call a relative or friend to pick up the Parent and child.
- Inform the Parent that if they choose to get into and operate a vehicle, the staff will notify the police immediately.
- Call the Ministry of Child and Family Services if the Staff feels the child is in need of protection

Driving while intoxicated is against the law and we have to note and report any and all incidents. If police are notified for any reason, in accordance with the law, the Ministry of Child and Family Services must be called.

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.

Change in Regular Attendance:

If at some point during the year, you need to change your child's regular attendance schedule, a **month notice is required** from the **first of the month**. 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 are collected via e-transfer.

Please ensure that all fees are **e-transferred to us**, 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)

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 \$50 at time of enrollment

Deposits

There is a \$200 deposit due at the time of enrolment that will be held and applied to your last months fees or in the case of leaving without proper 30 days notice.

Unpaid Program Fees

Fees are due on the first of every month and considered overdue on the 7th of each month. Please pay fees on time. Families may lose their childcare space if fees are repeatedly overdue.

Repayment of Pre-paid Fees

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

Affordable Child care Benefit

ACCB 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 ACCB 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 **\$50.00** 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 last month in care fees.

*** Hours 8am-3:30 pm ***

~~\$55.50~~ with govt. opt-in now **\$28.25** per day

Full Time monthly amounts

2 days Tues/Thurs	\$444 with govt. opt-in now \$226
3 days Mon/Wed/Fri	\$666 with govt. opt-in now \$339
5 days Mon-Fri	\$1110 with govt. opt-in now \$565

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.

The Right to Decline Service

First and foremost, we have a responsibility to provide a consistent level of quality care to all children enrolled. The first 30 days of enrollment will be a trial period for us to figure out if we can meet the needs of your child and if it's a good fit.

As we have a duty of care to provide and adhere to a certain standard (to which our staff and our philosophy always attempts to exceed) there may be occasion where alternate arrangements will need to be made. If it becomes apparent that our centre, or group care is not a good fit for your child or you, then management will contact you to discuss a plan and potentially terminate enrollment.

The centre may have to decline service for reasons such as, but not limited to: non-compliance to the health policy, the unavailability of additional specialized staff to help a child with unique needs, or disrespectful behaviour to our staff.

No member of the board or daycare staff wants to impose hardship on any family by declining the services of the daycare. Every reasonable effort to accommodate a child will be attempted when possible and always within the limits of the statutes, regulations and licensing requirements by which we are governed.

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 being part of a group.

It is important that 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 expression of feelings and assertion of felt needs. All children have the right to feel safe. Hitting, biting and other forms of physical, emotional and verbal abuse are not permitted.

Children will be supported and helped to learn healthy ways to manage their emotions (ie. to feel angry or frustrated is ok but it is NOT ok to hurt others or themselves or materials when they are feeling these strong emotions).

Health Policy

You **MUST** check in with/check your child for illness

BEFORE you bring them to the centre.

DO NOT bring your child to the centre if they are sick.

We have a **ZERO tolerance for any symptoms of illness** and will call to have children picked-up if symptoms develop while in care.

In addition, if your child has a **fever, diarrhea, or is vomiting**, they **must stay away from the centre for 48hrs after their last bout.**

Please let us know when your child is ill and their symptoms as we need to track and notify health authorities

Symptoms include but are not limited to:

Cough - all types Fever Vomit Diarrhea Sneezing Sore throat
Stuffed or runny nose Chills Loss of appetite Extreme fatigue Pink eye
Goopy or runny eyes Loss of taste/smell Difficulty breathing
Abdominal pains Swollen hands, feet, or mouth Blue lips, tongue, or skin
Headache Undiagnosed rash or skin lesions Any communicable disease

Why it is important to keep your child home when they are ill and to let us know:

Even when it may not seem like your child is too ill to attend daycare, a mild illness can spread and cause other children/staff to get quite sick. Not everyone responds to illness in the same way.

If any staff get sick, we have to close as we have no substitute staff. Lack of qualified ECE staff is a real problem on the coast so please help us stay healthy so we can stay open by keeping your child home if they are sick.

You must have a back-up plan in place.

If your child becomes ill while in the centre, we will contact you immediately. If a parent cannot be reached, staff will then call the emergency number on the consent form, so we ask that parents make sure that each contact person is aware of this procedure.

If a child is on medication, only 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 in our lock box, and a medication form needs to be filled out before staff can administer any medication.

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

All registered children must have up to date vaccinations and provide that documentation in their registration package before attending. Returning students will

need to update their packages each year with vaccination information to keep it current.

Children need to be fully toilet trained before enrolling.

Outside/Physical Activity and Screen Time

In accordance with the standards of practice and VCH licensing, recommended physical activity guidelines, we are outside engaged in physical activity for at least 2 hours a day including hiking in the forest, 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 through out 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. In accordance with this, we normally do not provide any screen time throughout the day at the centre. However, on special occasions (2x a year pj parties) we will have a short "movie" (30 min show) while enjoying some yummy treats.

Nutrition Policy

The children need to bring enough food in their lunch kits for morning snack and lunch.

Please make sure to have ice packs in your child's lunches and nothing that requires food handling by staff at this time.

In order to limit the transmission of illness , staff won't be heating up food as we are trying to minimize contact with their containers. Please open packages/oranges etc. slightly to allow children to finish on their own.

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.

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 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.

For birthdays, we make room for celebrating with treats so if you'd like to bring in something for everyone to share you are welcome to do so.

Power Outages & Inclement Weather

VCH Licensing requires that in the winter months the daycare can only remain open for 2 hours after a Power Outage. We will contact 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 adverse weather conditions, please check your email before leaving the house in the morning. We will notify families via email as early as possible 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 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.

Important Dates & Closures for 2025/2026

The centre is Closed for *ALL Statutory Holidays*

September 2nd 2025
Reopens

Centre

December 19th 2025
the winter break

Last day before

January 5th 2026
Centre Reopens

April 3rd 2026
Closed for Good Friday

June 25th 2026
Last Day in session

June 26th 2026
celebration for K kids

Graduation

June 27-July 11th 2026
for Staff Vacation

Closed

July 12th 2026
Centre reopens

Aug 28st 2026
cleanup for fall

Last day before turnaround and

September 8th 2026
Reopens

Centre

Two additional Staff Training days will be scheduled sometime in the year. You will have advanced notice.