

Starchild Centres Ltd



Policy and Procedures Manual

2024

992 Nightingale Rd., Mill Bay, BC V8H 1G7

Tel: 250-929-2223

250-929-3240

1689 Malta Rd., Shawnigan Lake, BC V8H 2H4

Tel: 250-733-2536

250-929-3240

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Starchild Centres Ltd.

Montessori, Waldorf and Nature-based Childcare

An opportunity to place your infant or preschool child in a unique, safe, loving, nurturing and stimulating environment – Either a 9-acre treed and pasture environment at 992 Nightingale Rd, Mill Bay, BC or a 2-acre forest and pasture at 1689 Malta Rd., Shawnigan Lake, BC that will help children develop a love of nature and, within themselves, the fundamental habits, attitudes, skills, and ideas which are essential for a lifetime of creative thinking and learning.

Our Philosophy

If the world is to become more abundant, just, and equitable for all, it will be the new generation of children that co-create it. However, in the meantime, it becomes the adult's task to give them our unconditional love, understanding, patience, encouragement, and support. They need appropriate role models to equip them to manifest their dreams and visions for a better world.

Most recognize that children, today, are vastly different from those of previous generations. Yet society continues its attempt to fit them into a box that they have already outgrown – into an educational system that neither meets their needs nor prepares them to cope with living in this rapidly changing world.

We feel that, by combining the cognitive focus of the Montessori approach to learning with the creative, intuitive, project-centered Waldorf method, and our focus upon outdoor education, we are able to provide a more holistic learning synthesis for children of all ethnic backgrounds and learning styles. For more information regarding the Centre and its methods, see www.starchildcentre.ca.

Mission

The Starchild Centre is dedicated to providing the best possible environment for supporting and fostering the emotional, mental, physical and spiritual development for these new-age children.

The Centre is committed to the development of the whole child by employing an integrated approach to learning and living through weaving together the Montessori and Waldorf philosophies and use of their pedagogic materials along with learning organic gardening, tending to animals and chickens, planting trees and appreciating and protecting nature and the environment.

The specific goals for the children attending our Daycare are:

- To develop and foster an abiding curiosity.
- To develop habits of initiative and persistence.
- To foster inner discipline and a sense of order.
- To develop sensory-motor skills in order to sharpen the ability to discriminate and judge their surroundings.
- To develop socially acceptable behavior.
- To acquire the basic skills and habits necessary for a lifetime of learning.
- To help develop each child's high self-esteem, self-expectations and confidence.
- To foster their innate love of nature and appreciation of all living forms

Today's Children

There is much material on the internet about the new children that have been incarnating during the past several years. Their DNA is different. The neurological wiring in their bodies is different. They see more, feel more and innately know more than their elders. They know their mission and will not be deterred from their path. They will definitely change what they cannot accept. These newcomers are generally grouped into two categories, the Indigo and the Crystal children.

The Indigos were the first to arrive. They have a warrior spirit, and their collective purpose is to break down the dysfunctional old systems that no longer serve us and to dismantle and remove old and limiting ways of thinking. They are here to quash government, educational, and legal and other systems that lack integrity.

The Crystal Children have come to begin the process of renewal and rebuilding. The Primary Mission of a Crystal Child is to teach the ways of Multi-Dimensional Living – in harmony, peace and love. They have come to teach us how to live empowered lives. “They have come to help us to reconnect with the Divine Feminine energies. They represent the future path of the Human Race.”

Many of these children born now and into the future will confound and exasperate their elders for they come here at this time with very specific missions. They are serving as catalysts for the evolution of humankind. It is society's role to support them in their endeavors to create a higher level of living. It is our duty to encourage and support them in their efforts to promote social justice, environmental preservation, global awareness, and peace.

Our Program

Our regular program operates Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:00 am to 4:30 pm. Extended care, before or after school hours, are no longer available, except on special occasion when requested by a parent.

The program year runs from September through to the following June in any given year and a separate summer program is offered in July and August.

The Centre offers infant care and toddler educare program. Parents are invited to share their knowledge about their children and to visit during the day. Our programs are open-ended and flexible but within a routine framework. Each child is free to make choices, as long as he/she remains within the guidelines of consideration for others.

Infant program: Birth to 18 months

This program provides gentle nurturing care to the infants of working mothers. Here, the caregiver will strive to be in tune with each infant's unique cues and needs and will work in partnership with the family to ensure consistent care in order to create a trusting reciprocal relationship.

Toddler program: 18 months to 3 years

Our Toddler program offers very young children unique years of self-development in a safe, tender atmosphere of special understanding, respect and support. Through art, music and outdoor activities, we strive to present our young students with a world of beauty that will nurture their sense of ease, joy, and peace.

Preschool program: 3 to 5 years

Our preschool activities involve the use of both Montessori and Waldorf pedagogical materials and methods, in a safe and supporting setting, with increased age-appropriate variety, depth, and complexity. Young children benefit from a strong sense of routine and predictability, and we work with a very regular rhythm for our daily and weekly activities. Music and verses accompanied by movement, stories, circle time, practical activities of cooking and baking, sewing, and artistic activities of painting, modeling and drawing, all contribute to the balanced, joyful, and healthy development of young children.

Unlike most other daycares, Starchild focuses upon outdoor education with a unique holistic nature-base curriculum. Children have their own organic gardening plots and grow vegetables to share with their parents. They feed the Koi fish and chickens and gather eggs. They feed and pet the miniature goats, and alpaca, harvest apples and plums, plant trees and go on nature hikes. These activities instill a love of plants and animals, the ability to grow and harvest their own food and a desire to preserve nature and the environment.

The Toddler and Preschool programs consist of components that support our overall philosophy and are intended to provide for the holistic development of the 18 months to 5 years old children. *(See page 7 for daily routine)*

During all statutory holidays, regular provincial government holidays and from the Monday prior to Christmas to the Friday following January 1st, as well as a one-week spring break in accordance with the Cowichan School district calendar and a couple of days at the end of August.

The Centre must be notified if a child is going to be absent and of the reason for the absence if health related. *(see Health Policy)*.

Enrolment and Withdrawals

Enrolment begins with a visit to inspect the facility and to meet Petra, the Directress, and, or the manager of the facility. After meeting and expressing interest in enrolling your child, you will be provided with an information and application package.

Trial Period

We have a one-month trial period before final enrollment. During this time the child is observed and assessed to ensure that s/he is able to adjust to the new environment and make new friends. For the wellbeing of the child - in the event that s/he is not adjusting to the new environment, Starchild Centre retains the right to terminate the enrollment. Parents also have the right to terminate enrollment at Starchild Centre during this trial period.

The one-month trial enrolment is accomplished by completing the application and providing a non-refundable registration fee of \$100 along with a cheque, cash or e-transfer for the first (Trial) month's fees.

Upon being informed (after initial trial month) that your child's enrolment is confirmed, we require, within five business days, a cheque, cash, or e-transfer for the following month's fees. Some parents prefer to provide a series of post-dated cheques for the contracted subsequent six months.

Gradual Entry

At Starchild Centre we suggest a gradual entry to the daycare. This means that your child will only spend a few hours the first day at the daycare and, if necessary, will gradually increase the number of hours over several days according to the stage of development and comfort level. A parent must accompany his/her child or make alternate arrangements with the Directress or teacher involved.

Withdrawal and Refund Policy when child is permanently enrolled:

Your child is booked by the month. If she or he misses days, no deductions will be made and no refunds due to unforeseen circumstances such as (weather conditions, electrical outages, daycare closures due to infectious diseases or safety reasons), Christmas, Easter, Statutory holidays, sick days or mid-month withdrawals throughout the year. Please understand that operation costs remain the same for us, and staff must be paid, whether your child attends that day or not

Withdrawal of a child from the program requires written notice a minimum of one full calendar month prior to withdrawal. The Centre must receive notice **no later than the last day of the month prior to the month of leaving.** (e.g. leaving April 30 – notice in by March 31st, or if leaving May 15th, notice also in by March 31st). Failure to give proper notice may result in the charge of additional fees.

All advanced payment or post-dated cheques falling beyond the properly notified withdrawal date **will be refunded** in full (i.e. cheques returned or destroyed).

A **\$25.00 fee** will apply to all **NSF cheques**, which must be replaced promptly. Failure to comply will result in your child being removed from the program. Following a second NSF cheque, Starchild Centre will require cash, certified cheques or money orders for the remaining months of the school year.

Receipts will be provided at year's end for income tax purposes. We ask that you keep them in a safe place as duplicates will not be provided.

Government assistance is available to those that are eligible.

Hours of Operation and Fees (with new Govt subsidy in place)

Regular hours 8:30 am to 4:30 pm - Monday through Friday

Children under 3 year – full time (5 days per week) - **\$515.00 per month**

Children 3 and over – full time - (5 days per week) - **\$550.00 per month**

Children can be dropped off for extra days if space is available - **\$95 per day.**

(Obtain separate complete schedule from the facility for fees for extended care).

Our regular program is for 8 hours per day and runs from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm and most parents are satisfied with an 8-hour day for their child. However, to accommodate the needs of some parents working out of the area, extended care is available from 8:00 to 8:30 am and from 4:00 to 4:30 pm.

Regarding Extended Care:

Extended care applies to any childcare beyond the normal 8 hours per day and for any care beyond 4:30 pick up time, when the centre normally closes. For example: if a child is brought to the Centre at 8:00 am, and picked up 8 hours later (at 4:00 pm) there is no extra cost. However, for any care for that child beyond 4:00 extended care fees apply.

On the other hand, a child brought in at 8:30 or later must be picked up on or before 4:30 because **extended care fees apply for any pick-up after 4:30 pm.**

If you need to discuss something about your child, please make an appointment for a brief discussion at 4:00 or earlier because staff members have appointments and commitments in the afternoons and often need to leave immediately after 4:30 pm.

In order to cover teacher overtime costs, we must charge extended care fees as follows:

- 50 cents per minute.

Payment of Childcare Fees:

Fees are to be paid promptly during the first week of each month and are charged on a flat monthly rate. E-transfers can be made to: payment@starchildcentre.ca or a series of post-dated cheques, provided when their child is enrolled after the first trial month. Cash payments are also accepted.

Centre Closures:

In the event of extreme weather (snow, freezing rain), infectious diseases, child health or safety reasons, electrical outages resulting in no water, it is possible that the Centre may close. The decision is based on a number of factors but primarily upon the closure of Cowichan Valley School District public schools. Every effort will be made to contact all families by telephone or email to advise of closure. ***Fees will not be refunded in the event of such closures.***

Daily Schedule:

8:00 Centre opens for the arrival of extended care children. Free play according to the child's individual interests.

8:30 Arrival and greeting of children.

8:45 Teacher-directed Table Activities. Teacher presentation of Montessori or Waldorf pedagogical materials to children, cooking, science or math activities. Children use materials according to individual choice.

9:45 Clean up - Put activities away, hand washing, diapering or toileting as needed.

10:00 Snack Time - Caregiver prepares (parent provided) snacks for the children and joins children at the table to model healthy eating habits and table manners. This is a time for language development and socializing.

10:30 Outside Activities - Children reminded to use the toilet before going out. Gross motor development and exercise with individual gardening, visiting the animals, nature walks within the property, climbing, sand and water play and other outdoor activities.

12:00 Children come in for lunch (provided by parents and prepared by staff) Wash hands, joined at tables by teacher. Children are responsible for putting leftovers in the compost, recycling and cleaning up of their eating area.

12:00 Lunch – followed by hand and face washing, brushing teeth

12:45 Diapering and toilet time for full day children before nap.

1:00 Nap Time - Children needing to sleep retire to their own sleeping mat in darkened room with soft music. Children's individual rhythm is respected and, gradually, as children wake on their own, they join their peers in the main playroom. Those children who are not sleeping have quiet time with books, the teacher may read them stories, or other activities of interest to the child.

2:20 Sleeping children wake up and prepare for snack.

2:30 Wash up and prepare for an afternoon snack. Children put leftovers in compost, recycle and place dishes in the sink.

2:50 Teacher-directed table activities. Teacher presentation of Montessori or Waldorf pedagogical materials to children, cooking, science, or math activities. Children use materials and self-selected activities according to individual choice. Continuation of self-selected activities or organic gardening, or other outside activities.

3:30 Outside activities - on nice days; indoor activities on bad weather days.

4:30 Departure of children. **Centre closes.**

The above schedule is **flexible and fluid**. More time is spent outside based upon children's interests and needs and as weather permits.

Calendar

The days we are open to provide childcare service are based on the Cowichan Valley School District schedule. We are closed for statutory holidays, one week at Easter, and some days at the end of August, as well as over Christmas. We remain open during public school's teacher professional development days.

(Please see 'Calendar' on our website: www.starchildcentre.ca).

Any changes in the dates will be posted on the parents' information bulletin at the front entrance.

Termination of Client Services

Starchild Centre is committed to providing a caring and supportive environment for all children and families. However, termination of services may be required if:

- Fees for services are not paid in accordance with the Parent Agreement and suitable arrangements cannot be agreed upon.
- A family does not abide by expectations outlined in the Parent Agreement and successful resolution of the differences is not achieved.
- The parents cannot reach a custody agreement.
- A family is physically or mentally harassing/abusive towards educators, other parents or a child at the daycare.
- A child's behavior is severely disruptive and/or physically threatening to the other children and/or educators.
- A child's needs require, on a continuing basis, an inordinate amount of educator time and attention when compared to the time and attention required to attend the needs of the other children.

Prior to termination the Directress or manager will meet with the family to seek a solution to the problem. If a reasonable solution cannot be found or if the solution, once tried, proves to be unsuccessful, client services will be terminated.

Parent Expectations

Form updates

It is the enrolling parent's responsibility to update all information on the registration forms so that all information is always current and accurate. In an emergency, it slows down quick action if we cannot locate the parent, doctor, or emergency backup person.

Absences

Parents are expected to notify the Centre in advance, as much as possible, if their child is going to be away. Please use the communication book, available at the centre.

Arrival

When you arrive at the Centre, please help your child get settled before you leave. Parents are asked to note relevant information in the DAY BOOK. Before leaving, please make sure that your child knows you are going, and that a staff member is aware that your child has arrived. **Please remember to sign your child in and out.** Children may only be dropped off by authorized responsible adults.

Pick Up

Authorized pick-up persons are asked to pick up the child before or by 4:30 pm unless extended hours have been arranged. Children will only be released to an authorized person listed on the registration form. In case of an emergency or an unforeseen circumstance, written authorization must be provided before your child will be released to anyone not listed on the registration form.

When picking up your child please make sure that we are aware that your child is leaving. Children may only be picked up by a responsible adult. Children must be picked up on time. **The facility closes at 4:30 pm sharp.**

If the parent, designated to pick up a child, is late and has not called prior to explain the delay, the emergency contact will be called for pick up. If these persons cannot be reached and the delay is exceedingly long, the Ministry of Children and Families will be called.

Habitual tardiness will result in your child being removed from the registry.

Conflict resolution

We encourage you to discuss any questions or concerns about our program or our procedures with the Directress or facility manager. If a conflict arises, the goal is to resolve differences of opinion and find solutions that everyone can accept. We are committed to providing a caring and supportive environment for our children and families. If a problem continues, a meeting can be arranged to amicably settle the matter.

Smoking

Starchild Centre is a smoke free environment. Smoking is prohibited inside the Centre, yard or within 100 meters of any entrance.

Parking

Kindly park in the front area to the left of the building, leaving the driveway clear for parent's vehicles arriving and leaving.

Food and Drinks

Parents are responsible for providing nutritious snacks and lunches following the Canada Food Guide and the child's dietary needs. Your child will need a morning snack, lunch, and afternoon snack. We use a refrigerator to store your child's individually packaged food.

We encourage healthy eating habits at our daycare – such foods as fruit, vegetable soup/sandwiches, cheese, yogurt, muffins, etc. An emergency supply of food is available to supplement children if necessary. We are aware of the health hazards of microwave usage so all food for your child will be heated in an electric oven.

Please, do not allow your child to bring chewing gum, candy or junk food to the Centre.

Water bottles

Because of the health hazard caused by Bisphenol A, being present in plastic products, in order to provide a safer, healthier environment for your children Starchild Centre requests that parents send a metal PBA-free water bottle for their child's daily use. This should be taken home at the end of each day. We will be able to refill your child's bottle throughout the day using filtered water.

(Bisphenol A is a toxic chemical compound found in some hard, clear, lightweight plastics and resins. It's used in the production of various types of food and drink containers, compact discs, electronics and automobile parts).

Clothing and supplies

Parents are expected to provide clothes, necessary sleeping supplies, sunscreen, diapers, helmets, and seasonally appropriate indoor/outdoor attire. Baby wipes will be supplied by the Centre unless parents prefer another appropriate alternative.

Suggested materials to bring for your child:

- Ice pack inside lunch box
- Stainless steel water bottle
- Child size toothbrush, and toothpaste
- Slippers or indoor shoes
- Small stuffed toy (if needed for napping)
- Small blanket (for napping)
- Change of clothes
- Weather appropriate outdoor clothing
- Light coat, rain boots/outside shoes
- Muddy Buddies
- Sun hat
- For Winter dress – warm hooded coat, hat, scarf, gloves, winter boots
- ***If your child is in diapers or pull ups, please provide a complete supply.***

Please ensure that your child has at least two changes of clothing (i.e., pants, shirts, underwear, socks). ***Please put your child's name on each item.***

Other than the stuffed toy (for napping) please, do not let your child bring toys to the daycare. Toys from home create sharing difficulties, concern in case of loss or breakage and general disruption.

Nap Time

Quiet time is between 1:00 and 2:15 every day. Some infants may nap more often, as needed. Children who nap will be provided with their own mats and sheets with their names on them. The children are encouraged to bring their own special blankets, sheets and one stuffed animal from home. ***Please label these items.***

We do not force children to sleep. We feel that if a child needs to sleep, he/she will fall asleep naturally. Children who do not nap will have opportunities to play quietly have a book or puzzle or do art activities, until the others get up.

Field Trips

For the present time, field trips will be limited to nature walks in the 9-acre property at Nightingale or to the gravel pit below the Malta Rd. facility. We will bring in entertainers, educators, and other resource guests on a regular

- If you have a talent: play guitar, sing, dance and would like to share it we would love to have you come in and be part of our all-class circle.

Bridging Multiculturalism

- Parents/Grandparents, if interested, may be invited to tell stories, or share their expertise in crafts, or baking or other talents with the children.
- Resource persons from other ethnic cultures may share their music, dance, food and language with the children
- Parents and children may have opportunities to attend multicultural events.

Parent visits

Parents are always welcome! However, although we maintain an open-door policy, kindly make arrangements with the staff in order to make your visits compatible with the program. We further suggest that you wait until your child has adjusted to the Centre's routine before visiting as you may find that he or she will have a completely natural wish to have you stay all the time.

Tel: Admin: 250-929-3240 or Nightingale 250-929-2223. or Malta facility: 250-733-2536

Summary of Parent Expectations

- Inform staff if there are any changes in address, phone number, emergency contacts, doctor or person authorized to pick up your child.
- Notify us if your child is going to be absent.
- Sign the child's daily registry on arrival and departure.
- Inform staff if a child arrives with bruises or any other unusual marks in order to avoid unnecessary concerns.
- Ensure your child is healthy and fit to attend class (see health and safety policy)
- Pick up your child on time

Program Policies

General

In the playroom areas and outdoors, the Manager and staff have overall responsibility for the program, teaching methods, guidance, health, and safety measures. Montessori and Waldorf methods and pedagogical materials form the basis of the Starchild Centre's operation and the children's unique discovery and learning experience.

Parents, elders, practicum students, observing students and volunteers may be involved in a child's program from time to time. The manager has the responsibility for supervising adult participation in the children's programs. Parents are encouraged to volunteer in the Centre.

Parents are encouraged to make an appointment with the manager at any time to discuss their child's development and ways of contributing to his/her progress. This would include any event or change of routine at home which might affect the child's behavior.

Emergency Procedures

Fire and Earthquake drills will occur on a regular basis to promote a learned response with preschool children. An emergency exit plan is posted on the wall on the bulletin board. In the event of a fire, children will immediately be taken outside using the nearest safe route of exit. Staff will ensure that all children, present that day, are accounted for. In case of a real fire, 911 would be called at the time of alarm.

If the building is unsafe to re-enter, we will see that the children remain in a safe place and the childcare worker in charge will make every attempt to reach parents to arrange for pickup. If communications are down, in the case of a blizzard or general power outage, please come to the daycare as soon as possible to pick up your child.

In the event of an earthquake, we will position children in the bathroom area where there are strong supporting beams and walls. Evacuation from the building will occur after the shaking stops.

In case of a power outage, we have enough emergency lighting and water to flush toilets for about two hours. You will be notified about the situation and if power does not return after 2 hours kindly arrange for your child to be picked up. If the outage occurs before opening time in the morning, the Centre will not be able to operate that day. Please call to make sure we are in service if you have experienced or have heard of power outages in the area overnight.

We require you, as a parent, to provide an emergency preparedness (comfort kit) consisting of:

- A full change of clothes
- Emergency blanket
- Travel toothbrush and travel sized toothpaste
- Two Granola bars
- Small bottled water (no more than 500 ml)
- Photograph of child with family – list names on back with emergency phone number
- Comfort note (love you, be with you soon, etc.)
- Comfort toy (very small stuffy)

These items may be placed in a Ziploc bag with your child's name on it to be stored at the Centre.

Injury/Illness

In the event of a child being injured, first aid will be applied within the level of competence of staff. If necessary, an ambulance will be called. The parent(s) of a seriously injured child will be informed as soon as possible.

At Starchild Centre, we take the health and safety of our children and staff very seriously. Upon signing in your child each day, we ask you to confirm your child is fit and healthy to attend class. In the event of a child becoming ill, the parent will be called to pick up the child. We do not ask that a child be taken home when he/she has a slight cold or is recovering, but for more serious, contagious illnesses, we do require it. Should the child be injured or seriously ill, e.g., repeated vomiting, and the parent(s) unavailable, we will call an ambulance and inform the parent(s) as soon as possible.

Any costs incurred as a result of attending to a child's injury or illness, e.g. ambulance fees, will be the responsibility of the parent(s).

Guidance and Discipline

Since we value and respect the individuality of each child, our goal is to assist children in developing self-confidence, self-control, inner discipline, and sensitivity to others. Positive guidance is based on realistic expectations of a child's needs and abilities.

Following are some of the guidance strategies uses:

- Redirection
- Observation and anticipation of children's play.
- Creating a positive, stimulating, environment that reflects the level of the children.
- Providing clear limits through consistent messages about expectations and safe, appropriate behavior.
- Modeling positive behavior and demonstrating respect, understanding and caring for other people and things.
- Teaching children appropriate expression of their feelings.
- Teaching children problem-solving and conflict resolution skills.
- Routine will be kept as much as possible to help children become aware of what is expected of them.

If a child misbehaves or refuses to follow the guidelines of the Centre, he/she will be taken to sit quietly beside a caregiver until his or her composure is regained enough to rejoin the rest. If a child is presenting a risk to other children by hitting, kicking, biting, etc. he or she will be removed by a caregiver to protect all involved and to calm the child. A quiet explanation of why the behavior cannot be tolerated will be given the child once settled enough to listen. All efforts will be made to assist a child whose behavior is being affected by ill health, fatigue or other problems beyond his or her control. However, in rare instances when a child becomes such a difficulty that his or her actions compromise the safety of others on a regular basis or interfere with the smooth operation of the facility, the child will be taken off the registry. The parents will be given a short time, no more than two weeks, to find another placement. In extreme cases where the child represents a real danger to himself or others, removal will be immediate and final.

Extra Support

Families will be consulted if a child has persistent behavioral problems in the Centre that require a systematic approach. Extra support can be accessed for children with emotional and behavioral challenges if families and/or staff determine a need for it.

Washroom

Children are encouraged to learn how to wipe themselves and to change their own clothes. Parents can help in this area by sending their children in loose-fitting clothes. This helps the child to be more independent and self-reliant.

Staff will assist children with personal hygiene and toilet learning if it's required or when requested by the child. It may become necessary to aid with wiping, pulling up or down of clothing, assisting with closures. Your child may have an accident, become ill, or simply become very dirty while playing and need a more complete wash. We have a shower on the premises to aid us in cleaning up extreme cases. Clothing soiled with feces will be rinsed, double bagged and sent home for laundering. Clean ones will need to be brought in the next day. Remember to put your child's name on these.

Note: If your child has a certain bathroom routine, please let us know. Children of all ages are encouraged to wash their hands after using the toilet, before and after eating and after playing outside.

Personal Conduct

At no time will your child be touched in a way that makes him or her uncomfortable. Unwanted physical touching will not be tolerated and any staff doing so will be immediately dismissed and licensing notified.

We do encourage appropriate demonstrations of affection. Affection is appropriate when:

- a child is hurt, physically and/or emotionally
- a child asks for a hug
- in the sleep room a child asks for a backrub
- a child wakes up from sleep time
- a child and staff are sharing positive emotions
- a child is arriving or departing from the daycare

When praising, sharing a happy moment, exchanging gifts, etc. we will show appreciation by hugging, patting on the head or back, or kissing on the cheek. Children need the freedom to express themselves in all ways and a healthy expression of caring is important. Children are encouraged to show affection. However, at no time will a child be forced to show or to accept these expressions if they are unwanted. If staff suspects that a child is being abused in any way – physically, emotionally, sexually – because of visual or verbal clues or disclosure by the child, the staff will report their concerns to the appropriate Ministry.

Health

There are many factors involved in ensuring a child's optimum growth and development; good health is particularly important. While children are ill the active environment of a daycare is not the place for them. They require a more relaxed atmosphere and more individual attention than a daycare can provide. Therefore, it may be wise for parents to consider what your options might be under such circumstances as when your child is sick.

As recommended by the Capital Health Regional District for group care facilities

A child is too ill to attend daycare if the child:

- has an acute cold with a fever, runny nose, runny eyes, green mucus discharge, persistent coughing, or sore throat.
- has difficulty breathing or is wheezing
- complains of unexpected or undiagnosed pain
- has a fever of 100F or 38.3C or higher

A child is too ill to attend daycare if the child, cont':

- has an ongoing sore throat or difficulty swallowing
- has infected skin or eyes or an undiagnosed rash
- has a headache and/or a stiff neck
- has diarrhea or a loose stool (2 loose stools in succession within 3 hours)
- is vomiting
- is severely itching their body or scalp
- has head lice (use over-the-counter shampoo (Nix, Kwellada, etc.)
- has any communicable disease or symptoms of one

Should your child become ill while at the daycare, you will be notified immediately and are expected to arrange for the child to be picked up promptly. Your child should be kept at home until symptoms subside. If the parent(s) cannot be located, staff will contact the Alternate Person listed on the Enrollment Form.

Communicable Disease Notification

Parents are required to notify the Centre of any communicable disease that their child is exposed to or contracts within 24 hours. We will post a notice that a child has been exposed to a disease or contracted a communicable disease in an effort to minimize its spread.

Re-entry following Illness

The child may return to the program after an illness if the following conditions are met:

- the child has received an antibiotic for 24 hours and there are no related symptoms
- the child is no longer contagious
- the child is symptom free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication
- The parent notifies and assures the directress that the child's health is back to normal.

Administration of Medication

- All medications must be prescribed by a medical practitioner or provided by the parent for that child. The Centre will ensure that the medication is given to the child in the amount and at the time specified in writing by the parent. The child's parent or guardian must sign the instructions.
- Parents can come to the daycare and administer medications to their child in the presence of a regular staff member. (The event will be recorded in the communications book).
- Staff shall not administer over the counter medication unless a physician prescribes it.
- Medication must be in the same bottle as issued by the pharmacist. When having a prescription filled, ask the pharmacist to put it into two smaller containers (one for home, one for daycare).
- All children's medication must be kept in a locked container. For each medication dispensed, the parent/guardian **must record the following information on the Medical Record Form posted in the daycare**
 - The date and time medication is to be administered
 - The amount of medication to be given
 - Why the medication is to be given
 - The parent/guardian signature
 - Any unusual effects

The staff member who administers the medication will sign the time when the medication was given and will also give their signature. If the form is not signed and appropriately documented, the staff will not administer any medication. The staff needs to be informed about administering medication to a child firstly by verbal communication, and secondly by the **Medication Record Form** in the daycare.

Animal Husbandry and Farmyard Practices - Parent's Policy

Starchild Centre's Ltd. has a 9-acre and a 2-acre hobby farm, each serving as a facility for a daycare licensed for 24 children.

On each location there is a small flock of chickens, ducks, 2 goats, as well as a pond of Koi fish. It is a big part of our curriculum to include the children with daily animal husbandry tasks, such as feeding the chickens, fish, and goats, collecting eggs, filling water containers, along with their organic vegetable gardening. As an active farm in a rural location, the livestock are at a risk of being eaten by predators. Livestock may become injured or die. This is the reality of a "working" farm or any household with animals for that matter.

At Starchild we embrace the seasons and cycles of nature and we respect ALL life no matter how small ... from a baby earthworm to a large mammal such as a deer or goat. It is part of our "Nature-based" philosophy to thoroughly acknowledge a deceased animal and, if appropriate and in the interest of the children, make it an age-appropriate "teachable moment". We keep the science simple and focus more on showing a reverence for the life that was lost and the role death plays in the lifecycle of the animal and the bigger cycles of nature.

When this rare occasion arises, or if we come across a dead bird or animal during a field trip in the forest, we strive to demystify and provide answers to questions children have about life and death – relative to their ages and ability to understand. As their parents, we wish for you to be informed of this practice and are apprising you by way of this policy. Please be assured, that if a child is disturbed by the sight of a dead animal, we will gently re-direct them as quickly as is feasible.

Nature-based education is becoming popular in Canada and other countries. If you as a parent, are worried at the thought of your child potentially being exposed to the above situation, we respectfully suggest that Starchild Centre is not the best fit for your child.

Risk Benefit Assessment for Outdoor Play: a Canadian Toolkit.

Because our focus is on outdoor education, it is required that applicants study the **Risk Benefit Assessment for Outdoor Play: a Canadian Toolkit**.

Please see the information on the link.

[2019-11-03-CANADA-RBAT-ENGLISH-1.pdf \(childnature.ca\)](#)

The following (Page 17) contains a copy of the **Informed Consent form** for your perusal. If you are not willing to read the Risk Benefit Assessment For Outdoor Play and then sign the Informed Consent Form that will be attached to the Application/Registration for Starchild Centres Daycares when applying for childcare the Centre, it would be advisable to seek an alternative daycare for your child.

Starchild Centres Ltd.



Informed Consent Form

- That while the injuries sustained in outdoor activity are mostly minor, they can be severe, and on extremely rare occasions, even fatal.
- That all rules designed to enhance the safety of your child and others and are to be followed at all times.
- That fire and open-fire cooking require special instructions and training from the facilitator.
- That your child's risk of injury increases with fatigue.

In unstructured, outdoor play, children freely choose which experiences and forms of play they are comfortable engaging in. Your child is under no obligation to participate in all experiences and may choose not to participate at any time during the program,

I/We have read the risk-benefit assessment summary for our program/experience.	<i>(Initial here)</i>
I/We have reviewed the risk-benefit assessment summary with my/our child and have explained to the child that they need to listen to and follow the instructions provided.	<i>(Initial here)</i>
I/We are aware that alongside the benefits, participation involves risks, dangers, and hazards, including but not limited to those referred to in the risk-benefit assessment summary, and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freely and voluntarily assume the risks, dangers, and hazards inherent in participating, including all those described in the risk-benefit assessment summary and possibility of personal injury, and the remote possibility of fatality. • Being satisfied that participation is suitable for my/our child, I/We give My/Our permission and consent for him/her to participate 	<i>(Initial here)</i>
I will notify you if my child suffers from any medical or health condition that may cause injury to themselves or others, or may require emergency care during their participation	<i>(Initial here)</i>
I have read the Animal Husbandry and Farmyard Practices - Parents Policy and agree with its provisions.	<i>(Initial here)</i>

Child's name

Date

Parent/guardian name (print)

Signature

Parent/guardian name (print)

Signature

Template developed from the Child and Nature of Canada:

[2019-11-03-CANADA-RBAT-ENGLISH-1.pdf \(childnature.ca\)](https://www.childnature.ca/2019-11-03-CANADA-RBAT-ENGLISH-1.pdf)