



Birchland Tree House Play Care Ltd.

Parent Information Handbook

“A part of your family team”

Revised 2022

WELCOME!

Welcome to Birchland Tree House Play Care Ltd. We have been in operation since 1992, providing a variety of childcare options to meet the diverse needs of the families in our area. We offer Infant/Toddler Program, Preschool, Before and After school care and a 3-5 Group care program for children ages 0 to 12 years and servicing schools who are attending Blakeburn and Birchland Elementary schools. All programs strive to provide a warm, caring and safe atmosphere for children to grow and develop.

PHILOSOPHY

Our goal at Birchland Tree House Play Care is to provide a fun, warm, caring and safe environment for your child. When a child feels secure, they can grow and develop as an individual. We value the uniqueness of each child. Children are encouraged to emerge and grow at their own pace. We believe that children learn through play. Children develop physical, cognitive, language, emotional, social, and creative skills through their everyday planned play experiences. We strive to make these experiences stimulating and appealing for your child. We also believe that children learn through their interactions with other children and adults. We promote positive communication between the children and our staff. Through these interactions, children develop self-concept, self-confidence, compassion, empathy, independence, and respect for themselves and others. The staff visualize the centre as an extension of the child's family. We encourage communication with parents to be open and honest, as we feel that information sharing is very important. We hope to provide parents with any information and support they may need. Please feel free to come and speak with us about any questions or concerns you may have. We look forward to working with you!

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

A staff member working in the 3-5 daycare program have either completed or are in the process of completing their Early Childhood Education courses. They all hold a valid Child Safe First Aid certificate. At least one staff member on the floor of the Infant/Toddler room must hold an Infant/Toddler certificate. The staff in the Out-of School care program all hold valid Child Safe First Aid certificates, have past experience working with children and require 20 hours of related courses in the childcare field. All staff have had a criminal record check.

HOURS OF OPERATION

The centre opens at 6:00am and closes at 6:00pm. Infant/Toddler program will have shorter hours 7:00am to 5:30pm. Please be sure to pick up your child by 6:00pm as a late charge of \$2.00 per min/child/staff member is accrued after 6:05pm (payable in cash at that time). If your child has not been picked up within 30mins of closing time, and we have not received a call from you, we would make every effort to contact you and your emergency contact person. If we were unsuccessful and could not reach either of you, we would then be required to call the Ministry of Children and Families. They would then send someone to pick up your child. This would occur only in an extreme case (sickness, car accident, etc.).

HOLIDAYS AND CENTRE CLOSURES

The centre will be closed on all statutory holidays including Good Friday, Easter Monday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, BC Day, Labour Day, Thanksgiving Day, Remembrance Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day. The centre will be closed during the last two week of summer holidays. We re-open the first day of school. This will cut down on our using different people to cover staff summer holidays. The months of July and August only will be on a weekly rate. If your child/children do not attend the centre through the summer, you will be required to pay a flat fee per child to secure your spot for September. (This fee does not go towards your September fees.) We will also be closed one week at Christmas as this allows the staff a time of well-deserved rest. You will be notified of the exact dates as soon as we know.

REGISTRATION

There is a registration fee of \$50.00 (non-refundable) that will be required at the time you register your child. You will also be asked at this time to make a deposit of half a month's fee (refundable) which will hold your spot and will be applied to your last month's fees. Please make cheques payable to Birchland Tree House Play Care Ltd. (We have a stamp). Fees are due on the 1st of each month and are as follows: Please see your Parent Agreement for Terms and Fee information Part time spots are available for 2 or 3 days per week. If you require 4 days a week or if your work does not have consistent days every week, that spot would be considered full time. If you require us to be there when needed, we will have to hold the spot open for you. Whether you are on a daily or monthly rate, your fees are still the same whether your child attends care or not. This means that if your child is away sick or is on holidays, you are still expected to pay your regular monthly fees. There will be a \$50.00 penalty imposed if fees are not paid by the 15th of the month. Those who have made previous arrangements will be exempt from this penalty. If your account is more than 30 day behind, the directors reserve the right to suspend your childcare until your account is paid in full. NSF cheques will be charged an extra \$45.00 to cover bank charges and paperwork.

REFUSAL OF CARE-30 DAYS CLAUSE

When filling out all of the necessary paperwork everything that is important must be disclosed and truthful. If a parent or guardian has neglected to advise the daycare of important information that would impact the care of the child, staff or over all centre, we at Birchland Tree House Play Care hold the right to refuse care as we may not be able to meet the needs of staff, other families or your child. Within the first 30 days of care the directors will determine whether your child will still be able to attend. In the case of withheld information your deposits and registration fees will be forfeited.

ADMISSIONS AND WITHDRAWALS

Upon admission all forms must be completed and signed before your child is left at the centre. This includes immunization forms. Gradual entries for Group 3-5, Preschool, and Infant/Toddler are required. Program supervisors will contact the parent to organize gradual entry schedule prior to the start date of the enrollment. When withdrawing a child from a program, we require that you give one month's on the first of the month. This gives us time to find someone to fill the upcoming vacant spot. If proper notice is not given, you will be charged you regular month's fees and deposit will be non-refundable.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information in your child's file is confidential. We do not give out information to anyone unless you authorize it. (This includes phone numbers.) If there are any issues regarding your child (disagreement with another child, hit by a toy, etc.) it will be documented in our daily journal. You are more than welcome to talk to the supervisor about it.

BEAR AWARE

In the Port Coquitlam area Bears are an ongoing issue. We do our best to be aware of the dangers in our area. We work closely with the Birchland Elementary School and the local community to help keep us safe. The staff carries whistles, when the whistle sounds all the children are to gather to the closest staff member so we can stay as a group and move to a safe place. We practice this with the children on a regular basis.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Please be sure to sign your child in and out on our sign-in sheet that is located at the door. When you bring your child into the centre, please make verbal contact so we know that your child has joined the group. When leaving with your child, please be sure to see a staff member so we may know that you are taking your child out of the group and that you are authorized to do so. The staff may also want to tell you about your child's day as this is usually a good time to share information. If for some reason the person that is authorized to pick-up your child has not arrived by their scheduled time, we would call that person, parent, or emergency contact. If we are unable to contact anyone, we would then and only then contact the police and Ministry of Children and Families, so they can assist in helping to find a family member. If you have someone else picking up your child, please be sure to let us know in advance with prior written notice so we may receive the necessary information like full name, phone number, and the time they will be arriving. The staff will then ask that person for ID when they come to pick up your child. We would also like to have a phone number where we can reach you in the event of any problems. If a problem does arise, we would talk to the parent and document it in our daily journal.

UNAUTHORIZED PERSON TO PICK-UP CHILD

We will not release a child to someone other than his or her parent/guardian unless prior written permission has been given or in some cases, a phone call by the parent/guardian would be accepted. If someone other than the parent or emergency contact has come for your child, we would contact the parent immediately to verify that this person does in fact have permission to take the child with them. If we cannot contact the parent or emergency contact, we will not release the child to the unauthorized person.

CUSTODY ORDER

If you have custody of your children and have a court order in place, we ask that we have a copy of it to keep in your child's file. We then will be able to make a proper decision regarding the safety of your child. If the other parent arrives to pick up your child on a different day than on the court order, we then have a legal right to inform him/her that they do not have access that day. If the other party still insists

on taking the child and we cannot calm him/her down, we would then call in the police to diffuse the situation. You as the parent/guardian would be notified as soon as possible.

SUSPECTED IMPAIRMENT FROM ALCOHOL/DRUGS

Our primary concern is for the safety of your child. We will not release your child to someone we suspect of being impaired by drugs or alcohol. Alternate arrangements will have to be made. We will call the other parent or emergency contact person to come and pick up your child. If there is a concern for the ability to care for the child and we have not been able to contact an alternate person, we would then contact the Ministry of Children and Families. If this becomes a constant issue we reserves the right to cancel your childcare immediately.

PARENT INFORMATION

There is a Parent Information board located above the sign-in sheet. This is where the monthly schedule is posted along with any important notices and reminders. There is a Parent Information board located above the sign-in sheet. This is where the monthly schedule is posted along with any important notices and reminders. Please be sure to check this on a daily basis. A e-newsletter will be sent home monthly to keep you updated on your child's activities. These newsletters are full of important information, so please be sure to read them!

WHAT TO BRING FOR YOUR CHILD

We provide lots of sensory (MESSY) experiences for your child, so please send him/her in comfortable play clothes that can get dirty. We finger-paint, stamp with ink, use felt pens, paint, and play outside in all types of weather. Please dress your child appropriately. We ask that each child has a complete set of spare clothes in their cubby (pants, shirt, underwear, socks). These items should be labeled with your child's name or initials. We also ask that you send a blanket and cuddly toy (one with no sounds) for nap time. Your child will be assigned a cubby where he/she can keep their belongings. This is where we put your child's art, fee receipts, monthly newsletters, and any notices that we need to send home. Please check this on a daily basis. If your child brings toys and/or other personal items to daycare, the daycare will take no responsibility for the care of these items.

SCREEN-TIME

We do watch movies from time to time in our 3-5 group program. This isn't a set schedule more of a special event. The Out of School care has video games, but every child must sign up and only has the ability for play for 10-25 mins during the day, each child only has the opportunity to sign up for one week every 3 weeks on a rotation. Out of school also has movies however this is also limited to special program events. Infant/Toddler program will have no screen time available in the program.

ACTIVE PLAY REQUIREMENTS

Children will be encouraged to be active throughout the day. Our routines will include indoor and outdoor time where the children will be provided with equipment and play spaces to elevate their heart rate and get their bodies moving. An active program encourages healthy choices for food and activities. From our youngest to our oldest children our programs will be set around limited screen time, lots of fresh air, getting dirty and using our imaginations. Please come prepared for the weather we go out rain

or shine. No screen time will be available to the infant and toddler programs, limited and/or timed screen time will be available in all the other programs. Each one of our programs will follow the regulations put forth by Fraser Health Childcare Regulations

- Preschool/Toddlers– 30/180 mins
- OOS – 60 mins
- Infants – Several Periods of free play during the day (interactive floor-based play, indoors or outdoors)

FIELD TRIPS

We will be taking the children on various trips throughout the year. Some of these will be walking excursions to various outdoor venues. Other trips may entail your child being transported by public transit, staff vehicles or company bus. You will have plenty of notice for the bigger field trips. For the smaller ones, it may be spontaneous and spur of the moment so we are able to take advantage of certain situations (weather, special event, etc.). You will be required to sign a Field Trip Permission form before your child is allowed to go on any of these trips.

TRANSPORTATION

We provide convenient transportation to daycare and school for your child by walking and vehicle. We have designated, labelled and certified to transport your child safely to school. All drivers undergo safety training, and their driving history is reviewed to ensure safety. Safety is our priority, and we will make every effort to ensure your child will arrive at school safe and on time. Our policy follows the Vehicle Safety Act website. Suppose bus service is not applicable to transport children (because there is no certified bus driver or the bus broke down). In that case, parents will be informed immediately, which may require children to be dropped off at school by their parents, or children will be required to walk with Birchland Staff.

SEVERE WEATHER CONDITIONS

Weather can be unpredictable, we also do our best to stay open, however if we feel that we can't maintain the health and safety of your child we will close the centre. Severe weather might include: wind storms, snow, flooding, earthquake, power outage, even severe heat etc. If you feel the weather might turn dangerous please keep your children at home.

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES

NUTRITION:

In the daycare program, we ask that you send a well-balanced, healthy lunch for your child. Birchland Tree House is **a nut free zone**. Candies and juices are prohibited at the daycare. If your child does bring unprohibited food items, it will be sent back home. Feel free to send food that needs to be reheated, as we do have a microwave (soup, pizza, pasta, leftovers, etc.). Please make sure that all containers are labelled. Please make sure that there is an ice pack in your child's lunch kit as they will be kept in the cubbies.

HYGIENE

The staff will model and promote good personal hygiene by encouraging children in the areas of hand washing, nose-blowing, eating and toileting. With any group setting (school, daycare), it has the potential to be a breeding ground for germs. We are very diligent in keeping our centre clean! We strive to keep our staff and children as healthy and happy as possible. To achieve this, our cleaning schedule is as follows: -the floors are swept/ vacuumed/ washed daily. -the bathrooms are cleaned; toilets, sinks, and walls are wiped down daily -all toys, furnishings, and equipment are disinfected on a regular basis - the laundry is washed bi-weekly

ILLNESS

The risk of communicable illness is fairly high in a childcare setting; therefore we ask that you follow this policy to ensure the health of your child and of the other children. If your child becomes ill at the centre, we will contact you and ask that you pick up as soon as possible. Your child will be put on a mat away from the other children but close to a staff so that we can monitor your child until you arrive. If a child in the centre contracts a communicable disease, we will post information regarding that illness on the Parent Board. Please keep your child at home if he/she shows any of the following symptoms within a 24 hour period:

- A fever of 100 degrees F (38.3 C)
- Sore throat or trouble swallowing
- Vomiting
- Infected skin or eyes Diarrhea or upset stomach
- Stiff neck
- A runny nose with greenish discharge
- Difficulty breathing
- Headache
- Severe itching
- Unexplained fatigue an undiagnosed rash
- Severe coughing

As a general rule, if your child is not able to participate fully in the program, then they need to stay at home. If any of the above symptoms occur while your child is in our care, or if you child has been injured, the parent/guardian will be notified and asked to pick up the child. If your child has been in contact with a communicable disease or has sustained a serious injury while in our care, it is our policy to write up a Serious Incident Report and forward it to our Licensing Officer within 24 hours. If your child has been in contact with a communicable disease, we require a Dr.'s note stating that the child is well enough to return to daycare.

EMERGENCY CONSENT

We ask that the registration forms for contacting you doctor, or ambulance be filled out and signed. We also have an emergency card that is with us whenever we leave the centre. It is very important to fill everything out correctly and sign the back so we can see to the safety of your child in an emergency. Please remember this information is us only to way to reach a parent in case of an emergency, keep us

updated with any new or revised information as your lives change.

MEDICATION

If your child is on prescription medication that must be administered while at the centre, you must fill out a Medication Administration form (available from the staff). Only prescribed cough or cold medication can be administered at this centre (no over the counter cough or cold medication is allowed to be administered by staff). The medication must be prescribed by a doctor and be in its original container. Please hand the medication to a staff member along with the signed form. The medication will be kept in the fridge in a locked box.

IMMUNIZATIONS

All children in a childcare setting are required to have on file an up to date record of their immunizations. If you do not choose to have your child immunized, we require a written letter from the parent/guardian. If a communicable disease does occur in the centre, you will be notified and your child will not be able to attend daycare until the danger period is over. This is to protect your child and the other children in our care.

ALLERGIES

Upon registering your child, please be sure that all staff is aware of any allergies your child may have and how they are to handle an allergic reaction. Please note Management feels we can't up hold providing snacks for risk of a reaction, you will be asked to provide your own snacks on a daily bases.

SPECIAL DIETS

If your child has a special diet, Management reserves the right to ask parents to bring their own snacks, lunch and treats. These items will be labeled and only be given to the child they are attended for.

FIRE, EARTHQUAKE AND LOCKDOWN DRILLS

Fire and earthquake drills are held on a regular basis. Please be prepared for the questions that may arise from your children. Lockdown procedures are sadly now a necessity, we follow the same protocols as the School Board. If we are having a Yellow lockdown we lock the doors and windows and no one is allowed in or out. If it is a red lockdown we lock everything including the gate, no one is allow in or out, the children will be gathered away from the windows. We will keep the children clam as possible.

HEAD LICE

In a group setting there is the possibility of head lice. There is a misconception that "dirty" children get head lice. This is NOT true; in fact, lice happen to like clean hair, therefore, any child can get it. The Health Board does not recognize head lice as a health issue as they do not carry transmittable diseases. That being said, head lice are a nuisance and it takes a lot of work to get rid of them. In the past, special shampoos would take care of the problem. However, nowadays the lice have become more resilient. The shampoo does kill the live lice but not the nits. (Nits are the greyish, white eggs that attach to the base of the hair) To get rid of lice, a three step approach is recommended:

- 1) Wash your child's hair with the lice shampoo.
- 2) Pick out all of the nits.
- 3) Re-treat your child with the shampoo 7 days after the initial treatment.

This is an arduous process but with the centre and family working together, this is what is proven to work. Once the child has had the initial treatment they may return to the centre. We do not feel that a child must be kept at home throughout this process, as it may take a week or so to get rid of all the nits. However, we do expect the family to be diligent in treatment and be willing to work with the centre.

Our responsibility to you:

- check the children's heads frequently
- inform parents if there are lice found
- supply parents with an information packet on head lice and treatment
- follow up on treatment
- make sure that spare clothes and bedding are washed
- have talks with the children regarding the sharing of hats, clothing, brushes,

etc. Parent's responsibility to the centre:

- check your child's hair once a week
- notify us right away if you find lice
- treat your child's hair with lice shampoo as soon as possible
- pick out the nits every night until they are all gone
- Re-shampoo your child's hair within 7-10 days of initial treatment Lice are a nuisance but with frequent head checks, early detection, diligence, and cooperation, we will get through this together!

ABUSE POLICIES DEFINITION OF ABUSE

Emotional abuse: Any act or lack of action which may diminish a child's well-being from a person in the facility or persons outside the facility (verbal harassment, yelling, or confinement).

Physical abuse: Any physical force that is excessive or inappropriate to a situation involving a person in care or perpetuated by a person not in care.

Sexual abuse: Any sexual behaviour towards a person in care by an employee, volunteer, or any person in position of authority. Any sexual exploitation whether consensual or not, or sexual activity between children when the older child is clearly taking sexual advantage of the younger child.

Neglect: Failure to meet the needs of the children in care (food, shelter, care, supervision).

LEGAL DUTY TO REPORT

If the alleged abuse has occurred to a child in this facility, the staff is required to report immediately to our Licensing Officer. At that time, our Licensing Officer will conduct an investigation under the Community Care and Assisted Living Act and Child Care Licensing Regulations. Abuse at the centre: If parents have any concerns about abuse at the daycare centre, you may also contact the Ministry of Children and Family Development or the Licensing Officer at the local Health Unit.

Abuse outside of the centre: If the alleged abuse has occurred when the child is not in this centre, our responsibility is to immediately contact an intake Social Worker at the Child Protection Division of the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

GUIDANCE POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

The staff at Birchland Tree House Play Care work together as a team to create an atmosphere of trust, security, and comfort for both the children and parents. We practice guidance strategies that are positive, consistent, respectful, and nonpunitive. Through these strategies we are assisting the children in developing self-control, gaining self-confidence, developing problem-solving skills and fostering independence.

Some of these strategies are:

- ❖ Stating limits in a positive, clear, consistent and simple manner.
- ❖ Using positive reinforcement for appropriate behaviour.
- ❖ Modeling problem-solving skills.
- ❖ Offering appropriate choices.
- ❖ Using natural and logical consequences.
- ❖ Redirecting.
- ❖ Setting up the environment to limit children and materials.
- ❖ Scanning the environment at all times.
- ❖ Clarifying and reminding children of their limits.
- ❖ Encouraging the children to problem-solve through talking, negotiating, and compromising.
- ❖ Time away will be used as a last resort. The time based on one minute per year of age.
- ❖ (5-year-old = 5 minute time away)
- ❖ If a child needs a time away, we will have that child sit in a chair away from the other children to calm down.
- ❖ In view of staff, when the child's parent arrives, the caregiver would approach to the parents. The parents and at that time discuss why a time away was used.
- ❖ The staff at Birchland Tree House Play Care at **no time** would discipline your child by:
 - Subject a child to shoving, hitting, spanking, or any other form of corporal punishment.
 - Subject a child to belittling or degrading treatment, whether verbal, emotional, or physical, that would humiliate the child or undermine the child's self-respect.
 - Subject a child to a form of punishment by confinement, physically restrained, or , or kept, without Adult supervision, apart from other children.
 - Subject a child to a form of punishment by depriving of meals, snacks, rest or use of a toilet. If you have any questions or concerns regarding our guidance strategies, please

feel free to approach the staff.

POLICIES REGARDING CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOUR FOR STAFF, VOLUNTEERS, SUBSTITUTES, AND STUDENTS'

INAPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

- ❖ Speak with the child ∞ Use redirection
- ❖ Use modeling
- ❖ Demonstrate and encourage problem solving
- ❖ Use time away

ESCALATING BEHAVIOUR

- ❖ Remove the child from the situation, away from the other children, and yourself (if necessary).
- ❖ Give the child space so that they can calm down before you try to problem solve. ❖ Stay a safe distance away so that you can monitor the child.
- ❖ Talk to the child softly so they have to focus on you.
- ❖ Talk to the child about what happened, talk of feelings, consequences, what you can do differently next time.
- ❖ Write in the daily journal about the incident. Include the date, time, children involved. Also include the staff who was involved, what transpired, how it was handled, and whether you had to contact the parents.
- ❖ When the parents arrive, speak with them about the incident.

BEHAVIOURAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

When a child is consistently having behaviour issues, we may need to put together an individual n individual behaviour management plan for them. This is to help the child become more successful, and to ensure that everyone dealing with the child is on the same page and is consistent in their guidance. If this is necessary, the following steps will take place:

- ❖ Meet with the parents and the Program Supervisor
- ❖ Discuss the issues of concern and find out what strategies are successful
- ❖ Make suggestions that have worked for us in the past
- ❖ Decide what strategies we are going to put into place and have agreement that we will all work together and be consistent in using them.
- ❖ Meet with the parents and the child to discuss the plan.
- ❖ Review the plan weekly or as needed.
- ❖ Let the parents know of the community resources that are available to assist them in supporting children whose behaviour may be challenging.
- ❖ If the challenging behaviour continues and the staff can no longer provide safe care for the child, alternate care will have to be found.
- ❖ An Incident Report is required to be sent in to Licensing if a child has been aggressive or shown unusual behaviour, or if use of restraint has been required. Guidance for IT Children ❖ We will

practice guidance verse punishment. We use this website (<http://oureverydaylife.com>) a great recourse. This will also be posted up for all the staff and in our training book. Using the following steps:

❖ Positive Attention

❖ Discipline is about teaching your little one the acceptable way to behave, and it doesn't have to be all about correcting the bad behaviors. Find as many opportunities as you can to praise her for the good behaviors you see. When she hands you her favorite toy, say "Good job sharing," or when she has to wait for your attention, tell her how patient she was. The Mayo Clinic website states that your displays of affection for your child should outnumber any consequences she receives. When she feels a positive relationship with you, she will be more motivated to follow your directions.

❖ Say "No" Positively ∞ Toddlers are naturally curious and will often want to test the boundaries of acceptable behavior. There will be many times you have to tell your little one "no," but it can often be done in a positive way. Instead of just saying no, offer a simple explanation. If he is climbing on furniture, say "Not safe," as you redirect him to another more suitable activity, or when he grabs for a breakable item tell him, "That's not for you," and move it out of his reach. Remember to pick your battles, and only say no when it is absolutely necessary. ❖ Set Them Up for Success

❖ While tantrums are a normal part of toddlerhood, parents can reduce them by following a few guidelines. Stick to a consistent routine, and watch your child for signs of hunger or tiredness and avoid putting her into situations that could be frustrating, like having to wait in line. Toddlers are developing a sense of independence, and you can help to encourage that by offering your little one choices whenever possible. Let her pick out the cup she wants to use or which book she would like to read at nap time.

❖ Natural Consequences

❖ Since discipline is all about teaching, it is important to let your toddler learn from his mistakes. When he does break a rule, let him see the consequences of his actions, as long as they are not dangerous. For example, if he is too rough with a toy and it breaks, he will not be able to play with it anymore.

INFANT/TODDLER PLAY GROUND POLICY

We will have use of the forested area behind the childcare centre. This is large open space with lots of room to run. We will also have equipment to encourage gross motor skills, such as: ride-on toys, tunnels, balls, buckets and a sand box. We also have a large school area to go for walks, an undercover area and forested areas to go on adventures. Some equipment on the school grounds and in our community may not be age appropriate, they staff will limit the children to what they think is safe for the ability of the child or group. If you have a particular concern about your child or their abilities please inform the staff immediately.

**Birchland Tree House Play Care Ltd.
Parent Contract**

Please sign the following and return to the Centre after you have read the Parent Handbook.

I, _____ (parent/guardian), have read the Parent Handbook and understand it completely. I agree to adhere to its philosophy, policies, and procedures.

If you are not in compliance with the regulations above you may be asked to leave the centre without notice.

X _____

Parent/Guardian's Signature

X _____

Date