

Welcome to the MFRC's Out of School Care Program



Parent Handbook

**Colwood Pacific Activity Centre
2610 Rosebank Road (250)363-2640**

Welcome

The MFRC's Out of School Care program has been open since 2002. We serve children and families of full-time Canadian Armed Forces members living in the Victoria area. Our program is licensed through Island Health and we offer age appropriate activities, outdoor play and school age programming to children attending École John Stubbs and Victor Brodeur.

Vision Statement

Our vision statement is to provide a welcoming, nurturing and inclusive environment where children grow and explore while families feel appreciated and supported within the military community.

Philosophy

The MFRC's Out of School Care program is based on providing a child-centered approach to care, taking individual needs of each child and family into account.

All child care workers will promote a partnership with parents to ensure consistent and respectful care for each child. Staff will work with you to ensure consistent care for your child and to build a trusting, reciprocal relationship with you that is based on open communication. Our objectives are to assist children to develop at their own rate in a safe, nurturing, supportive and respectful environment.

Additionally, care will be provided that is age appropriate and play based across various environments that stimulate curiosity, independence and positive emotional and social development.

We believe that all behaviors present an opportunity to learn. Young children need guidance in learning socially acceptable behavior. We try to use each situation to explain feelings, encourage empathy and model alternate solutions. By setting clear and consistent limits, following through, intercepting inappropriate behavior, and explaining the reasons for the limits, we work with the children to gain confidence and learn to acquire social problem solving skills.

The program has an open door policy, which means parents/guardians are welcome to visit any time of the day. When visiting your child, we encourage you to participate in your child's care, routine and activities. All child care workers deliver programming that encompasses best practices found within the Island Health's Child Care Licensing Regulations and provide individual and flexible care as needed. Also, all staff are familiar with implementing additional supports when required regarding lifestyle challenges such as deployment and relocation.

We pride ourselves on providing a diverse and inclusive setting. ***All children are welcome in various activities and care options are available in our Children's services program.*** Activities and programs provided to our community will strive to include all children to participate to their fullest extent. *(Please see Inclusion Statement below)*

Operational Procedures & Guidelines

Hours of Operation

The Out of School Care centre is open from 6:30 am until 5:30 pm Monday to Friday. The program does not run for statutory holidays, School District's staff professional development days, Spring Break, Christmas Break or Summer Break (please see *Key Dates* document). The program does run on early dismissal days.

Notification

If your child is going to be absent or late arriving, please notify staff as soon as possible. The Out of School Care office phone (250)391-4256 is equipped with voice mail that is routinely checked.

We request that you inform Out of School Care staff by telephone or a signed note if:

- Your child will not be attendance – *if the reason is health-related, please inform staff*
- Your child will be arriving late or picked up early
- A previously non-authorized person will be picking up your child; he/she will not be released to an unauthorized person without your permission (*Must have this in writing*)

Orientation

In order to have children gain a sense of comfort and belonging in the Out of School Care setting, it is important that they have time to adjust to it and meet the staff who will be caring for them.

We encourage parents to bring their child to the Centre for an initial tour and orientation to our program. It is important for parents to meet with one of the staff members prior to the child starting the program to discuss the routines, expectations and any additional supports or strategies that will be helpful in providing highest quality of care for your child.

Daily Arrival and Departure

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to sign their child in and out of the centre each day. This is set up for the safety of the children and is also a Licensing requirement. As a safety measure, children may not arrive on site unaccompanied.

The sign in/out sheet is used as an attendance record in emergency situations and to plan staffing needs.

In addition to signing in/out on arriving and departing from the Centre, please take the time to share information of any additional needs your child may have on a given day. Please say all good-byes inside of the childcare areas.

Only those persons whose names appear on the registration form or the alternate contact list may pick up children from the Centre. All persons, other than the parents, must provide identification upon picking up a child. No child will be allowed to leave for home unaccompanied, or in the hands of a person whose name is not on file at the OSC.

Procedure for Child Missing From Designated Pick Up

The following procedures will be in place should we arrive at the school and your child is not at the designated pick up area:

- The program leader will check in with the office and teacher to see if the child was in attendance throughout the school day.
- School grounds will be checked if the child had attended school.
- Attempts will be made to contact the parents or emergency contacts.
- If we are unable to contact someone who can confirm your child's whereabouts, we will immediately contact the Military Police and file a missing child report.
- A search of the school and route your child may have taken home will continue with the help of the Military Police.

We take the care and safety of your child very seriously and a number of resources will be involved in trying to locate your child. Therefore, it is imperative that you inform the staff if your child will not be attending the program.

Parent/Guardian Participation

Parents/guardians may be invited to attend events during the year in order to allow time to:

- Discuss policies and issues of concern to parents/guardians
- Acknowledge work of staff, volunteers, and parents in support of the program
- Provide an informal social opportunity for parents to network with each other and educators

Should a family need to discuss personal issues or concerns, please feel free to approach a child care worker or an appointment may be set up at any time with the Child Care Supervisor or Children's Services Coordinator.

Late Pick-up Fees Policy

Parents/guardians agree to pay a late charge of \$15.00 per hour, or part thereof, after the scheduled closing of the Out of School Care centre should they arrive late when picking up their child. (In determining the correct time, the staff on duty will go by the clock in the room). Parents/guardians are responsible for making alternate arrangements for someone to pick up your child if you are late.

Procedure:

If alternate arrangements are not made the staff procedure is as follows:

1. Fifteen (15) minutes following the closure of the Out of School Care centre, staff will try to reach the parents/guardians at all provided phone numbers.
2. If unable to reach a parent/guardian; those authorized on registration forms as an "Alternate Pick-up" will be called. A message will be left for the parent/guardian at the home phone number regarding what arrangements have been made.
3. If unable to reach an authorized "Alternate Pick-up", those listed "In Case Of Emergency" will be called. A message will be left for the parent/guardian at the home phone number regarding what arrangements have been made.
4. One (1) hour following the closure of the Out of School Care centre, if parents/guardians have not made contact and an alternate or emergency pick-up has not been arranged, staff will contact their immediate supervisor who will contact the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD). A message will be left for parents/guardians at their home phone number regarding what arrangements have been made. During office hours (8:30 – 4:30 PM, Monday – Friday) , parents/guardians may contact the local MCFD office located at the:

West Shore Family Services 2nd Floor, 345 Wale Road, Victoria, BC
V9B 6X2 250- 391-2223. To contact MCFD's emergency and after office (hours), call the 24 hour line at 1-800-663-9122

MFRC Staff and all citizens have a legal **Duty to Report** suspected child abuse, neglect or any concern about a child's safety and wellbeing to MCFD as stipulated in the Child, Family and Community Service Act. *See Staff Qualifications section for additional information regarding Duty to Report and Child welfare concerns.*

Financial

A \$20 non-refundable registration fee is due at time of enrolment. This non-refundable fee covers administration costs only. This charge does not go towards the first month childcare fees. A non-refundable deposit of ½ of one month's fees is required at the time of signing the contract.

Child care is offered by the calendar month, beginning on the first day of each month. Fees will not be pro-rated for those months when there are statutory holidays, or other school closures.

Fees are due in full and in advance by the first of every month. Please note that there may be changes in fees from time to time with due notice. The MFRC agrees to give six weeks' notice of any fee changes.

Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring that all subsidy authorizations are in place prior to enrolment and all approval forms are placed in your child's file. If subsidized, the parent agrees to pay the full amount of childcare fees when the subsidy expires. The parent portion of fees is required in full and by the first of every month.

In order to maintain a child care space, full monthly fees must be paid for any period of time when children are away from the centre, including vacation, statutory holidays, sickness or other absence. No refunds will be given for these absences. The parent/guardian is not permitted to sublet their child's position for any reason.

Failure to pay childcare fees by the 1st day of the month or make alternate payment arrangements with the Office Administrator may result in a notice of a cancellation of childcare services provided by the MFRC.

Parents/guardians agree to give one calendar months' notice, in writing, to the MFRC daycare centre by the last day of the month, one month prior to leaving. For example, notice by March 31st for May 1st. Licensing regulations with Island Health, requires that your child withdraw from daycare when they have reached the licensed group-care age maximum for this centre.

The MFRC Out of School Care will give six weeks written notice to parents/guardians if we are no longer able to provide services to your child(ren).

All fees paid to the MFRC are tax deductible. *Please ensure that you keep your receipts as there is a charge to reprint receipts.*

All payments for this program must be done at CPAC (2610 Rosebank Road).

Health Policy

There are many factors involved in ensuring a child's optimum growth and development; good health is a particularly important one. Children who are ill require a relaxed atmosphere and more individual attention than the Centre can provide.

When choosing a program such as the MFRC Out of School Care, parents/guardians must realize they will be restricted in the use of the program if their child is sick. In a child care setting, illnesses travel fast. If your child is sick or not feeling well, please refrain from bringing him/her to the program until they are well again. Keep in mind the children attending the Out of School Care are expected to participate in a variety of play experiences. If your child did not attend school due to illness, they are not to attend the Out of School Care on the same day.

It is understood that keeping a sick child home can mean a parent might miss valuable work hours. Please consider what your options are for alternate care if it is difficult for you to leave your work.

If a child requires medication to be administered, *Permission to Administer Medication* form will be provided whereby written authorization must be given by a parent/guardian. This permits

and provides staff with the necessary information to administer any medication. Staff will only dispense medication(s) listed on this form which is to be filled out completely and precisely. A staff member will insist that you get your physician's approval:

- if you wish the dosage to be given to your child to be different than the one indicated on the package, or
- if there is a concern about the number of consecutive days and times your child receives a particular medication.

We must ensure that all precautions are taken with the children in our care.

If your child becomes ill during the program hours, we will contact either parent/guardian right away. If we cannot reach you, the alternate person(s) on the registration form will be contacted to ensure that your child receives prompt, appropriate medical attention.

Child care workers have the right to refuse admission to a child who appears to be too ill to attend the Out of School Care. If your child cannot participate in our program (i.e. outside play, group activities etc.) then he/she is not permitted in the program. We ask you to respect the staff's decision when asked to pick up your child due to illness. Our concern is to provide a healthy, safe environment for all children to enjoy.

Please note, the criteria for exclusion listed on the following page are recommended by Island Health. These criteria may differ in some respects from your physician's opinion, primarily because these criteria are designed for children participating in group care.

CONDITIONS FOR CHILDREN TO BE EXCLUDED FROM DAYCARE

- **Acute cold:** Contagious with obvious discharge of infected green, yellow or reddish brown mucus – return when discharge has subsided.
- **Cough:** 3-5 times per hour, and especially if choking and/or vomiting accompanies the cough. Child may return when coughing has subsided.
- **Fever:** 38⁰C (100.4F) or over – may return when fever has remained at 37⁰ (98.6F) for 24 hours without the aid of medication, and the child has not developed a secondary infection.
- **Vomiting:** Return after 24 hours of last bout of sickness.
- **Diarrhea:** Must be symptom free for 24 hours and have had one solid bowel movement.
- **Antibiotic:** Return after 24 hours since first taken.

- **Infected skin or eyes:** A doctor must examine undiagnosed skin irritations, and medical clearance for return is obtained. Conjunctivitis (pink eye) is very contagious and must be treated and eyes clear before the child may return.
- **Ear aches and Infections:** Because VIHA says untreated ear infections can lead to hearing loss and are potentially infectious, we require children to see a Doctor for direction and ask that children stay home for a minimum of 24 hours with or without antibiotic medication. This allows for the children to be monitored and assessed. Children may return when symptoms such as fever and ear tugging have subsided.
- **Lice:** A child may return once he/she has been treated with an effective treatment and **all lice and nits** have been combed or picked out of hair. Follow up shampooing must be administered to complete treatment.
- **Communicable Diseases:** Communicable diseases such as chicken pox and measles must be reported to the Daycare educators as soon as they are diagnosed. The duration of the child's treatment and exclusion from daycare will depend on VIHA's Communicable Disease recommendations which educators will be able to provide.

Allergies

Please inform the child care workers of any food allergies that your child has. Staff must be notified in writing if your child has food allergies including symptoms resulting from the allergy and any remedies and precautions that need to be taken.

Please note our policy regarding allergies which may restrict certain food products at the centre such as nuts and tree nuts. We will inform you if it is required for us to enforce that policy due to a child's severe allergy that could be life threatening including anaphylactic reactions.

Inclement Weather

In addition to walking to and from École John Stubbs, children will spend time outdoors daily and will participate in activities during sunny and rainy weather; appropriate clothing is strongly recommended. Extreme weather conditions such as intense cold or heat will be monitored by educators and any necessary precautions taken (as directed by VIHA).

The Out of School Care will remain open during most periods of perceived inclement weather. Given the mild climate of Victoria it is unlikely that extreme weather/temperature fluctuations will occur. However, in the event of extreme weather conditions, the MFRC and CFB Esquimalt reserve the right to close the Out of School Care. Every effort will be made to contact parents/guardians.

Emergency Procedures

Child Care Licensing Regulations requires all licensed group daycares to post and practice monthly fire drills. These fire drills are posted in the Children's Services Coordinator's office.

In case of an emergency such as a fire or earthquake, children will be evacuated from the Out of School Care and parents/guardians will be contacted. If practical, the children will remain as close to the centre as possible for a maximum of two hours as parents would most naturally come straight to the program. After the 2-hour period, our staff will bring the children to the nearest Community Emergency Centre (CEC), please listen to the local radio station (CFAX-1070) to find out the location of the closet CEC (e.g. Juan de Fuca Recreation Centre). Please Note: The MFRC's emergency plan may be changed as the situation develops. Every possible effort will be made to properly inform parents of where they can pick up their child if plans change due to uncontrollable circumstances.

If it is not possible to leave the building, all staff will assist the children in any manner required, for example administering first aid, providing comfort or emotional support during an emergency.

Base Emergencies

Parents/guardians should be aware that if there is a base emergency, the Department of National Defence (DND) has priority over the building and may need access to the Out of School Care location and its amenities. It is possible during such emergencies that all operations and programs will temporarily close until further notice and clearance given by the base. Every effort will be made to contact parents/guardians of a closure at the Out of School Care or a cessation of programs such as the child care centre(s).

Family Care Plan

All Regular Force and Primary Reserve members are responsible for ensuring that they have a *Family Care Plan* (DAOD 5044-1) in place to accommodate deployments and emergencies. Having a Family Care Plan ensures that members have made arrangements for child care in preparation for situations in which they will need to be absent for duty reasons. When developing your Family Care Plan Declaration it is essential to consider all of the possible scenarios in which you could be absent for duty reasons. These could include emergency call-outs, domestic and international operational deployment; training and short-term duty requirements even Daycare Closure.

Fill out your Family Care Plan Declaration and return it to your unit. If you require help to develop your family care plan, contact the MFRC for assistance.

Staff Qualifications and Philosophy Statements

Staff Qualifications

All child care workers are considered Responsible Adults, in accordance to Island Health's Licensing requirements. Staff are at least 19 years of age, hold a current first aid and CPR, and have a least 20 hours' worth of education in children development. The Child Care Supervisor also holds a post-secondary training in Early Childhood Education. Additionally, all staff have completed a Criminal Record Check. The MFRC holds continuous professional development for staff to further enhance the quality of the service. The Children's Services Coordinator and Child Care Supervisor have additional skills and educational requirements.

Military Lifestyle Awareness

All child care workers are familiar with unique aspects associated with the military lifestyle, for example, deployment and relocation, and how these features can affect our children and families. At the time of hire, all child care workers are expected to review the on-line tool "Caring for the Military Child". This is an interactive presentation designed to give staff tools information to help children from military families cope with unique lifestyle challenges, such as deployment and relocation.

Parents/guardians who are experiencing deployment may also find the MFRC's deployment workshops for children useful during these times of transition. Please speak with a staff member or the supervisor to obtain additional information.

Practicum Students, Volunteers and Substitute Educators

Occasionally, practicum students, volunteers and substitute child care workers will be involved in your child's program. Parents/guardians are encouraged to consult with the regular classroom staff if any questions or concerns arise regarding students or temporary staffing.

Parents/guardians will be informed as necessary when a substitute staff is employed when a regular staff is absent for more than two consecutive weeks. Additionally, substitute staff will also be employed when a regular staff member is unavailable due to holidays, illness or bereavement.

Practicum students and volunteers are never unsupervised with the children in our programs and are not counted in our staffing to child ratios of care. Completed criminal record checks are also required by students and volunteers.

All child care workers are familiar with circumstances that require them to report child abuse, neglect or any concerns about a child's safety and well-being as mandated by law. Staff or parents who have additional child welfare concerns should download or obtain a copy of BC's *Responding to Child Welfare Concerns. Your Role in Knowing When and What to Report and the Child, Family and Community Service Act of BC.*

Additionally, staff or concerned citizens can contact the **Children's Helpline at 310-1234**, (no area code required) regarding suspected child abuse, neglect or if a child's safety appears compromised.

Nutrition Statement

Parents/guardians are responsible for providing a nutritious snack daily for their child. The only beverage we will provide is water. Children are welcome to bring their breakfast to the Out of School Care if they arrive early in the mornings.

We strongly believe in a well-balanced, nutritious lifestyle and encourage families to do the same. Please ensure that your child has healthy food and drink according to *Canada's Food Guide*, which promotes healthy eating and nutritional habits. Please ensure that your child has sufficient quantity and quality of food and drink to meet the developmental needs regarding a child's age, the number of hours the child is away from home, considering the child's food preferences and cultural background. If you need any suggestions regarding these guidelines, our staff can help you with choosing healthy options.

Regarding special occasions as birthdays or holidays, please check with the child care supervisor or a staff member about some ideas and options to promote healthy eating habits for special days.

Please note: Do not send hard candy, gum, nuts, tree nuts, potato chips or chocolate bars to Out of School Care. Some of these items are also choking hazards.

Communication with Families

We strive to build strong, respectful and reciprocal relationships through open communication with our families. These relationships are maintained and enhanced as required and begin with informal conversations daily about the well-being of your child, within a private milieu, for example, outside his/her hearing. Other mediums of communication are used as necessary, for example, telephone, email or a scheduled meeting with the coordinator and or supervisor. To assist the staff with providing the optimum support needed, informing the staff of any changes at home, for example, deployment will provide us with information to modify a child's programming at the centre.

Guidance and Discipline

Guidance and discipline are always approached positively and respectfully at the centre. Any interventions implemented, whether formal or informal, take into account opportunities for children to learn self-regulation skills, are age appropriate and promote supportive problem solving skills. All supports cultivate nurturing, responsive behaviour change through conversation, modelling and providing positive feedback and reinforcement.

Additionally, our staff use suggestions associated with the Positive Behavior Support Teaching Pyramid or PBS as recommended by VIHA's Supported Child Development. All educators
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receive training in PBS methods and are expected to implement these strategies when assisting children with overcoming difficulties or modifying behaviors. Underlining principles of PBS support ideas that staff need to understand “why” a child presents with challenging behavior and learns to focus on teaching new skills to reduce or replace undesirable behaviours.

All supports associated with any concepts pertaining to guidance and discipline must be in keeping with requirements and principles associated with the Child Care Licensing Regulations and the BC Child Care Act. The safety and well-being of children receiving care is of paramount importance. In addition, the MFRC has the following Policies:

- Children in care occasionally require individualized, behaviour management supports that meet a child’s unique needs.
- Educators will use positive methods and approaches to managing behaviour. Some strategies typically include: setting clear and direct limits, using redirection, acknowledging feelings and encouraging children to “use their words”.
- The MFRC does not permit the use of physical, emotional or psychological punishment of any child and will not tolerate a parent who chooses these approaches in our setting.
- Occasionally, parents/guardians will be asked to sign incident reports when they occur.

For any child requiring additional behavior management or positive supports, staff will request a meeting with parents/guardians to find solutions that are created collaboratively. A Child Care Plan must also be drafted listing goals with interventions required to assist a child who requires additional supports. This document is required by Licensing. Suggestions for community resources can also be made as needed.

Parents are required to review the *Out of School Care Guidelines for Behaviour* with their child. A signed copy of this document must be kept in each child’s file at the Centre. A second copy will remain in this booklet for your reference.

Inclusion Statement

The MFRC Out of School Care accepts and welcomes children of all abilities. Our child care workers recognize that all children may have unique, cultural or special needs. We believe that all individuals deserve an environment and experiences that promote growth in all areas of their development. Using a strength-based approach, our programs and services endeavor to provide for the inclusion of individuals who require additional support because of a physical, cognitive, social or emotional need.

Child care workers at Esquimalt MFRC child care programs strive to accommodate needs and promote an inclusive environment. The extent to which we can support specialized inclusive care in our licensed programs is dependent upon the situation, our resources, staffing, training and community partnerships.

Upon enrollment, if known, please inform the Children’s Coordinator or another designated staff of your child’s specific, extra needs or an actual diagnosis if determined by health officials. The staff will assist you with developing a developmental or individual plan specific to support

any required needs. This document is also required by licensing officers as delegated in the Child Care Licensing Regulations.

Why we play! Activities and Outdoor Play

Children benefit greatly from time spent outdoors and we provide opportunities for this each day. Outdoor play offers children unique opportunities for learning about various activities and the environment that cannot always be obtained from being indoors. Additionally outdoor play enhances gross motor play that is part of promoting healthy body development and coordination. Outdoor play may also involve “getting dirty or a bit wet” please provide appropriate clothing for this.

Occasionally, trips to local areas typically accessed by walking may occur, for example, to the beach or local library. Parents will be informed prior to these trips.

Your Feedback

We welcome your feedback on our programs and services and will ask for your support during our formal evaluation processes throughout the year. We also appreciate any informal and constructive feedback you would like to offer to the Child Care Supervisor or Children’s Services Coordinator.

Formal Evaluation

You will be invited to participate in the Family Resource Program online survey on an annual basis. Additionally, a meeting between you and your child’s educator will be scheduled to give you the opportunity to learn more about your child’s care and provide us with input.

FOR YOUR REFERENCE



**Out of School Care Program
Guidelines for Behaviour**

Respectful language and behaviour is expected of all persons involved in the program. If you do not feel you are being treated with respect, please inform staff.

No distasteful conduct will be tolerated. Such conduct is at the discretion of the staff, and may relate to language, gestures, music lyrics etc.

Violence and threatening behaviours will not be tolerated. Out of School Care is a place where everyone should feel safe and comfortable.

Roughhousing, play fighting and running in the building are not allowed. These actions quickly escalate and it can be difficult to determine if someone is being bullied or intimidated, or if it is all in fun.

All furnishings and equipment must be treated with respect.

Hanging out in the bathrooms or main hallway is discouraged. Supervision is focused on the Out of School Room (multi-purpose room) and a crowded hallway could hinder any necessary evacuation of the building.

Parent/Guardian's Signature

Child's Signature

This copy to remain in Parent's Manual. A copy is also required for each child's file and can be found on the MFRC Out of School Care Guidelines for Behaviour (yellow) form in the registration package.