

Beaufort Children's Centre

FAMILY HANDBOOK

2300 Ryan Road
Courtenay, BC V9N 8N6
Office Phone: (250) 897-1233

Email: admin@beaufortchildcare.ca

Website and Blog: www.beaufortchildcare.ca

Facebook: www.facebook.com/beaufortchildcare

Hummingbird Room (250) 897-1235

Orca Room (250) 897-1236

Ladybug Room (250) 897-1237

Introduction

We warmly welcome you to Beaufort Children's Centre.

This Family Handbook is intended to provide you with information about our programs and policies. Our goal is to work with you to provide a safe, healthy, and happy experience for your child(ren) and family while at the centre.

Vision

We envision and actively participate in a community that supports accessible, affordable and outstanding publicly funded early care and learning programs.

We create respectful, caring, inclusive relationships between staff, board members, families, NIC students and other community partners through open and consistent communication that supports the health and development of each child.

We are committed to working together to provide a safe, positive and nurturing environment where children are encouraged to explore and learn through a variety of creative and meaningful experiences.

We maintain an engaged, committed and connected board of directors to provide balanced, democratic, thoughtful and caring guidance on policy development to support the centre's social, environmental and financial well-being.

We recognize the value of our staff and the need to retain and attract exceptional educators through innovative professional development opportunities, ongoing recognition, a supportive work environment and a competitive compensation package.

Mission

Our mission is to provide outstanding early care and learning experiences to support the health, well-being and immense capabilities of young children, their families, early childhood educators, NIC students and other community partners.

About Us

Beaufort Children's Centre is a licensed group centre offering outstanding early care and learning programs to young children ages 18 months to 5 years.

Located on the Comox Valley campus of North Island College, Beaufort Children's Centre (BCC) is a non-profit centre that serves student, faculty, and community-based families.

BCC is operated by the Beaufort Child Care Society; as such, parents and community members make up the Board of Directors and contribute to the direction and operation of the centre.

BCC is fortunate to have a very dedicated, well-qualified, and highly experienced team of licensed early childhood educators, many of whom have additional training in infant and toddler care and working with children who have with special needs.

Programs

Beaufort Children's Centre offers one program for toddlers and two programs for preschool-age children.

The Hummingbird Room program accommodates up to 12 children ages 18 months to three years as is facilitated by four early childhood educators.

The Orca Room program accommodates up to 17 children ages 30 months to five years and is facilitated by three early childhood educators along with one support worker.

The Ladybug Room program accommodates up to 25 children ages 30 months to five years and is facilitated by five early childhood educators.

With gentle care and thoughtful guidance, our early childhood educators strive to support the children as they learn about themselves and the world around them. Through daily music and movement activities, art projects, outdoor and Nature-based play, stories and finger plays, science experiments, cooking and many other individual and shared activities, the children investigate their interests and build knowledge and skills in multiple areas. Documentation (using photos, words, and art) is one way that we share our learning with each other, families, and our community. We also provide Kindergarten transition documents to support children when they graduate from our programs and prepare to enter into Kindergarten.

Wait List Policy

1. First priority to any opening is internal. Any family being presently served who has provided a completed *Request to Change Schedule*, form shall be given the highest priority for any openings. If two or more families have applied for the same day, a first-come-first serve priority be given.
 - a. Some discretion will be given to the administrator depending on the need to fill spaces to reach capacity. For example if a 2 day a week family is waiting to switch one of their days, but the day they request does not allow a new family to use a five day a week spot. If providing a current family with a desired switch will prevent a new family from using a 5 day a week spot, then the administrator will have discretion to achieve capacity.
2. First priority for any new families will be to full-time NIC students. Accommodations may be made to allow for a September start, but financial stability of the centre will be paramount. If space is available in the summer months and the student refuse to begin enrollment over the summer, and this will cause a financial loss to the centre, then the space will be offered to the next priority; which may result in the student not having a space “reserved” for September.

3. Second priority for new families will be to NIC staff, part-time NIC students and siblings of families BCC is serving or have served in the past. Once again holding any spaces for a desired start date will be secondary to any financial loss to the centre.
4. Third priority to new families will be given to community members, on the wait list, on a first come-first-serve basis with consideration of achieving a balance in room composition.

Enrollment

Prior to your child's first day at the centre, all child care forms must be completed and submitted, including: enrollment form, parent/guardian agreement form, consent forms, and emergency contact forms. We also require a copy of your child's immunization record or a signed immunization waiver form.

You will need to submit a deposit of \$100 to confirm the space reserved for your child. If you do not decide to use the reserved space, your deposit will be forfeited. We will reimburse your deposit after we have finished providing care for your child, less any outstanding fees. We also require four post-dated monthly cheques made payable to Beaufort Children's Centre. Cash payments or e-transfers are also accepted, but arrangements need to be made in advance with the Administrator.

Finally, you will need to arrange three visits (parent/guardian and child) prior to your child's start date in order for your child to become familiar with the centre, staff, and other children in the program. We recommend that each visit be at least 2 hours in duration. This will help ensure a smooth transition.

Please Note: If you qualify for child care subsidy, we encourage you to complete the Child Care Subsidy Application Form (4 pages) and Child Care Arrangement Form (2 pages) as soon as possible, as we require payment on the first day of each month. If needed, the Administrator can assist with completing these forms.

Communication

We strive to provide open and consistent communication with families and we hope you will feel comfortable sharing your thoughts, suggestions, and feedback with staff and/or the Administrator.

We currently use email as a primary mode of communication. We also post updates and documentation of learning projects in our classrooms, on our Facebook page, and on our website blog. If you prefer not to use email and/or other electronic communication, please let the Administrator know.

De-Registration

De-registration may be required for any of the following reasons.

- A family chooses to withdraw their child.
- There is no notice, and we have not seen or heard from the family after 30 days.
- BCC requires to terminate service.

Withdrawal

Withdrawal of your child must be given by the first of the month at least one month prior to the effective date of the change or withdrawal and must be submitted in writing. Fees for the month must be paid regardless of whether your child will be attending Beaufort Children's Centre. The *Notice of Withdrawal* form will provide instruction on how to return your deposit.

Withdrawal without Notice

De-registration will be considered automatic, if we have not heard from a family in 30 days. Fees for the missing month and another month, in lieu of notice, for a total of 2 months fees, will be applied on account, minus the deposit.

Full payment of accounts is expected and the centre reserves the right to send delinquent accounts, of over 6 months, to a collections agency.

Terminating Service

The centre reserves the right to immediate de-registration if there is an extreme health and safety issue, which requires immediate action. The centre also reserves the right to immediate de-registration if there is a reasonable expectation of imminent and significant risk to the overall health and safety of the adults and children in the centre.

There are a variety of potential reasons the centre will initiate de-registering a child. Prior to providing a notice of de-registration, every reasonable effort will be made to resolve any circumstances requiring a cancellation of registration.

The Family:

- The parent does not make an effort to pick up his or her child when the child is ill or contagious, or the parent brings his or her child to the Centre knowing full well that the child is ill or contagious.
- The parent is in noncompliance with the Family Handbook agreement.
- Actions contrary to the interests of the Beaufort Child Care Society (BCCS).
- Actions deemed prejudicial to the BCCS, its staff, or to the children in its care.
- Physical or verbal violence towards any person on site.

Depending on the severity of noncompliance, before terminating any service, parents will first receive a verbal notice and/or a warning letter. If there has been no improvement, a final notice cancelling the child's registration at the Centre will be issued.

The Child:

- The care the child requires is beyond the centre's resources.

The parents will be consulted and encouraged to work jointly with the staff to develop strategies to resolve potential de-registration. If all the tools and strategies of the intervention plan do not result in an improvement within 3 months, then the Centre will provide a deregistration notice. The family will be given a reasonable notice of up to one month, depending on the circumstances.

PROCEDURE:

- Staff will document challenges and discuss with families.
- Families and staff will develop plans.
- Continued revaluations and adjustments as required.
- Within 3 months of implementing plans, the level of care will not be a detriment to the quality care of other children.
- If after 2 months, the Executive Coordinator and Room Supervisor believe the challenges will continue to compromise the quality of care to other children, then the Centre reserves the right to provide a 30 day notice of de-registration.

Request for an Extra Day

If you need an "extra day" of child care, you must fill out the Request for an Extra Day form and submit it to the Room Supervisor for approval. We will do our best to accommodate extra days. Please note that payment for an extra day must be received *on or before the day(s) requested*.

Authorization to Pick Up Your Child(ren)

Under no circumstances will a child be released to a person not authorized by the parent/guardian to pick up the child. All persons authorized to pick up your child must be included on the Enrollment Form. If a person with whom we are not familiar will be picking up your child, please give us written notice and a physical description of the person. We will also ask for identification.

If you are aware of a potential problem with a person who is not authorized to pick up your child, but may try to do so (as in a custody dispute), please inform the Room Supervisor and include details on the reverse of your Enrollment Form.

Staff do not have the legal right to deny a parent access to his or her child unless *a copy of the relevant court order is in the child's file*. If this is a concern for you, please talk with the Room Supervisor.

We will make every effort not to allow someone to remove your child from the centre without your permission.

Moving from the Toddler to Preschooler-age Program

Every effort will be made to provide space for a child turning three to move from the Toddler Program (18-36 months) in the Hummingbird Room to the next age group (30 months to 5 years) in the Orca Room or Ladybug Room. However, *this space cannot be guaranteed at the time of enrollment*. We will do our best to accommodate your child care needs while meeting the requirements of the BC Child Care Regulation.

Snacks and Lunches

The centre provides a morning and afternoon snack to all children. Families provide lunch for their children and are encouraged to send a variety of healthy foods including whole grains, fruits, vegetables, and proteins (meat, dairy, beans, and legumes). Please ensure that grapes are cut lengthwise (to prevent choking) and please do not send popcorn (choking hazard) or candies.

Clothing

Child care is a busy and messy experience. We encourage children to explore and learn, especially with messy mediums like: sand, water, mud, dirt, and paint, just to mention a few. Children will get messy and although we do our best to avoid permanent stains, this is also a possibility. Please ensure your children come to our centre in clothing that will allow them to actively explore a wide variety of materials.

As we deal with dozens of children each day and serve about 100 families a month, staff cannot know which piece of clothing belongs to which child. It is very important to label all your children's clothing.

Clothing (Continued ...)

As you know, we are outside every day. Most children are outside for at least 1 hour in the morning and 1 hour in the afternoon, but most often we are outside for 3 to 4 hours a day. We need families to make sure their children have appropriate attire for being outside, regardless the weather. As West Coasters this means rain gear, warm clothing in the winter and light clothing for the summer.

As a final note, our educators are dedicated to providing the highest standard of care to children and our focus is always on the children, not their clothing. Sometimes clothing does get damaged or lost. We do our best to ensure children's clothing remains in tack, but we cannot be held responsible to any lost or damaged clothing.

Fees and Other Payments

In order to provide quality care for your children, Beaufort Children's Centre must maintain financial stability and this can only be achieved when fees are paid in a timely and consistent manner. To this end, our Board of Directors implemented a process for managing fees in Nov of 2011. The intent is to have a proactive policy that is clear and fair for all families and is manageable and fiscally responsible for the centre.

The entire process is available for review and the key parts are as follows:

- 1) Registration is confirmed once a \$100 deposit is received. This amount will be applied to the final month of fees.
- 2) All families are required to provide 4 months (minimum) of postdated cheques to the Executive Coordinator at all times. If yours is a situation including subsidy, you are required to pay the full fee and will be reimbursed the subsidy portion when it comes through. Child care fees are due on the first day of each month. If for some reason a family is unable to meet this requirement, then please discuss this with the Executive Coordinator. Cheques can be made payable to Beaufort Children's Centre. Receipts will be issued annually (in February) for tax purposes.
- 3) If fees are not paid as required, the first step will be an informal letter/email as a reminder of this policy and a discussion with the Executive Coordinator to make arrangements for payment.
- 4) If fees an arrangement is not made, then a formal follow-up letter will be issued, which will include a \$25 late fee.
- 5) If fees are not received by the end of the month, you will be asked to withdraw your child from Beaufort.

It is important to stress that Beaufort is highly dependant on fees to maintain the high standard of quality care we provide. We understand the financial strain that childcare costs can create and we also hope you understand the importance of enforcing this policy.

Please Note: No refund will be given for absences due to illness, vacation or when the centre is closed. Scheduled days cannot be substituted for other days.

Parents/guardians requesting duplicate copies of child tax receipts will be required to pay an additional \$10 processing fee for this service.

Cheques returned NSF will require an additional \$15.00 fee to cover service charges. Overdue fees are not permitted. Your space in the centre will be forfeited if fees have not been paid or other acceptable arrangements have not been made by the end of the month.

Beaufort Children's Centre is open Monday to Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. A full-day space is the equivalent to up to 9 hours per day.

The centre is closed on all BC Statutory Holidays and between Christmas and New Year's of each year. It is also closed on Easter Monday and the Friday before Labour Day.

If your child has not been picked up by the time the centre closes (5:30 p.m.), we will attempt to reach one of the persons listed on your emergency contact form. *If we are unable to locate anyone to pick your child up and we do not know where you are, we are required to contact the Ministry of Children and Family Development for further instructions.* If you are not able to pick up your child, please call and let us know what alternate plans you have made.

A late pick-up fee of \$15.00 will be charged for every 15 minutes (or portion thereof) after 5:30p.m.

Hours of Operation

Beaufort Children's Centre is open Monday to Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

The Centre is closed on the following days:

| | | |
|---------------|--------------|------------------|
| New Years Day | Victoria Day | Thanksgiving Day |
| Family Day | Canada Day | Remembrance day |
| Good Friday | BC Day | Christmas Day |
| Easter Monday | Labour Day * | Boxing Day |

Where a holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the weekday(s) following the holiday(s) shall normally be deemed the day when the centre is closed. A notice/reminder of holiday closures will be posted at the centre.

* The centre is also closed on the Friday before Labour Day weekend for Program Planning Day.

Please Note: Fees are not reduced for these holidays and closures.

Monthly Child Care Fees (including \$2.00 monthly membership fee)

Effective April 2017

| Monthly Child Care Fees | 5 days/week | 4 days/week | 3 days/week | 2 days/week | Extra Day |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------|
| Toddlers 18 mths to 3 yrs plus membership | \$917 \$919 | \$787 \$789 | \$609 \$611 | \$433 \$435 | \$52 |
| NIC Student Rate plus membership | \$879 \$881 | \$754 \$756 | \$586 \$588 | \$412 \$414 | \$47 |
| Preschoolers 3 yrs to 5 yrs plus membership | \$745 \$747 | \$640 \$642 | \$499 \$501 | \$355 \$357 | \$41 |

Please Note:

Fees are due on the 1st day of each month. Post-dated cheques for four months at a time (Jan.-Apr., May-Aug., and Sept.-Dec.) are required, unless alternate arrangements have been made with the Administrator.

The Administrator can provide assistance with the Child Care Subsidy Application Form and Child Care Arrangement Form, including use of the fax machine. However, it is the parent or guardian's responsibility to ensure that paperwork is completed and sent in advance so that Child Care Subsidy is in place on or before the child's start date.

Christmas Break

Beaufort Children's Centre closes at 3p.m. on the last working day before Christmas Day and re-opens the first working day after New Year's Day.

Please Note: This typically represents three week days in addition to the designated holidays. This break enables staff to rest and rejuvenate before the New Year. It also enables us to do annual centre maintenance.

Snow Closure

Beaufort Children's Centre is closed when snow conditions pose safety hazards, as determined by North Island College. Once a decision has been made to close an NIC campus it will be posted on the college's website, and all applicable primary media outlets in the region will be contacted. Media outlets may include:

- Radio EAGLE 97.3 FM - Comox Valley, Campbell River, Port Alberni
- Radio THE PEAK 93.3 FM- Port Alberni
- Radio JET 98.9 FM - Comox Valley
- Radio THE RIVER 99.7 - Campbell River
- Radio THE PORT 1240 AM - Mt. Waddington
- CHEK News
- CTV Vancouver Island

Decisions regarding campus or college-wide closure are made as early as possible, prior to 6:00 am, if the weather event or power outage occurred throughout the night.

If the power is off for a half hour before opening, the centre will be closed. If the power outage occurs during the day and is expected to last for more than an hour, the centre will close.

Guidance Strategies

Prevention strategies promote positive or pro-social behavior. These include appropriate child to staff ratios, inclusive practices, classroom arrangement, and programming strategies.

When needed, intervention strategies ensure that guidance is supportive rather than punitive when unacceptable behavior does occur. These strategies include:

- Reminding children of acceptable behavior, to clarify and reinforce limits.
- Being supportive of children by acknowledging feelings before setting limits.
- Re-directing children to other appropriate activities to meets their needs.
- Offering appropriate choices to clarify expectations or reinforce limits.
- Using natural and logical consequences.
- Removing equipment or materials if necessary, particularly if safety is a concern.

By using both prevention and intervention guidance strategies, children learn appropriate behaviors and develop self-control and responsibility in a gentle, warm, and supportive environment.

If prevention and intervention strategies are not working, parents will be informed and, when needed, additional support will be requested. Supported Child Development funding may be available for children who require behavior and other supports. To make a request for Supported Child Development, please fill out the appropriate form in the lobby.

Confidentiality

We will make every effort to ensure that your confidentiality is protected. Staff may share information with each other, in order to better understand and respond to your child's needs. Information about your child, verbal or written, will only be released under the following circumstances:

In case of emergency or injury to your child, information may be released to the police authorities or medical staff attending the child.

When the RCMP or a designated Social Worker from Child Protection in conducting an official investigation.

Child Abuse

We are required by law to report suspected or disclosed sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse, and/or child neglect to the Ministry of Children and Family Development. Reporting procedures are in place for the safety, well-being, and protection of all children.

Health Policy

No child or adult who is deemed to be unwell or a source of infection may attend the Centre. Acceptance or non-acceptance for care of children who may be ill is at the discretion of the staff and/or Administrator.

Here are the health standards that we follow (a) *when a person must be excluded*; and (b) when a person may return.

*An underarm temperature of 100 degrees F (37.8 degrees C) or higher,
or an oral/ear temperature of 101 degrees F (38.3 degrees C) or higher;*
Underarm temperature has remained below 100 degrees F for twenty-four hours without medication.

Diarrhea;

Any episodes of diarrhea need to be reported to the child care staff, as per licensing requirements, and the child must not attend until he/she has had twenty four hours since the last episode; or has been examined by a doctor and received written medical clearance.

Skin infection, undiagnosed rash, eye infection, or any signs of contagious disease;

Child has been examined by a doctor or public health nurse and has been properly treated and has received written medical clearance.

Any parasite-related condition (such as scabies);

Child has been examined by a doctor or public health nurse and has been properly treated and has received written medical clearance.

Acute cold with coughing, atypical running, colored discharge from nose or eyes and/or sore throat;

Symptoms have subsided and/or child has been examined by a doctor and has received written medical clearance.

Vomiting;

Any episodes of vomiting must be report to the child care staff, as per licensing requirements, and the child must not attend the centre until twenty four hours have passed since last bout of vomiting and no other signs of illness is present.

Has been on antibiotics for less than twenty-four hours;

After a minimum of twenty-four hours has passed, depending on the condition.

Complaint of unexplained or undiagnosed pain or is abnormally listless;

Child has been examined by a doctor and has received written medical clearance, and/or symptoms have subsided.

Children who are unwell may not participate in the centre programs.

If a child becomes ill while at the centre, a parent or guardian is contacted and requested to pick up the child as soon as possible. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached, the emergency contact person is called.

Parents/guardians are required to inform the centre within twenty-four hours of a diagnosis of serious illness or contagious disease in the family or in the people that the family has been in contact with. The centre is required to inform families and the Medical Health Office of reportable communicable diseases within the centre, its staff or the families it serves. An exception to this policy is HIV/AIDS, as families have a legal right to withhold such information. Ministry of Health personnel guide leads the centre in decision-making around health and report concerns.

In the case of an emergency, a parent/guardian or emergency contact person is contacted and, if required, immediate medical attention is sought, which may include transportation of child(ren) by ambulance. Any related costs are the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

When children need medication, a parent/guardian must fill out a medication permission form. The staff will administer prescription or over-the-counter medications in their original container, when accompanied by a physician's instructions. Families must inform the staff of any medications being administered to the child at home. Non-prescription diaper creams supplied by parents/guardians for use at the centre do not require a permission form. Any other non-medicated skin creams, or homeopathic remedies must be in their original containers and require parents completing a permission form.

Universal precautions are taken at all times.

Head Lice Procedure

Head lice are tiny insects that live on the scalp. They lay eggs, called nits, which cling to the hair very close to the scalp. Head lice spread from person to person by direct contact, or on things like hats, combs, sweaters, etc. They are easily transmitted in a child care setting.

- 1) If a child has either nits or lice, parents are required to inform the Centre at once. The Centre will then post a notice indicating the date and the number of cases.
- 2) **If a louse or nit is found on a child, the parents will be contact immediately and asked to pick-up their child as soon as they can. Once the children are treated they can return to the centre, as long as they no longer have any nits or lice.**
- 3) Parents must check their child's hair and remove all nits before bringing the child to the Centre. Nits are removed by running the hair strand between the thumb and forefinger or by gently pulling out the hair. Put the nits or strands of hair in a plastic bag, tie it up and throw it away.
- 4) At the same time, parents must vacuum their homes and cars, and wash all bed linens, towels and clothes worn in the last two days in hot water, including hats, scarves, jackets and sweaters). Stuffed animals, pillows and other items that do not go in the washing machine can be put in the dryer on the hottest setting for 29 minutes, or be dry cleaned. Hair brushes and combs should be soaked overnight in the lice treatment.
- 5) Upon arrival at the Centre, all children will be checked by a staff member before joining the other children.
- 6) Parents may not leave their child at the Centre until she/he has been checked.

- 7) The Centre has a zero tolerance policy. Therefore, if one nit or louse is found, the child will be sent home and may not return for 24 hours. During that time the parents are expected to remove all nits and, if one louse is found, to repeat the treatment.
- 8) This procedure will be followed until there are no nits or lice found in any child's head for a period of one week. Then everyone in the family will require one more treatment to be sure all nits are dead.
- 9) Parents should continue to check their child's head whenever they wash their hair.
- 10) Throughout the year, spot checks will be conducted on all children and staff at the Centre.

Social Media

Beaufort Children's Centre requires parental/guardian permission for any images or videos being shared on social media (Item #3 on the Parent/Guardian Release Form). We also have a clear policy for staff to follow regarding social media use. We therefore, expect families to use sound judgement when referring to Beaufort Children's Centre in any of their personal social media platforms.

Our expectations are that confidentiality will be paramount. You can of course use any images or information about your own children. The confidentiality of any other children, families, staff and Board associated with Beaufort is not yours to share on social media sites.

Beaufort Child Care Society

The Beaufort Child Care Society operates Beaufort Children's Centre. This is a non-profit Society with a Board of Directors made up of parents from Beaufort Children's Centre, representatives from North Island College, and individuals from the community. Board members are typically elected at the Annual General Meeting each year in June. Additional Board members may be appointed throughout the year. The Board is responsible for the policies and procedures of the centre.

The 2016 - 2017 Board Members are as follows:

| | | | |
|---------------|-----------------|----------------|-----|
| Claire Guiot | David Yule | Laurie Tulloch | |
| Jessica Earle | Sarah Corrigall | Shannon Klipa | Jim |
| Tessman | Darry Monteith | Michelle Simms | |

In addition, the Executive Coordinator, Marc Lalonde, and Staff Representatives, Amanda Peters, Donna Hamilton and Sue McGiffin, participate in Board meetings as appropriate.

Board meetings are held monthly and everyone is welcome. Child care is provided during meetings. Minutes are posted in the hallway. Your ideas, concerns, and involvement are an important component of operating the Society and enhancing the Centre.

An annual fee of \$24.00 is required of each family using the Centre as membership in the Beaufort Child Care Society. This is billed monthly (\$2/month) as part of your monthly child care fee.

Donations and Other Support

Beaufort Child Care Society is a registered charitable organization and can issue tax receipts for donations. We greatly appreciate cash and/or in-kind donations to help support our programs.

Items that are needed on a regular basis include: outdoor gear (especially rain pants), plastic bags, sun hats, children's books, sunscreen, socks and underwear.

Thank you for reviewing this Family Handbook and we look forward to caring and learning with your child and family!