



Cowichan Valley Regional District

Shawnigan Lake Community Centre

Licensed Preschool Program

Questions | Information

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Shawnigan Lake Community Centre Preschool

Mission Statement

Shawnigan Lake Preschool's mission is to 'provide an environment that will foster the development of each child's capabilities while promoting a sense of community.'

Our goal is to provide a caring, healthy, creative and stimulating place for children to explore and grow. Qualified staff provides a wide range of self-directed and structured learning activities.

General Information

Shawnigan Lake Preschool is offered to children between the ages of 32 months (turning 3 by December 31) and 5 years of age. The program operates from September through June in the Elsie Miles annex of Shawnigan Lake Community Centre and follows the public school's Christmas Break and Spring Break schedule. There are no classes on Statutory Holidays. You have the choice of 3 days per week (Mon/Wed/Fri 8:45 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.) or 2 days per week (running Tues/Thurs 8:45 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.) Opportunities for gym games, outside play, art, music, and developing a love of books are provided. Children have the opportunity to explore their world through play.

Registration Policy

Currently Enrolled

Registration for preschool classes is done before May 1 for children and siblings currently registered in the preschool. Parents must indicate to the office that they would like their child pre-registered for the following year. Please avoid disappointment and do not assume that we will automatically put your child on the pre-registration list. First month's fees are required for deposit and must be received by June 15th to confirm your child's registration. **This deposit is non-refundable after August 15.**

New Families

Registration begins the first week of May and is open to all interested families. **Once again, first month's fees are required as a deposit and are non-refundable after August 15.** Registration is on a first come, first served basis.

Full Enrolment/Waitlist Policy

All interested families wishing to enroll their child in a currently full class will be put on a numbered waitlist. As space becomes available we will contact the first person on the list; this person will have 48 hours to respond before we move on to the next person. Staff reserve the right to review children on the waitlist to ensure that class dynamics are not jeopardized. Those wishing to re-register must do so by May 1 as noted in the Registration Policy. Waitlists are only maintained for the current year.

Registration

Admission of a child requires a parent to complete a preschool registration form and to provide a copy of their child's immunization record. The yearly school fees are outlined under the Fee schedule link on our website. First month's fees will hold your child's spot and go toward your September fees. Fees are divided into 10 equal monthly payments. School begins the second Monday in September. The preschool teacher will notify you of start date in the last week of August.

Payment Policy

Payments are due one month in advance. Your registration deposit covers September fees. October fees are due Sept 15, November fees are due Oct 15, and so on. Your final payment will

take place May 15 for June fees. Payments received after the 15th of the month will be subject to a late payment fee. Payments not received by the end of the month may result in your child being withdrawn from the program. We accept payment by Cash, Interac, MasterCard or VISA. Please see the office at the Community Centre if you are wishing to have payments automatically charged to MasterCard or VISA.

Refund Policy

Withdrawal from the program requires **one month's written notice** or one month's fees for short notice. No withdrawals, with refund of fees, will be considered after March 30th. All withdraws received after March 30th will be subject to remaining years fees. If for any reason the Shawnigan Lake Preschool is no longer able to operate, the unused portion of your fees will be fully refundable.

Arrival Policy

When arriving at preschool, please sign your child in. Preschool begins at 8:45 a.m. If your child will not be attending class, please call 250-743-6643 to inform the teachers of your child's absence.

Departure Policy

When picking up your child, please make sure that you or your authorized alternate sign your child out and that you notify a staff member that your child is leaving. Child may be picked up only by those name(s) that appear on the registration form. However, if an emergency situation arises and someone else is picking up your child, we require prompt notification in writing, via email or fax. Our fax number is 250-743-1533. This alternate person will be asked to show a staff member photo identification for safety reasons. In all other circumstances an unauthorized person requesting the release of your child will be denied.

Persons authorized to pick up your child may be refused if it appears that they are incompetent to drive or incapable of safely caring for your child. In this event an authorized alternate will be contacted and you will be notified of the change in plans.

Parent Helpers

Please see teachers if you are interested.

Washroom Policy

Children are allowed to use the washroom at any time. We do encourage the children to go before snack time, outdoor play, or before any field trips. Children are always supervised when leaving the classroom or the gym to use the toilet.

Children are encouraged to wipe themselves, although assistance will be given if a child is distressed. If clothes become soiled due to a toileting accident staff will assist the child into a change of clothes. Parents will be notified of the clothing change at pick up time. All children are encouraged to be toilet trained before entering the preschool program.

Snacks

Please provide your child with healthy food for snack. Labeling containers avoids confusion. Additionally, please provide food that does not require refrigeration or heating.

Allergy Policy

The preschool teacher needs to have written information on any child with allergies or a medical condition. Every precaution will be taken to ensure the children are protected from foods or materials that might cause a reaction. We must also have written information of what to do for the child in case of a reaction or emergency situation.

Things Your Child Needs for Preschool

Please label all of your child's belongings. Your child will need a pair of indoor shoes, a healthy snack, and an extra change of clothes.

Field Trips

Throughout the year, special trips may take place to places of interest. A notice will be sent home in advance informing you of the destination, time, and date. A permission notice is included in the registration package that covers the preschool year.

Visitors in The Preschool

From time to time, the program may have a special person in to visit from the community. Practicum students may also contribute to the program. Parents or students helping in the class are required to have a criminal record check done. Preschool students will always be under the supervision of a preschool staff member. If you have any concerns please inform the preschool teacher.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is very important. Information cannot be released without parental consent. Files and information are stored in a safe and secure place with access only to the appropriate staff.

Communication

Communication and cooperation are important. Questions, suggestions, discussion of concerns regarding your child, or the policies are welcomed. Please feel free to arrange a convenient time to talk after preschool hours. If you have issues regarding the program, please speak to the head teacher. If issues remain unresolved, please contact the Community Centre Manager.

Discipline and Guidance

The word "discipline" is derived from the word disciple. It describes the teaching/learning process by which children develop socially acceptable and appropriate behaviour as they grow to maturity. Discipline is something adults do **with** and **for** children, rather than something done to children to stop them from behaving in undesirable ways. Its intention is to help children become self-disciplined as they learn appropriate and acceptable behaviour patterns. Discipline involves a continuous process of guiding behaviour and is offered while acceptable behaviour is occurring, as well as before, during and after the display of unacceptable behaviour.

Our goal is to assist children in developing self-control, self-confidence, and ultimately, self-discipline and sensitivity in their interactions with others.

The guidance and discipline techniques we use at the preschool are based on a positive, non-punitive approach.

Their overall development, their environment and the adults who care for them influence children's behaviour.

Each child will be encouraged and supported to develop positive relationships with peers and educators. Staff will strive to model appropriate forms of verbal and physical interaction.

Child Development

Each child is a unique individual – By nature, children differ in terms of their activity level, distractibility, and sensitivity. Caregivers who accept and understand these differences in children's styles will be in a better position to offer effective and appropriate guidance for them.

Children's behaviour reflects their level of development – When adults recognize that growth

entails making mistakes and that difficulties are a normal, expected part of children's development, they tend to be more tolerant and patient with misbehaviour.

Children's experience in their family and culture influences their behaviour patterns – Expectations for behaviour vary greatly from family to family, and from culture to culture. While some value compliance, dependence and respect for elders, others give priority to risk taking, assertiveness, and independence. Knowledge about a child's background and respect for different value systems will help caregivers respond sensitively to varying child rearing approaches.

The staff appreciates these principles of child development and has developed attitudes and practices, which are based on realistic expectations of children's needs and abilities.

GUIDANCE STRATEGIES

Prevention

The following strategies are prevention oriented. They set the stage for a positive atmosphere and maximize opportunities for desirable behaviour.

Establish clear, consistent and simple limits – Limits are statements of what behaviour will be acceptable. They ensure order and prevent children from having to guess about what is expected. Limits should be clearly related to the safety and protection of self, others and the environment. They should be few in number, consistently enforced and within the child's ability to understand. For example: *"Inside we walk", "Chairs are for sitting on."*

Offer straight forward explanations for limits – When children understand the reason for limits, they are more likely to comply and abide by them. For example: *"The sand needs to stay down low so that it doesn't get into people's eyes."*

Intervention

While the preceding strategies will help create a positive climate and minimize behaviour problems, there will be inevitable occurrences of unacceptable behaviour. At these times, caregivers will need to try to stop the behaviour. The following intervention strategies will ensure that guidance is supportive, rather than punitive.

Gain a child's attention in a respectful way – Apart from situations where children may be losing self-control, the closeness of an adult can often help them re-establish it. Simply moving close to a child, putting an arm around a child can serve as effective guidance and intervention.

If the situation arises, educators will physically hold a child only if he or she becomes a safety hazard to self or peers. The intent is to soothe and protect the child until the child regains control.

Remind – To clarify and reinforce limits, simple reminders are helpful to young children. Because preschool children have short memories and become easily distracted, caregivers must be prepared to remind often.

Acknowledge feelings before setting limits – In order for children to perceive adult guidance as supportive, it is important for them to know that their feelings are recognized and understood. When limits are preceded by an acknowledgement of feelings, children will be less likely to respond in a negative way. For example: *“I know you’re really angry, but I cannot let you hurt Scott.”*

Distract or divert when appropriate – This can be an effective strategy with children whose attention span and verbal abilities are limited. With upset toddlers or very young preschoolers, offering a substitute toy or engaging them in some other activity may quickly resolve behaviour problems. As children mature, however, this strategy is less desirable, since it “sidesteps” children’s involvement in problem solving and does not help them learn alternative approaches to situations.

Model problem-solving skills – When children face discouraging or frustrating situations, it is natural for them to lose control. As caregivers anticipate this, they can offer verbal and/or physical assistance which models problem solving. A starting point in providing coping skills is to acknowledge the problem. *“I can see there is a problem. Tim has the bike and you want it.”* Following a statement of the problem, it may be appropriate to pose the following questions. For example: *“Have you asked Tim to give you the bike when he’s finished?”* If further guidance is necessary, state a solution or physically demonstrate. For example: *“Tell Tim that you would like to use the bike when his turn is over.”* When a situation has been resolved, it is helpful to summarize. For example: *“Next time, you can try to remember how we solved the problem.”*

Offer appropriate choices – When clarifying expectations or reinforcing limits, caregivers can offer children a simple choice. The choice should be posed in a non-punitive way. For example: *“You can sit quietly at the circle, or you can go choose a puzzle. You decide.”*

Use natural and logical consequences – A statement of natural consequences simply clarifies the inevitable. For example: *“When you forgot to put your picture on the shelf, we can’t find it at going home time.”* A statement of logical consequences simply clarifies an adult arranged outcome of a behaviour. For example: *“When you cannot remember the rules about playing with water, you need to find something else to do.”*

Redirect

This strategy involves changing the circumstance, which are causing unwanted behaviour. When adults redirect children’s activity, they assume responsibility for solving a problem which children have been unable to resolve through other guidance strategies. As much as possible, children should be redirected to activities which are in line with their needs. For example: *“I can see you really need to be outside, let’s get our coats.”*

Limit the use of equipment – Redirecting often goes hand in hand with removing a piece of equipment from a child’s play options. This strategy should be used sparingly and only when other strategies have proven unsuccessful. For example: *“Since you are having trouble remembering the rules for using the piano, I’m going to close it now.”*

Provide opportunities for children to make amends – Rather than demand a superficial apology, caregivers should offer genuine opportunities for children to restore relationships after an incident of hurt or harm. While children may not be immediately ready to “take” these opportunities, they should be suggested nonetheless. Ultimately, the goal of this strategy is to help children learn that making amends requires time and good will, rather than revenge. For example: *“Sharon doesn’t feel ready to play with you yet, because she’s still upset. Let’s give her a while.”*

Discipline

State limits in a positive, rather than negative way – Phrasing limits positively focuses on what to do, rather than what not to do. When caregivers offer these positive statements, they reinforce for children what is appropriate, serve as desirable model of communication for children to imitate, and decrease the likelihood for children to respond with resistance. For example: *“It’s time to put the blocks away.”* Rather than: *“Don’t leave the blocks on the floor.”*

Focus on the behaviour, rather than on the child – Messages which focus on “You always…” are perceived by a child as attacking and critical. They tend to produce feelings of guilt and shame and ultimately result in lowering a child’s self-esteem. For example: *“When you grab the truck, it makes Sam angry,”* Rather than: *“You should be ashamed of yourself for grabbing the truck.”*

Make statements of expectation, rather than pose questions – In matters of routines, and expected behaviours, it is important to state rather than to ask. Posing questions implies that the child has a choice. For example: *“It’s time to tidy up now,”* Rather than: *“Do you want to tidy up?”*

Allow time for children to respond to expectations – Children react more favorably when they are offered cues and warnings. This decreases their anxiety and helps them to anticipate or prepare for change. Instead of demanding immediate results, caregivers should be preparing for change. Instead of demanding immediate results, caregivers should be prepared to give children time to respond. For example: *“In five minutes, it will be time to clean up,”* Rather than: *“Get that cleaned up now.”*

Reinforce appropriate behaviour, both with words and gestures – When children are doing well, it is important to acknowledge this through words or gestures. Positive reinforcement helps children build self-confidence, and encourages them to repeat desired behaviours. In using this strategy, adults should again focus on the behaviour, rather than on the child. For example: *“It was really kind of you to share that with Kathy,”* Rather than: *“You good girl.”*

Ignore minor incidents – Adults who work with young children develop tolerance for a certain amount of noise, clutter and attention-seeking behaviour. As long as children’s activities are not infringing on the rights of others, it is often best to “take a breath”, rather than to speak.

Encourage children to use you as a resource – Children feel a greater sense of comfort and trust when they know that the caregiver is there to protect, guide, and help them. When children learn that the adult is willing to listen and respond in a fair and supportive manner, their security and control increases. For example: *“If you’re not sure what to do, ask and I’ll help you,”* Rather than: *“That’s hard for you so I’ll do it.”*

Scan – When caregivers observe children in their activities, they are in a better position to anticipate potential difficulties and step in to prevent problems. Circulating often enables the adult to gain total awareness of what is happening and to foresee troubles.

*All the information on guidance and discipline has been taken from a booklet provided by the Ministry of Health and The Provincial Child Care Facilities Licensing Board.

Illness Policy

In order to maintain safety of all staff and patrons, we must instill strict guidelines when it comes to our Illness Policy. **If you are sick, stay home.** Staying home when sick is one of the most important way to reduce the spread of communicable diseases, including COVID-19. The Shawnigan Lake Preschool follows all guidance provided through the Public Health Office as well as guidelines set out through the BC Centre for Disease Control.

Parents are required to inform the preschool within 24 hours of a diagnosis of a serious illness or contagious disease of a communicable nature in the family. The parent should inform the preschool of the diagnosis and the cause of the infection in order to warn other families using the preschool in consultation with the local Health unit. (E.g. chicken pox in the event that another family member should be immune suppressed). If your child has a communicable disease or serious illness, a doctor's approval is needed before returning to the facility.

Should your child become ill while at preschool, you will be notified immediately and asked to pick your child up. Your child is required to stay home until symptom free for a minimum of 24 hours.

The preschool must consider not only the individual child but also the health of the other children in care as well as the caregiver's health. Children who return to a child care setting while they are still ill present an unsafe situation for others in the program and may result in the preschool having to close until illnesses are gone.

In the event of an emergency the staff would immediately try to contact the parent, if the parent could not be contacted the alternate number would be phoned and an ambulance would be called.

Head Lice

Due to the highly contagious nature of head lice in a school setting, we require that parents inform preschool staff if their child has head lice or nits. An information sheet will be given to parents on how to treat the lice effectively. If we feel that the head lice is not being dealt with in a **responsible manner** and within an **appropriate time frame**, we reserve the right to ask that your child not attend until the lice has been dealt with.

Immunization Policy

The preschool requires that every child who enters the program have a current family physician and the name of that physician be recorded on the preschool's records. Parents need to provide the preschool with a photocopied immunization record as part of the initial enrollment. If you choose not to have your child immunized you must provide a written letter stating you are not following the B.C. Health immunization schedule.

Medication Policy

If it becomes essential that a child must receive medication while in the preschool's care the following procedures **MUST** be taken:

- A medication form must be filled out and signed by the parent.
- All medication must have a prescription label with the child's name and a recent date.
- Medication must be in the same bottle as issued by the pharmacist.
- If medication is administered at the preschool, the Head Teacher will only administer it.
- The preschool will not give any medication that is not prescribed by a doctor.

Active Play Policy

In partnership with CVRD's mandated training modules and commitment to Physical Literacy, we at Shawnigan Lake Community Centre Child Care will implement and practice Physical literacy as part of our Active Play Policy.

Active play is essentially physical activity with spontaneous and occasional bursts of high energy. It can occur indoors or outdoors, alone or with friends and family. Even before children can walk, they can start **playing**. As they get older and learn more skills, opportunities for **active play** increase.

Physical literacy is a fundamental and valuable human capability that can be described as a disposition acquired by human individuals encompassing the motivation, confidence, **physical** competence, knowledge and understanding that establishes purposeful **physical** pursuits as an integral part of their lifestyle.

Our goal is to implement purposeful daily activities that encourage physically literate children. Individuals that are physically literate, move with competence and confidence in a wide variety of physical activities, in multiple environments, that benefit the healthy development of the whole person. **Active Play** has a vital role in our Centre. When at all possible, active play will occur in an outdoor setting at a minimum of 15-minute increments. Preschool will have a minimum of 30 minutes total of Active Play added to their curriculum daily. This will be accomplished in a variety of ways through physical literacy games, organized leader facilitated activities and free play. In inclement weather we will use our Gymnasium at SLCC and rooms at the CC Centre.

Screen Time Policy

Our Childcare Centre promotes active play and quality interactions while participating in our program. We do not allow enrollees to use phones, gaming consoles, TV'S or computers during operating hours with the exception of:

- Supported Child Development Individual behavior management plans that incorporate the use of a digital device
- One movie on PJ Day (2x per year balanced with Active Play)

Parents are respectfully asked **not to send** electronic devices with children to Childcare.

Snow Policy

In the event of snow, the centre will remain closed until the driveway has been cleared and deemed safe to use by our facility manager. The community centre will make every attempt to have the driveway cleared. If the facility manager deems the driveway or roads unsafe for use, we will not open until it is safe to do so. In the event that the schools shut down because of the snow, we will be closed as well. Please call the Preschool before coming to ensure that we are open on snow days. We will update our website with the latest information.

Photo Taking Policy

Our Preschool program occasionally takes photographs of special events that may include your child. We hang these photos in the Community Centre for the children to look at. We may also use a photo for upcoming brochures, flyers or media releases. If you do not want your child photographed, please insure you fill out the appropriate spot on the registration package.