



Halifax & Region Military Family Resource Centre
Centre de ressources des familles militaires d'Halifax et régions

SHEARWATER CHILDREN'S CENTRE



PARENT HANDBOOK

Updated: August 2016

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PHILOSOPHY

At the Shearwater Children's Centre, we believe children learn through active discovery and interactive play. To meet the needs of each developing child we will provide an active, inclusive environment with stimulating activities to enhance all areas of development. The children will be encouraged to direct their own play experiences through the use of adult arranged activities. These activities are chosen for their potential to engage and challenge, while promoting the child's choice.

GOALS/OBJECTIVES

The Shearwater Children's Centre will provide for the health and social well-being of children in their care; providing a safe, nurturing and stimulating environment with the opportunities for learning, socialization, and fun in a consistent environment.

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

Our Early Childhood Educators (ECE's) are trained in Early Childhood Education and hold a Classification with the NS Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Services from Levels 1-3 based on education. The NS Daycare Act & Regulations require only 2/3 of staff working in a licensed child care facility to be ECE trained; we require all full time ECE staff at Shearwater Children's Centre to be ECE trained. As a requirement to maintain Classification all ECE's must complete ongoing professional development.

All staff are certified in First Aid & CPR "Standard C", and must maintain a Child Abuse Registry Check, a Criminal Records Check and a Vulnerable Sector Check.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

The Shearwater Children's Centre is an on-site licensed childcare program with 161 spaces, for children ages 3 months - 12 years.

Infant Program - 8 spaces for children ages 3 months - 18 months (ratio 1:4)

Toddler Program - 36 spaces for children ages 18 months - 36 months (ratio 1:6)

Daycare Program - 48 Spaces for children ages 3 - 5 years (ratio 1:8)

School Age Program - 45 spaces for children ages 5 - 12 years (ratio 1:15)

Part Day Preschool Program – 24 spaces for children ages 3 – 5 years

Part Day Preschool Programs consist of:

Mornings from 8:30-11:30am

Monday/Wednesday (2 Day Program)

Monday/Wednesday/Friday (3 Day Program)

Shearwater Children's Centre full day spaces are available to full time serving military member only. In the event a parent ceases to be a full time military member, the child must be withdrawn from the childcare centre no later than the date of release of the member. Two weeks written notice must be provided prior to the release date.

As the MFRC Daycares are available to CF members only, the member is required to sign off on registration forms that

they are aware of and will be responsible for the registration of their children. The CF member will be responsible to ensure all information provided is current and accurate. In addition, by signing the registration forms the CF member agrees to keep the account in good standing and will be held responsible for all delinquent accounts, even in the case of family separation.

Failure for the CF member to sign off on registration forms will result in the child no longer having a space in the Child Care Centre.

In the case of dual CF families, one parent must sign all documents and accept responsibility for the registration and the account.

Parents applying for a space once the capacity has been reached will be placed on a waiting list; wait list guidelines are available to families. Parents will be notified as a space becomes available for which they qualify. It may be necessary to select children from the waiting list based on age, sex and developmental needs. SCC will accommodate siblings whenever possible, except in the cases where the account is in arrears for payment.

Shearwater Children's Centre accepts subsidy spaces as approved by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Services; application must be made directly to the Department.

Due to conflicting program schedules children cannot enrol in both a full day program and a part day program at the same time.

Spaces in the School Age Program are full time attendance only; we can not accommodate sporadic or irregular schedules. Children not arriving off the bus each day causes program disruption and compromises supervision, as staff must take time away from the program to track children. *We strongly encourage parents wishing to pick their children up early that they allow them to take the bus to the Centre and meet them so they can advise the staff that the child will not be staying for the afternoon.*

Parent's continual disregard of policies as outlined may be cause for the child's dismissal from the program.

Admission for Full Day Programs

- Once accepted into the program, parents will be invited for a tour of the Centre and will receive a registration package. Payment information will be discussed; please refer to Payment Policy for fee information. A deposit of one month's fee will be required.
- Registration forms must be completed including permission slip, health and medical information and immunization records; which are a license requirement and must be submitted prior to a child starting the program.
- Registration forms must be returned at least one week prior to start date.
- Parents are welcome to bring children in for an introductory visit prior to starting; these are scheduled for the Thursday (2-3 hours) and/or Friday (half day) just prior to the start date. Visit days are not available for September enrolment start dates, due to the large number of new enrolments.
- Parents are responsible to ensure that information on your child's file is kept up to date. Including, but not limited to address, telephone numbers, immunizations and medical information.

Admission for Part Day Preschool

- Mass registration will be held in May each year; no wait list is maintained for this program.
- Registration forms must be completed including permission slip, health and medical information and immunization records; which are a license requirement and must be submitted prior to a child starting the program.
- Prior to the start of the program there will be a "Parent Orientation Meeting", providing information about the

program as well as an opportunity to meet the teachers, other parents, and ask questions.

- As per license regulations all children must be 3 years old by the start date of the program (third week of September).
- **All children must be toilet trained; non-compliance will result in immediate loss of space.**
- Parents are responsible to ensure that information on your child's file is kept up to date. Including, but not limited to address, telephone numbers, immunizations and medical information.

Cancellation Policy

In the event of cancellation, if the space is filled before program commencement, the deposit will be refunded. If the space remains vacant, as a result of cancellation, the one month deposit will be non-refundable.

Parent Information Board

This is located outside the Director's office and contains the following information:

- Copy of Daycare Act & Regulations
- Copy of Parent Handbook
- License for the facility
- Copy of report for most recent inspection of the facility
- Copy of Licensee's Behaviour Guidance Policy
- Copy of the current Menu
- Copy of the daily Routine, (Program Plans are posted outside each classroom)
- List of current names of the Parent Committee
- Copy of the most recent minutes of the Parent Meeting
- Notification of Funding
- Staff Qualifications

INCLUSION STATEMENT

Research indicates the proportion of children with disabilities in childcare is 10-15%; this is consistent with occurrences in the general population. Therefore, it is our goal to provide an inclusive childcare program with developmentally appropriate group experiences for all children; early childhood educators will be involved and work with all children.

We recognize children have unique needs; some reflecting their family's background or culture. We will work directly with families of children with disabilities to ensure our program will best meet the developmental needs of the child; ensuring full participation in all activities.

Our Centre will work in partnership with other professionals (early interventionists, speech therapists, etc) but we ask that professionals consult with the Inclusion Coordinator prior to setting up visits; this will ensure appointments do not disrupt the child's involvement in the regular program.

Parents are required to disclose any diagnosed disabilities before to starting the program. The Director and Inclusion Coordinator will meet with parents prior to starting to discuss possible program modifications and adaptation's to ensure the child can actively participate in all aspects of the program. At this time, Shearwater Children's Centre is not able to accommodate children who require the use of a wheelchair.

SCC receives annual funding from Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Services to sustain an inclusive child care program. This funding does not to provide one on one care to individual children with disabilities.

Inclusion Information

Shearwater Children's Centre is an inclusive child care centre. In the case where a child who requires extra supports is starting in the program, a meeting may be required with the family (including the child), the Inclusion Coordinator and the Director prior to the child's enrollment. This meeting will help to ensure the program is the best fit for the child; providing an exchange of information and knowledge which will include us learning about your child; expectations, involvement with external professionals, our program philosophy, goals and curriculum, and a Centre tour. The information gathered will assist the Early Childhood Educators to ensure the child is fully included in the program.

We view parents as partners, who lead the decision making process, this is predicated on the family being the expert on their child; what they would like for their child and how best to meet their needs.

Our Early Childhood Educators (ECE's) are trained in early childhood development as well as participate in ongoing professional development in topics related to developmental milestones, curriculum, special needs, inclusion and diversity. They can be a valuable resource to you on any topic related to child development. In cases where ECE's have concerns with a child's developmental progress this may be communicated in a variety of ways including daily verbal communication, feedback on Progress Reports or meetings may be set up with the Director, Inclusion Coordinator, or ECE's. If you have a specific request for how you want this information communicated please let us know. We encourage ongoing dialogue and questions about your child.

So in keeping with an inclusive philosophy, should your child require extra supports, have a diagnosis or in the process of an assessment, we ask that you disclose this information upon registration as this is valuable information that allows us to make any necessary program adaptations or modifications to ensure that your child benefits from all aspects of the program.

Our ECE's collaborate with many external professionals (Early Interventionists, Speech Therapists, EIBI, and Occupational Therapists etc.) to work directly with children within in the classroom. In these instances, parents must ensure that "Consent to Release and Receive Information" forms are completed and on file with SCC prior to external professionals requesting to visit the Centre.

SCC has a full time Inclusion Coordinator, which is possible due to funding received by the Department of Education & Early Childhood Development Services; this funding is reviewed and approved annually. Our Inclusion Coordinator assists in the creation, enhancement and development of an inclusive child care program; working with the ECE's to support children who require extra supports to be fully included in the program. This position does not provide one on one support to children. Parents can view the funding notification letter on the parent info board outside the Director's office, #229.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Days and Hours of Operation

Full Day Programs

- Monday through Friday 6:30 am - 6:00 pm.
- Summer hours may be in effect in the months of July and August (6:30am- 5:30pm).
- Full day programs operate year round.
- School aged program operates from September to June.

School Aged Program

- The School Age Program begins on the first day of school.
- Due to staff availability it may not always be possible to provide care for less than 5 children on short notice for unscheduled in-services or primary orientation; check with the Director/designate one week prior to day required.
- We provide full day care on school on in-service days, early dismissal days, March Break and Christmas Break.
- We provide full day care on storm days only when schools are closed, regardless of bus service.
- The school aged program staff must be notified if your child will not be getting off the bus to attend the afternoon program. Failure to notify the staff results in disruption to supervision as they track down the child, therefore continual failure to notify that your child will not be arriving off the bus may result in dismissal from the program.
- For children attending our full day preschool program and starting primary, a space in the school aged program is dependent upon availability; enrolment in this program is not guaranteed. Parents in this program do not need to go on the wait list. Priority will be given to children who live within the boundaries of Tallahassee and Bois Jolie; based on your current address. Due to high demand for these spaces out of area requests to these schools to attend our program cannot be accommodated.

Part Day Preschool Programs

- Part Day Preschool Programs are 2 or 3 mornings/week (Monday/Wednesday/Friday) from 8:30- 11:30am. (September through June, start and end dates to be announced).
- The Part Day Preschool will be closed for Christmas and March Break.
- The Part Day Preschool will be closed for in-service days and storm days when schools in the HRM are closed.

Holidays

- Closed all statutory holidays.
- These include: New Year's Day, Heritage Day (February) Good Friday, Easter Monday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, Natal Day, Labour Day, Thanksgiving Day, Remembrance Day, close at 12:00pm on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Boxing Day and close at 4:00pm on New Year's Eve.
- Statutory holidays will not affect parent fees. Parents will be billed for all holidays as they are paying for the space not attendance.

What Your Child Needs: (Please remember to label all items with your child's name)

Infant

- Bottles of formula or breast milk; please label with child's name, date and content.
- We provide a breastfeeding friendly area in our infant room and other designated areas within the Centre. "*Baby Friendly Area, Breastfeeding Welcome*" stickers indicate designated locations.
- Baby food is to be provided by parents until children can be introduced to regular food at which time they will be fed according to the Shearwater Children's Centre menu.
- Diapers and wipes to be left at the Centre and replenished as necessary.
- Any cream or ointment required for diaper rash.
- Special blanket or toy for crib use at naptime.
- Indoor sneakers or other rubber soled shoes are required for the winter months (no slippers please).
- 2-3 changes of clothes, including undershirts, socks, and outer wear.
- Outside clothing appropriate for the weather i.e. snow suit and boots, splash suit and rubber boots, mittens, hats with ties, etc.

***Please note: Shearwater Children's Centre does not encourage the use of pacifiers. If your child currently uses one, please discuss this with an Early Childhood Educator.**

Toddler

- Diapers and wipes to be left at the Centre and replenished as necessary
- Any cream or ointment required for diaper rash.
- Blanket for naptime
- Indoor sneakers or other rubber soled shoes are required for the winter months (no slippers please).
- Two full changes of clothing (more if toilet training), including underwear, socks, and shoes.
- Outside clothing appropriate for the weather i.e. snow suit and boots, splash suit and rubber boots, mittens, hat with ties, etc.

Preschool/School Age

- Blanket (full day preschool program only).
- Indoor sneakers or other rubber soled shoes are required for the winter months (no slippers please).
- Change of clothes, including socks and underwear (not required for School Age Program).
- For skating: skates, hockey helmet (all sport helmet), snow pants/splash pants and mitts.
- For swimming: bathing suit and towel. (toddler room requires water shoes & little swimmers diapers)
- We encourage parents to send Velcro sneakers for their child; it is part of our program to promote self-help skills.

Clothing

As part of the learning process, the children are involved in messy activities. Please send your child in clothes appropriate for an active day. The children will go outside everyday as per Daycare Regulations unless the temperature is -25c with or without the wind chill factor.

- Children should be dressed appropriately for the weather. Children play outside daily and must be protected from the elements.
- Due to ECE: child ratio requirements children staying inside is not an option, therefore it is essential that children come prepared each day.
- Spring/summer will require a hat and sunscreen to leave at the centre (for summer months)
- Fall/winter children will need a hat, mittens, snowsuit, and boots; extra pair of mittens to leave at the centre (for winter months).
- Wet weather requires rainboots, and splash pants.

- All of these items must be clearly labelled with child's name.
- The Shearwater Children's Centre is not responsible for lost or damaged items.

**** Children's belongings are stored in individual "cubbies" located in the main hallways. Parents are encouraged to take belongings home overnight and on weekends.**

PAYMENT POLICIES

Fee Structure 2016 *(fees are subject to change; parents will be given reasonable notice)*

Program	Monthly Cost
Infant Program	\$770/month
Toddler Program	\$704/month
Daycare (Side A&B)- Full Time Preschool	\$660/month
Before & Afterschool Program	\$330/month
Afterschool Program	\$286/month
In-service/Storm Days (If not enrolled in program)	\$17.00/day
Part Day Preschool -2 Day Program	\$100/month
Part Day Preschool -3 Day Program	\$120/month
The parent fee on subsidy spaces is based on your individual assessment.	

** Fees are charged based on the program your child is enrolled and not by age. Movement of children from one program to another is dependent on space availability.*

One account is set up for a child/ren's space therefore both parents have access to information on the status of the account. All correspondence with regard to financial matters including notification of outstanding payments or delinquent accounts will be provided to both parents.

Should separated parents wish to limit financial information provided to the other parent a detailed request must be submitted in writing to the Director and signed by both parents.

Full Day Programs

- Child Care monthly fees must be paid in advance for each child's Child Care space.
- Fees are to be paid once a month by post-dated cheque.
- 12 post-dated cheques for either the **1st or the 15th of each month** are required at the time of registration.
- Cheques should be made payable to "H&R MFRC".
- "Non-sufficient funds" cheques will result in a \$27 NSF charge (\$12 Bank fee and \$15 Administration fee.)
- Two "NSF" cheques will result in the Centre no longer accepting cheques. In this instance, parents will be required to provide money orders for payment; we do not accept cash payments.
- Annual tax receipts will be provided no later than February 28th for payments made up to December 31st of the previous year. There is a \$25 charge for a replacement receipt.
- No exceptions to the payment system above will be made.

Part Day Programs

- Post-dated cheques for the **1st day of each month** for the full school year are required at the time of registration.
- Cheques are to be made payable to "H&R MFRC."
- "Non- Sufficient funds" cheques will result in a \$27 NSF charge (\$12 bank fee and \$15 Administration fee.)
- Two "NSF" cheques will result in the Centre no longer accepting cheques. In this instance, parents will be

required to provide money orders for payment; we do not accept cash payments.

- Annual tax receipts will be provided no later than February 28th for payments made from September to December 31st of the previous year; and in June for payments made from January to June. There is a \$25 charge for a replacement receipt.

****Please note that non-payment for the month will be cause for dismissal from the program.**

Outstanding Fees:

- In the case when an account is in arrears, the Director will give notification to either parent. In cases of family separation both parents will be given notification.
- The Executive Director will be notified of all delinquent accounts.
- A final notice for payment will be issued to receive payment. If full payment is not received, it will result in dismissal from the program.

Delinquent Accounts:

By signing the registration forms the CF member agrees to keep the account in good standing and will be held responsible for all delinquent accounts, even in the case of family separation.

- If a child is no longer enrolled at the Centre and there is an outstanding balance, the CF member will be contacted in writing to discuss payment arrangements.
- All means necessary will be used to recover funds from the CF member up to and including contact with the Chain of Command or the account will be turned over to a Collection Agency.

Withdrawal

- Two weeks written notice is required prior to the withdrawal of children from the Shearwater Children's Centre.
- If this requirement is not met, parents will be billed for the two-week period.
- Children/families can be dismissed from centre if they are disruptive to program, interfere with the staff, or do not practice the stated policies.
- When a child's behaviour is continually disruptive to the point that it negatively impacts the program, and attempts to resolve the situations are depleted the child can be dismissed from the Centre.

PROGRAM POLICIES

Behaviour Guidance

Behaviour guidance techniques are implemented as a method of re-enforcing positive behaviour; taking into consideration the child's age and developmental level. Our ECE's will demonstrate a professional approach to behaviour guidance; assisting children to learn appropriate behaviour, social and communication skills; including ECE's being consistent when setting limits.

Re-direction is the most commonly used strategy at SCC. This is when an ECE intervenes to positively re-direct children when they are exhibiting inappropriate behaviour, this may include removing a child from one activity in which they are being disruptive and introducing them to a new activity.

The following forms of behavior guidance are **permitted:**

- Limits set will be enforced consistently and fairly;
- Children will be provided with appropriate "choices" that correspond with the behavior that is of concern as a strategy to allow children to make their own decisions; ECE's will follow through;
- ECE's will watch for potential conflicts that are arising and re-direct children to another activity as a means of prevention;

- Positive behavior reinforcement will be used at all times; ECE's will avoid using "No" statements;
- ECE's will teach children strategies to self-regulate their emotions by helping them to identify their feelings and model coping and calming techniques such as deep breathing;
- ECE's may, when age appropriate, assist children in resolving conflict by discussing the behavior with the children immediately following the incident;
- A child may be removed from an activity for a period of quiet time. Time away may be used as a "cooling off" period when a child is distraught, excited and needs a period of time to calm down; the child will remain in the classroom during these "cooling off" periods;
- In some circumstances, ECE's may need to use physical contact to guide behavior, such as gently holding a child to prevent disruptive/destructive behavior; an adult touch during a frustrating situation may have a calming effect on a child;

The following forms of behavior management/discipline are **prohibited**:

- Corporal punishment, including but not limited to:
 - striking a child directly or with any physical object;
 - shaking, shoving, spanking or other forms of aggressive physical contact;
 - requiring a child to repeat physical movements;
- Harsh, humiliating, belittling, threatening or degrading responses of any form, including verbal, emotional or physical;
- Confinement of/or isolation of child/ren; a child shall never be placed alone in a room;
- Depriving a child of basic needs including food, shelter, clothing or bedding, for example withholding food, or security objects such as taking a child's blanket away at naptime;
- Food is not withheld as a consequence for inappropriate behavior; nor is it offered to reinforce positive behavior; food is not used as a reward for completing a task or finishing a meal.

Should a child's behaviors cause continual disruption, the child may be asked to leave the program.

As an inclusive child care program, modified behavior plans may be in place for specific children as a goal to address a particular behavior; these are completed in consultation with the Inclusion Coordinator and in some cases parents and external professionals working with the child.

All Early Childhood Educators and staff must adhere to the Behaviour Guidance Policy as stated above.

Hiring Staff as Afterhours Child Care Providers

Due to conflict of interest, code of ethics, confidentiality and professional parent/Early Childhood Educator boundaries. Parents are not to ask our Early Childhood Educators to provide child care services. Our ECE's are highly valued, trained early childhood professionals who have a professional relationship with you, please help us all respect boundaries. Should you require child care services after hours we have resources available within the MFRC that could assist you.

Drop Off/Pick Up

Children must be dropped off no later than **9:00am** for full day programs and **8:45am** for part day morning programs. It is very important that your child is dropped off on time as all structured programming begins. This includes circle time activities and discussion (when language skills are enhanced), group time where children actively engage in arts and crafts, science activities, field trips, etc. If children arrive late it is a disruption to the children and ECE's engaged in these activities.

In emergency situations or to notify staff that your child will be late please contact the following numbers:

Infant Program 902-720-2164
Junior Toddler Program 902-720-2163
Senior Toddler Program 902-720-1470

Daycare/ Full Day Preschool Program 902-720-2096
Part Day Preschool Program 902-720-1321
School Age Program 902-720-1242

All children must be signed in/out by a staff member. Please ensure that a staff member is aware that your child has been picked up at the end of the day, so they can be signed out.

- Pick up must be no later than 6:00 pm (5:30pm July/August).
- Children will be released to authorized persons only. Children will only be released if parents have given written permission that your child will be picked up by someone else.
- Parents are asked to notify the Centre when children will arrive late.
- Parents are asked to notify the Centre when children will be picked up late; and may be subject to a late fee charge (see late fee policy).
- Parents must advise staff if someone else will be picking up your child. If the staff member is not familiar with the person, they will be required to show identification before taking the child.
- Bus service is available to/from the Tallahassee School and feeder schools, Bois Joli & Ecole du Carrefour for the School Age program.
- Shearwater Children's Centre reserves the right to only release children to adults 16 years or older, as important information is relayed at the end of the day.

Late Fee Policy

In the case where a parent arrives to pick up a child after the program is scheduled to end or the Centre is scheduled to close, there will be a fee charged. The late fee charged is \$10.00 per 15 minutes or part thereof. Parents will be invoiced for late fees, with a copy kept on file. Payment for late fees is to be made to the Assistant Director (office # 225). Excessive lateness could result in loss of space, at Director's discretion.

Custody & Access

SCC requires a signed and legal Court Agreement to be submitted and kept on file that outlines specific access or restrictions to the child in order for Centre staff to enforce or deny access to a parent. Without a signed court agreement we recognize both parents having equal access. In cases where a court agreement is on file and a parent with restricted access attempts to take the child, the Military Policy will be contacted.

Access to Information

Information provided on registration forms is the property of Shearwater Children's Centre and will be held confidential. Access to any information, including providing copies of documents, contained in children's files will not be granted.

In cases where families are separated, any additions or deletions to children's files must be approved by both parents, such as persons authorized to pick up children.

In cases where families are separated, all Centre information such as parent letters will be disseminated to the parent (or designate) picking the child up from the program; it is the responsibility of both parents to communicate the information to each other. The Centre will not provide double correspondence.

Attendance/Vacation

- Please notify the Shearwater Children's Centre if your child will be absent for any reason. Please see above for a list of classroom phone numbers.
- Please notify the Centre in advance if your child will be picked up early or will arrive late due to a medical appointment.
- In cases, where children have medical appointments and miss lunch, parents are responsible to ensure children are fed lunch prior to drop off. To avoid disruption to the program/children we ask that children not be dropped off

during naptime.

- Please notify the Centre in advance of any vacation time.
- The school aged program staff must be notified if your child will not be getting off the bus to attend the afternoon program. Failure to notify the staff results in disruption to supervision as they track down the child, therefore continual failure to notify that your child will not be arriving off the bus may result in dismissal from the program.
- Parents are required to pay for the days their child is absent since the space is reserved for them.

Illness

- Shearwater Children's Centre will follow the Nova Scotia Health Promotion and Protection Guidelines for Communicable Disease Prevention and Control for Childcare Programs.
- Sick children should not be brought to the Shearwater Children's Centre; this includes but is not limited to high fever (101F or 38.3C), vomiting, diarrhea, and other communicable diseases.
- Parents are required to notify the Centre if their child has, or has come in contact with a communicable disease.
- If a child becomes ill while at the Centre, including but not limited to fever (101f or 38.3C), vomiting, diarrhea and other communicable diseases, the parents will be contacted immediately for arrangements to be made for pick up. Children can not return to the program for 24 hours should they be sent home with these symptoms.
- Shearwater Children's Centre reserves the right to exclude children from the program if they are generally unwell and unable to participate in the general daycare routine (i.e., field trips, outdoor activities, etc.).
- Staff of the SCC will follow medical practice standards as set out in the KFLA Resource "Its Contagious" published by the Canadian Institute of Child Health and "Well Beings" published by the Canadian Paediatric Society.

Participation

- Shearwater Children's Centre provides active and stimulating experiences for all children. Part of our weekly programming includes swimming, skating, gym time, and field trips.
- It is understood that children who are signed in to attend the program will participate in all scheduled events and activities. Due to the highly active nature of the program, and the need to fulfil ECE: child ratio requirements, Shearwater Children's Centre is unable to provide alternate arrangements for non-participating children. Parents must be able to provide a medical reason in order for children to be excused from a scheduled activity.
- Parents who are available to "help out" (volunteer) with scheduled activities are always welcome, especially on swimming and skating days. However, should your attendance result in program disruption you may be asked to help out with a different group.
- The number of parent volunteers needed for a particular activity may be limited so parents may be asked to volunteer for events on a rotational basis to ensure equal opportunity for participation.
- As special events/field trips are part of our curriculum, siblings not enrolled in the program may not participate in these events when a parent is volunteering.

Naptime (Full Day Programs Only)

- In accordance with Daycare Regulations all children enrolled in a full day program are required to have a rest period each afternoon. Our program is a very active one with swimming, skating, and outings as a regular part of the curriculum. Rest periods/naps are necessary in order for children to rejuvenate for the afternoon activities.
- ECE's are unable to entertain individual requests for children not to nap.
- Infant sleep schedules will be personalized to each child. Parents and ECE will work together to make changes as required.

Medication

- Staff are only permitted to give medication authorized by a medical doctor.
- All prescription medication must be labelled with the child's name, prescribed dosage, and doctor's name.
- SCC staff will store and secure all medications in a cupboard or fridge (as required) and will retrieve it and hand it back to the parent at the end of day. For risk management these **cannot** be stored in your child's bag or cubby.
- Staff are **NOT** permitted to administer a non-prescription drug.
- Written instructions and explanation of symptoms from a Doctor must accompany prescription inhalers in cases where inhalers are not given on a regularly scheduled basis. If your child requires an inhaler please speak with the Shearwater Children's Centre Director.
- **Epi-pens must accompany children each day in order for them to attend the program. Parents are responsible to check the epi-pen regularly to ensure it has not expired.**

Nutrition

- Shearwater Children's Centre has a four-week rotational menu, which is posted on the Parent Information Board outside the Director's office #229 and outside the Part Day Preschool classroom.
- Shearwater Children's Centre will provide two snacks and a nutritious lunch daily for full day programs. And one snack for part day programs daily.
- Menu is developed following the Standards for Food and Nutrition in Regulated Child Care Settings.
- We provide a relaxed and social environment during snack and lunch times.
- We respect children's hunger cues; they are encouraged to try new foods but are not required to finish meals/snacks.
- IAW Behavior Guidance: "Food is not offered to reinforce positive behaviors; or do not withhold food as a consequence for inappropriate behaviors; food is not used as a reward for completing a task or finishing a meal."
- Allergies must be reported to the Shearwater Children's Centre Director. We will make every effort to accommodate medical allergies but unfortunately due to Regulated Standards for Food & Nutrition we can not accommodate food preferences that are not medical.
- We will make every effort to accommodate cultural requirements; please speak with the Director to review the menu upon enrolment.
- Parents must make alternate arrangements for allergies/cultural requirements, which can't be accommodated by the Centre. All food provided by parents must follow the menu as closely as possible as well meet the Standards for Food and Nutrition Guidelines.

Parents are required to follow "Standards for Food and Nutrition in Regulated Child Care Settings" when bringing in food from home, so birthday cakes, cupcakes, and cookies for celebrations will no longer be accepted.

For children arriving prior to 7:30am has the option to bring in breakfast foods that are healthy. The following is a list of acceptable food items: cheese or cheese strings, regular milk or real fruit juice, yogurt, homemade items such as muffins, tea biscuits, bagels (can not contain chocolate or nuts), cereal (no sugar cereals), fruit or veggies, or please see our menu for other approved items.

Foods brought into the Centre that do not meet the new food standards will be taken and stored in a cupboard or the child's bag until pick up time.

Nutrition/Infant Program

Infants will be fed according to their personal needs based on parent information, adhering as much as possible to their home schedule. The introduction of new foods will be done in cooperation with parents. We are responsive to infants hunger cues and may provide snacks and meals outside of the regular schedule as required.

Nut Policy

Shearwater Children's Centre is "peanut reduced". Please DO NOT bring nuts or products containing nuts into the Centre. (We encourage parents not to feed children peanut butter at breakfast as residue can stay on hands and clothing.) We do not permit nuts or nut containing products in our classrooms or Daycare kitchen but as a public facility (MFRC) we **cannot** guarantee the building (i.e. hallways) is nut safe.

Toys from Home

- The Shearwater Children's Centre is well equipped with materials and toys; we ask that children do not bring toys from home unless specified for Show and Tell.
- Toys will be taken away and returned to the parents at the end of the day.
- SCC is not responsible for lost or damaged toys.

Power/Water Outage

- In the event of a power/water outage where the Centre cannot ensure the safety and health of children (i.e. no heat, unable to provide meals, prolonged outage) the staff will not accept children into the program in the morning. If children are already present parents may be contacted in cases of prolonged outages. In the event parents can not be reached those listed as emergency contacts will be contacted.
- In the event of an evacuation the children will be taken to a secondary site; the Shearwater Sports and Fitness Centre.
- Parents not making use of their child's space during a power outage day will be required to pay for that day.

Snowstorms

The Shearwater Children's Centre will close due to winter storms when 12 Wing Shearwater/Base are closed. Please phone the main Daycare classroom voice mail for closure information at 902-720-2096 or the Part Day Preschool at 902-720-1321, or the 24 hour information line at 902-427-7788. You can also visit our website at www.halifaxmfr.ca for closure announcements and updates.

In some exceptional circumstances, the child care facility may endeavor to remain open, however in the interest of safety for your children and our staff the Centre will operate at minimum manning and would be open to the children of essential personnel only.

In cases when the Wing/Base opens mid-day, the Children's Centre will open 30 minutes prior to the announced re-opening time for the Wing/Base to allow parents time to drop off their children before having to report to work. In order to ensure ratio requirements are met all children must be dropped off within one hour of opening.

In cases when the Children's Centre re-opens at mid-day we will be unable to provide lunch, so please ensure your children have lunch prior to drop off.

Emergency Procedures

Shearwater Children's Centre has emergency procedures in place for the following:

- Fire; monthly fire drills are conducted
- Evacuation; our emergency secondary site is the PSP Recreation Centre
- Lockdown

Supervision

As a public access facility with multiple exits the safety of all children is a priority; therefore the H&R MFRC requires

children to be supervised at all times. This includes, keeping your children with you at drop off and pick up times; not allowing them children to wander or run in the hallways and ensuring you are attending to them when they are near an exit. In cases where children are found unattended in the hallways, any staff of the SCC/MFRC will direct them back to the parent.

Parking Lot

The H&R MFRC discourages parents from leaving children unattended in vehicles in the parking lot. The H&R MFRC cannot be held responsible/liable for accidents/incidents resulting from children being left unsupervised in vehicles. Please be careful to observe road safety in the parking lot and crosswalks. Children may be present and they often act quickly including darting off sidewalks and into roadways or around cars. We ask you use extreme caution and pay attention to ensure the safety of all children entering and exiting the building.

Child/Abuse Protocol

All persons are required to report suspected child abuse. The duty to report suspected child abuse and neglect overrides the confidentiality of all professional relationships and includes information considered to be privileged. Every person in Nova Scotia is required by law under the *Children and Family Services Act* to report child abuse and neglect. Suspected cases of child abuse will be reported to the Department of Child Welfare.

Caregivers under the Influence

- A parent who appears to have been drinking and intends to drive will be asked to make alternate transportation arrangements i.e. Call the other parent, call a friend, or a taxi
- If the parent rejects this request, it will be necessary for the staff to call the Military Police immediately.
- In the case where a parent is intoxicated to the point that staff may have concerns about the child's safety regardless of the method of transportation, the above procedure will be followed.

Child Evaluation/Progress

- Each child's progress will be recorded twice a year.
- Parents will receive feedback regarding these progress reports.
- Progress reports will be kept in children's files; copies will be made available for parents.
- Individual progress can be discussed with ECE's.
- In cases where parents are considering holding children back from starting school at 4.5 years, this must be brought to the Director's attention. A parent meeting will be set to discuss your child's developmental progress, program expectations and goals for repeating a year to determine if this will be in the best interest of the child.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Communication

Communication between parents and Early Childhood Educators is essential for providing quality care. At morning drop off, parents should share information with the ECE's about their child's morning and previous night's routine (sleeping, eating, moods, and so on).

In cases where a parent is deployed it is important to ensure this information is shared with the ECE's, so your child can be supported through this change in routine. Our ECE's receive training in the effects of deployment on children and so can also be a resource to parents.

Infant and toddler records are kept daily (on site) and track important information about your child's day such as nap, eating, toileting, activities and special information. These are available for parent input and review daily in addition to

ongoing communication with ECE's.

Weekly Program Plans are posted for parents to review and ask questions. Information Boards are located on classroom doors and provide reminders for next day events.

Parents with program concerns are encouraged to speak with their child's Early Childhood Educator or the Director/Designate.

Parent Information

- A parent newsletter may be distributed to keep parents informed of Centre events, curriculum or trending topics.
- For the benefit of the program, parents are needed to participate on program committees and the Halifax & Region MFRC Board of Directors.
- SCC Program Evaluations are conducted annually and distributed to all families for feedback on programs.

Parent Committee

A parent committee which will be made up of 5 members; 3 parents, 1 ECE staff, and the Director, will be formed for the purpose of being a resource to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Services (DEECDS). This committee is a license requirement and parents will be asked to provide personal contact information that will be forwarded to the DEECDS so you can be contacted directly to provide input and receive notice of any matters of interest or concern by the DEECDS.

Terms of Reference for this committee are available upon request. If you are interested in putting your name forward please speak with the Director.

Community Involvement

- All regular program volunteers, such as swimming, skating must maintain a Child Abuse Registry Check, a Criminal Records Check, a Vulnerable Sector Check and a signed copy the Centre's Behaviour Guidance Policy. All program volunteers are screened by the H&R MFRC Volunteer Services Coordinator.
- SCC believes in mentorship of the ECE profession and therefore supports student practicum placements. These students must maintain a Child Abuse Registry Check, a Criminal Records Check, a Vulnerable Sector Check and a signed copy the Centre's Behaviour Guidance Policy. Students are screened by their educational institution.
- SCC participates in many events within the larger community including but not limited to Research Studies, food bank drives, as well as participation with charities including the hop-a-thon for Muscular Dystrophy.

Daily Schedules

- Schedules for each program are attached. These are meant to provide an overview of a "typical" day, so timings and activities may vary.

Infant Program Daily Schedule

6:30-7:30am	Arrival & Greeting in the Junior Toddler Room
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	Breakfast may be given up to 7:30am.
7:30-8:15am	Free play is self-directed. Younger children may have a bottle.
8:15-8:40am	Morning clean up, diaper changes, and washing. Morning snack; foster social interaction.
8:40–10:30am	Morning naps based on individual needs. Teacher facilitated play in learning centres to promote all areas of development including, language, fine & gross motor, cognitive and social/emotional skills. Age appropriate indoor activities are planned for all children, including morning nappers according to their sleep schedules.
10:30-11:00am	Outdoor Play: age appropriate activities are planned for individual children or small groups.
11:00-11:30am	Handwashing following outdoor play (health requirement) Prepare for lunch. Bottle fed infants will be fed according to their individual needs and schedules.
11:30-12:00pm	Lunch for those eating solid foods. Bottles for infants.
12:00-12:30pm	Prepare for afternoon nap; washing and diaper changes.
12:30–2:30pm	Individualized afternoon nap times and wake up. Self-directed play and exploration at learning centres. Promote age appropriate development, i.e. songs, stories, fingerplays and games.
2:30-3:30pm	Clean up toys and washing to prepare for afternoon snack as the children begin to wake from afternoon nap. Bottle fed infants will be fed according to their individual schedules. (2:45pm) Afternoon snack as a group to foster social interaction
3:30–4:30pm	Outdoor Play with self-directed and teacher facilitated activities.
4:30-5:30pm	Clean up, washing and diaper changes as needed. Late afternoon snack for infants departing late may be provided. Free play in Junior Toddler Room.
5:30-6:00pm	Departure: Greeting parents and information sharing about the children’s day. Daily Reports available for parents to view. Late departure is in the Daycare room.

Please note: Infant sleeping and feeding schedules will be personalized according to individual needs. The ECE’s will plan activities that can be altered to accommodate the various schedules. Changes to individual schedules will be made as the children grow and develop.

Junior Toddler Program Daily Schedule

6:30–8:45am	Arrival & Greeting Free play with both teacher facilitated activities and self-directed play. Learning centres encourage creativity and discovery. Breakfast may be brought in until 7:30am.
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	Diaper changes complete by 9:00am
8:45- 9:00am	Clean up toys and washing at the classroom sink.
9:00-9:30am	Snack is eaten in the classroom. Teachers sit with the children to foster peer interaction; language skills through conversations and promote table manners.
9:30-10:30am	Prepare for outdoor play; self help skills are encouraged as children begin to dress themselves. Outdoor play: age appropriate activities are planned for individual children or small groups; both teacher facilitated and self-directed.
10:30-10:45am	Handwashing following outdoor play (health requirement)
10:45-11:00am	Circle Time: Promote language development and listening skills through stories, songs, fingerplays, games or interactive and fun learning activity.
11:00-11:30am	Small Group Activity: Developmentally appropriate, teacher facilitated activity may include art, messy, sensory, science or cooking. Activities are chosen to reflect the children's interests. Diaper Changes Washing to prepare for lunch
11:30-12:00pm	Lunch is served in the classroom in small groups. Teachers sit with the children to foster peer interaction, encourage language skills through conversations and promote table manners and self help skills.
12:00-12:30pm	Clean up and washing (hands/face) in the classroom Diaper check Prepare for nap time
12:30–2:30pm	Nap Time. An important part of the daily structure that provided children rest for the program's afternoon activities.
2:30-2:45pm	Wake up Diaper changes as children wake up Quiet activities such as books and table top activities.
2:45-3:05pm	Snack is eaten in the classroom.
3:05-4:30pm	Prepare for outdoor play: encourage self-help skills in dressing. Outdoor play: Develop gross motor skills through games, activities and equipment to encourage active play.
4:30pm	Diaper check and changes as needed
4:30-5:30pm	Indoor free play Learning centres available for children to make choices. Departure: Greeting parents and information sharing about the children's day. Daily Reports available for parents to view.
5:30-6:00pm	Late departure is in the Daycare room.

Senior Toddler Program Daily Schedule

6:30–7:30am	Arrival & Greeting in the Junior Toddler room. Self-directed play in all learning centres. Breakfast may be brought in until 7:30am.
7:30-8:45am	Free play with both teacher facilitated activities and opportunities for children

	to make choices. Learning centres encourage creativity and discovery.
8:45-9:00am	Clean up and washing at the classroom sink; diaper changes.
9:00-9:20am	Snack is eaten in the classroom. Teachers sit with the children to foster peer interaction; language skills through conversations and promote table manners.
9:20-10:15am	Prepare for outdoor play; self help skills are encouraged as children begin to dress themselves. Outdoor play: age appropriate activities are planned for individual children or small groups; both teacher facilitated and self-directed.
10:15-10:30am	Washroom: Handwashing following outdoor play (health requirement)
10:30-10:45am	Circle Time: Teachers introduce the topic with an interactive learning activity. Develop attention span, listening skills, and language development through stories, songs & games.
10:45-11:05am	Small Group Activity: Developmentally appropriate, teacher facilitated activity may include art, messy, sensory, science or cooking. Activities are chosen to reflect the children's interests.
11:05-11:30am	Washroom routine (in the classroom: toilet training/diaper changes) Free play in classroom learning centres
11:30-12:00pm	Lunch is served in the classroom in small groups. Teachers sit with the children to foster peer interaction, encourage language skills through conversations and promote table manners and self help skills.
12:00-12:30pm	Clean up and washing (hands/face) in the classroom Washroom routine in the classroom for toilet training/diaper check Prepare for nap time
12:30-2:30pm	Nap Time. An important part of the daily structure that provided children rest for the program's afternoon activities.
2:30-2:45pm	Wake up, washroom routine in the classroom & diaper changes Quiet activities such as books and table top activities.
2:45-3:15pm	Snack is eaten in the classroom.
3:15-4:30pm	Prepare for Outdoor Play: encourage self-help skills in dressing. Outdoor play: Develop gross motor skills through games, activities and equipment to encourage active play.
4:30-5:30pm	Washroom routine in the classroom for toilet training/diaper check. Indoor free play in the Junior Toddler room; all learning centres available for children to making choices. Departure: Greeting parents and information sharing about the children's day. Daily Reports available for parents to view.
5:30-6:00pm	Late departure is in the Daycare room.

Side A – Full Day Preschool Daily Schedule

6:30-8:50am	Arrival & Greeting Free Play: Self-directed play in all learning centres; teacher facilitated social interactions to foster positive peer interactions. Breakfast may be brought in until 7:30am.
8:50-9:00am	Clean up

9:00-9:20am	Circle Time: Teachers introduce the topic with an interactive learning activity. Develop attention span, listening skills, and language development through stories, songs & games. Calendar & Weather
9:20-9:30am	Washroom Routine
9:30-9:50am	Snack is eaten in the kitchen. Teachers sit with the children to foster peer interaction, encourage language skills through conversations and promote table manners and self help skills. <i>Extra bathroom routine to wash hands as needed</i>
10:00-10:30am	Small Group Activity: Developmentally appropriate, teacher facilitated activity may include art, messy, sensory, science or cooking. Activities are chosen to reflect the children's' interests. Cognitive skills & school readiness skills are enhanced through activities.
10:30-11:30am	Prepare for outdoor play; encourage self-help skills in dressing, finding and putting belongings in cubby. Outdoor play: Develop gross motor skills through games, activities and equipment; encourage active play and positive peer interactions; teacher facilitated and self-directed. This time may also include swimming, skating or field trips.
11:35-11:45am	Washroom Routine: hand washing for lunch.
11:45-12:15pm	Lunch is eaten in the kitchen. Teachers sit with the children to foster peer interaction, encourage language skills through conversations and promote table manners and self help skills.
12:15-12:30pm	Washroom Routine Preparing for Rest Time
12:30-2:30pm	Rest Time
2:40-2:55pm	Wake Up & Washroom Routine
2:55-3:15pm	Snack is eaten in the kitchen.
3:15-4:45pm	Prepare for outdoor play; encourage self-help skills in dressing. Outdoor play: Develop gross motor skills through games, activities and equipment; encourage active play and positive peer interactions; teacher facilitated and self-directed.
4:45-5:00pm	Washroom Routine
5:00-6:00pm	Departure: Greeting parents and information sharing about the children's day.

Side B – Full Day Preschool Daily Schedule

6:30-7:45am	Arrival & Greeting Self-directed play in all learning centres; teacher facilitated social interactions to foster positive peer interactions (on Side A). Breakfast may be brought in until 7:30am.
7:45-8:00am	Side B children Clean Up to go to the Side B classroom
8:00-8:40am	Free Play: Self-directed play in all learning centres; teacher facilitated social

	interactions.
8:50-9:00am	Washroom Routine
9:00-9:20am	Snack is eaten in the kitchen. Teachers sit with the children to foster peer interaction, encourage language skills through conversations and promote table manners and self help skills. <i>Extra bathroom routine to wash hands as needed</i>
9:20-9:40am	Circle Time: Teachers introduce the topic with an interactive learning activity. Develop attention span, listening skills, and language development through stories, songs & games. Calendar & Weather
9:40-10:10am	Small Group Activity: Developmentally appropriate, teacher facilitated activity may include art, messy, sensory, science or cooking. Activities are chosen to reflect the children's' interests. Cognitive skills & school readiness skills are enhanced through activities.
10:10-11:10am	Prepare for outdoor play; encourage self-help skills in dressing, finding and putting belongings in cubby. Outdoor play: Develop gross motor skills through games, activities and equipment; encourage active play and positive peer interactions; teacher facilitated and self-directed. This time may also include swimming, skating or field trips.
11:10-11:20am	Washroom Routine: hand washing for lunch.
11:20-11:50am	Lunch is eaten in the kitchen. Teachers sit with the children to foster peer interaction, encourage language skills through conversations and promote table manners and self help skills.
11:50-12:15pm	Washroom Routine Preparing for Rest Time
12:15-2:15pm	Rest Time
2:15-2:30pm	Wake Up & Washroom Routine; as children wake
2:30-2:55pm	Snack is eaten in the kitchen.
2:55-4:45pm	Prepare for outdoor play; encourage self-help skills in dressing. Outdoor play: Develop gross motor skills through games, activities and equipment; encourage active play and positive peer interactions; teacher facilitated and self-directed.
4:45-5:00pm	Washroom Routine
5:00-6:00pm	Departure: Greeting parents and information sharing about the children's' day.

School Age Program Daily Schedule

Before School	
6:30-7:00am	Arrival into Side A
7:00-7:50am	Bus pick up for Ecole Bois Joli Free play School Aged Program room; learning centres available
7:50-8:00am	Clean up and prepare for bus pick up for Tallahassee and Seaside

	Schools
After School	
2:15 -3:15pm	Bus arrivals Outdoor Play
3:15-3:30pm	Snack in the classroom
2:50-5:30pm	Late bus arrivals. Indoor play with age appropriate, teacher facilitated and self directed activities are planned and may include art, science, baking, sensory, etc. Learning centres provide opportunities for children to make choices; promote social skills and positive peer interactions. Children have the option to do their homework
5:30-6:00pm	Departure: Greeting parents and information sharing about the children's day. Late Departure is in the Daycare room
<i>* Full Days such as In-services or March Break</i>	<i>Children may do off site activities (pending staffing and facility availability) including swimming, skating, bowling, or short bus trip; please check the information board.</i>

Part Day Preschool Daily Schedule

8:30–9:15am	Arrival & Greeting Free play with both teacher facilitated activities and self-directed activities. Learning centres offer opportunities for children to make choices.
9:15–9:25am	Clean Up
9:25-9:45am	Circle Time: Teachers introduce the topic with an interactive learning activity. Develop attention span, listening skills, and language development through stories, songs & games. Calendar & Weather
9:45-10:00am	Washroom Routine
10:00-10:20am	Snack is eaten in the classroom Teachers sit with the children to foster peer interaction, encourage language skills through conversations and promote table manners and self help skills.
10:20-10:50am	Small Group Activity: Developmentally appropriate, teacher facilitated activity may include art, messy, sensory, science or cooking. Activities are chosen to reflect the children's' interests. Cognitive skills & school readiness skills are enhanced through activities.
10:50-11:10am	Prepare for outdoor play; encourage self-help skills in dressing, finding belongings in cubby.
11:10-11:30am	Outdoor play: Develop gross motor skills through games, activities and equipment; encourage active play and positive peer interactions. Departure: Greeting parents and information sharing about the children's day.