

**Edward Jost Children's Centre
Parent Policy Manual
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Edward Jost Children's Centre Parent Policy Manual

Philosophy

The Philosophy of the Edward Jost Children's Centre is to support good parenting practices. As a preschool education facility, we are interested in helping you promote your child's full development by providing a happy and safe environment with lots of opportunities for active learning and play.

Goal

Our program is designed to provide an atmosphere that facilitates and stimulates intellectual, physical, emotional and social development appropriate to the developmental level of your child and to provide activities which encourage language development.

Staff

The Director and the majority of our teachers are graduates of recognized Early Childhood Education programs and have earned diplomas or degrees in the field of Early Childhood Education. Please see our Staff Bulletin Board for more information.

License

The centre is a licensed facility, inspected annually by the province of Nova Scotia. We follow the regulations set out in the Nova Scotia Day Care Act and Regulations, which are monitored by the Department of Community Services. **You will find the following documents posted on the parent bulletin board at each of our centres – Nova Scotia Day Care Act and Regulations, a copy of this handbook, our most recent Licensing Inspection Report, our Behaviour Guidance policy, our current Menu, our Daily Routine and Program plan, and Notification of Funding provided by the Department of Community Services. Information on our parent committee, including members and minutes, will also be posted. Our license and employee bios are also posted in each centre.**

Program

Full day care for children aged 5 months to five years of age is provided. Part-time positions may be available.

Our program is designed to provide an environment and structure which promote the total development of your child. It is our intention to facilitate physical and mental growth; to promote social interaction; to facilitate language development; to encourage independence; and to establish acceptable behaviors. The daily schedule is posted on the Parent's Bulletin Board and individual group programming is located in each of the classrooms. A regular rest period, exercise, and a nutritionally balanced meal are integral parts of our program.

Parents are required to disclose any special needs they are aware of before their child begins attending our program. We are able to provide an inclusive program as required, however we do have limited resource staff. If special needs are identified after enrolment in our program, we may not have the resources to provide optimum participation and assistance to a child. In that case, the child may be removed from our program if we feel their specific needs would be better met in another centre.

Waiting List

If a day care position is not available when requested, names can be placed on a waiting list. Children will be enrolled in the program according to their position on the waiting list for each classroom and their ability to meet certain criteria specific to that room.

Your child's first day

This is a very important day for your child. In order to facilitate the adjustment of your child to the day care environment, we suggest a gradual introduction. The following procedure is strongly recommended to help your child adjust to our Centre's environment.

- Day 1:** 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. On the first day we suggest that a Parent and the child visit the centre together.
- Day 2:** 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon On the second day the Parent will likely be asked to leave the child alone after getting him/ her settled in.
- Day 3:** 9:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. On the third day, the child will attend scheduled activities in the classroom on their own for the better part of the day.
- Day 4:** Full days This is the first day of regular attendance.

We realize that the outlined orientation sessions may be difficult for some parents with busy schedules and that some adjustments may need to be made. Adjustments to the schedule can be discussed with the Director.

Parents may wish to pick up their child earlier than normal for the first few days, so that in the beginning, the child's days are not too long. If at all possible, parents should have a backup care giver on stand-by for the first couple of weeks in case the child is having difficulty with the adjustment process and the Parent is not immediately available.

If this is the child's first Day Care experience, some parents may also require support. Often parents feel uneasy and some even feel guilty about placing their child into Day Care. These are normal and natural feelings and we encourage you to call the centre at any time to see how your child is doing.

Hours of Operation

The Centre is open weekdays Monday to Friday (except holidays) from 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Regular hours for attendance are between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Any adjustments to this schedule are to be worked out during registration. Due to the low numbers of staff present in the early morning and late afternoon, we are only able to accommodate those parents whose schedules do not fall within our regular hours.

Holidays

The following are paid holidays for our Child Care Staff and the centre will be closed on these days:

New Year's Day	Heritage Day	Good Friday	Easter Monday	Victoria Day
Canada Day	Natal Day	Labor Day	Thanksgiving Day	
Remembrance Day	½ day Xmas Eve	Christmas Day	Boxing Day	

Arrivals and Departures

Experience has shown that an exceptionally long day is undesirable for your child's well being. With this in mind, we ask for your cooperation when making the initial arrangements for your child's stay at the Centre. Please adhere to the following requirements:

Between the hours of 7:00 and 9:30 a.m., our program is flexible and children are free to choose from a variety of activities. Children arriving after this time, miss out on valuable learning opportunities. Unless attending medical or dental appointments, **all children are expected to be in attendance by 9:30 a.m.** This means assisting your children with undressing, taking them into the classroom, and informing staff on duty of the child's arrival by 9:30. Please ensure that everyone involved in your child's care is informed of these expectations.

Arriving on time, allows the cook to adequately prepare for snack and lunch time. It also helps to relieve the early morning confusion resulting from arrival during transition times. Since many outings take place at or around 9:30 a.m., we cannot guarantee adequate supervision after this time. If children are going to be absent, please notify the office by 9:30a.m.

We reserve the right to refuse admittance to families who frequently arrive late as it may have a disruptive influence on the program.

Late Charge

After 5:30 p.m., a late charge of a minimum charge of \$10.00 (5:30- 5:40), and \$2.00 for every minute thereafter will be levied against parents. Note that neither Subsidy nor Assistance cover late fees, therefore they are the sole responsibility of the parent. This late charge is to be paid to the Director or Assistant Director upon presentation of the notice to pay. They must be paid within 30 days of issue.

Authorized Pick Up

For the protection of the children, staff will only release children into the custody of those persons designated by the parents at the time of enrollment, unless verbal or written notification from the parent indicates otherwise. **Please advise people who are picking up your child that they may be asked for identification if they are not recognized by the staff.** Upon leaving the classroom, the children become the responsibility of the parents or those designated to pick them up. At no time are children to be left unattended while on the premises. Staff are not permitted to call a taxi for children at any time and may not place children into a taxi.

Fees

We do not reduce fees for any absences, this also includes if the centre has to close down in the event of storm weather. Fees are payable for all days that your child is registered. Payments can be made to the Director or Assistant Director, or can be placed in the office door mailbox. Cash payments should only be given to the aforementioned.

There is a \$50.00 deposit required upon completion of application forms. This deposit will be applied against the first invoice for childcare.

There is a \$40.00 charge for NSF cheques. Receipts issued at the time of payment are for Income Tax Purposes. Year end receipts are not normally issued.

All day care bills are to be paid at the beginning of each month. For example, on September 1st, September's fees are due for payment. **All invoices remaining unpaid after the 10th of the month will be subject to a \$25.00 late fine.**

ARREARS POLICY

Below is the policy and steps we will be following:

- 1- All fees are to be paid at the first of the month. We have extended a grace period until the 10th of the month at which point if the fees are not paid a \$25.00 late charge will be applied to the clients account. Along with the fee, a letter will be placed on the child's cubby, requesting the client to pay all fees at once.
- 2)- If the client's account has still not been rectified they will receive a letter stating that if they do not pay in full by that Friday the child will be suspended from care the coming Monday.
- 3) - A letter of suspension will be placed on the child's cubby. This means that until the bill has been paid in full the child cannot attend daycare.

In order for the child to return to care all outstanding fees must be paid off. If this is not done by the last day of the month we will then have no other choice but place a child from our wait list in the client's child's spot. The client's account will be sent to a third-party agency for collection.

Absenteeism and vacations

Parents must notify the director, in advance, in the event that their child will be absent from the centre. Parents are expected to pay for the child's space whether or not the child is in attendance (i.e., sick or vacation days, storm weather days).

Subsidy Regulations

If your child is subsidized or receiving supported funds for special needs, the Department of Community Services will pay for actual days of attendance only, with the exception of the following:

1. Payment will be continued for up to three absent days and five sick days a month. A doctor's certificate is required for more than five sick days. Three weeks of vacation days are allowed during the year. Any absent days over and above the three allotted days will be recorded as vacation days.
2. Subsidized families are responsible for the full payment for any days not covered by the department.
3. A leave of absence may be arranged. However, immediate readmission will not be guaranteed. Children on a leave of absence will be placed on a temporary waiting list.

Withdrawal

In order to eliminate financial loss to the Centre, it is necessary that vacancies be filled immediately. Therefore, the Center requires that at least **30 Day written notice** be given to the Director, prior to withdrawing your child from the program. Parents using the subsidy program must keep their child at the Day Care for this 30 day period in order to receive their subsidy. It is not possible to use vacation days during this time period as the Department of Community Services will not pay a subsidy for vacation days if the child is not returning to the Centre. Failure to follow this procedure will result in a one month full-fee charge.

Health Policy

We have a separate Health Policy document which outlines exclusion criteria, and other information about the health and safety of children in the centre. Please refer to this document for information about when to keep your child at home or when you can expect a call from us to pick up your child.

Emergency procedures

It is the Centre's policy to evacuate immediately should the need arise (flood, fire alarm etc.). This procedure will be followed regardless of the time of day or weather conditions. In the event of emergency evacuation, the children will be taken to the Golden Age Social Centre at Herring Cove Road and the parents will be contacted immediately.

The daycare holds monthly fire drills.

Behaviour Management Policy – We have a separate 2-page document with more details; please ask the office if you would like a copy.

Summary:

It is our centre's policy that staff never use any form of corporal punishment. Rough handling, striking, shaking or pushing, or any other forms of aggressive physical contact are not acceptable forms of discipline. Staff members are encouraged to positively guide children into learning appropriate behaviors. We encourage the use of forestalling, redirecting and distracting. Calm removal is used as a measure of last resort. We feel that prevention is the key to behavior management.

During intervention, staff will use and teach children to use the 6-step approach to resolving conflicts.

1. Approach calmly, stopping any hurtful actions or behaviors.
 2. Acknowledge feelings.
 3. Gather Information.
 4. Restate the problem.
 5. Ask for ideas and solutions and choose one together.
 6. Give follow up as needed.
- Using natural consequences, staff will redirect children away from negative actions. Staff will engage in discussion and follow up with the child regarding the inappropriate behaviour, and steer the child towards an acceptable substitute activity.
 - Any marked changes in a child's behavior will be discussed with the parents by the child's teacher. In cases of extreme difficulties, the Director may meet with the parents and request permission to seek outside professional observation and counseling.
 - In the event that a behavior is considered to be detrimental to the other children or staff, a child may be dismissed from the program.
 - Parents' participation in working out these problem areas is invaluable and we encourage you to tell us of any family problems or difficulties that might help us in understanding your child's behavior.

Meals

The children are served a nutritious noon meal as well as a morning and afternoon snack. Menus are posted on the Parent Bulletin Board. No outside food may be brought into the Centre. Exceptions for special dietary concerns will only be considered if arranged with the Director in consultation with a nutritionist/physician. Any food allergies are to be reported to the Director.

When we purchase or receive donations of food or beverages from an outside source*, such as a caterer or parent, the food must be from an establishment permitted by the Department of Agriculture and comply with the Food and Beverage Criteria. The licensee must ensure that the product includes a list of ingredients and any special preparation, storage or serving instructions are clearly labeled.

Staff and care providers are responsive to children's cues around hunger and provide snacks and meals outside of the regular schedule as required. Staff and care providers encourage children to respond to hunger and feelings of fullness and children are not forced to finish food that has been served.

Staff and care providers create a relaxing and enjoyable meal environment (e.g. plan for transitions in routine from play to meal/snack).

Breast Feeding:

Nova Scotia has a Provincial Breastfeeding Policy that promotes, protects and supports breastfeeding. Providing a supportive environment in regulated child care settings is essential to promote continued breastfeeding.

- Regulated child care settings welcome mothers to breastfeed anywhere in the facility or home. A statement to support this is included in the Parent Handbook.
- When requested, regulated child care settings provide a comfortable space for breastfeeding mothers (e.g. a chair in a quiet space). A statement to support this is included in the Parent Handbook.
- Breast milk is stored in the refrigerator and labelled with the contents, date, and the child's name.
- When requested, regulated child care settings work with families to develop an Infant Feeding Plan to address storage and feeding of breast milk. This may also include a plan to follow when the supply runs out and a 'transition' plan to other milks if/when necessary. The Infant Feeding Plan is available for review.

Infant feeding:

Infants will follow a documented Infant Feeding Plan. Staff and care providers allow infants to explore their food, feed themselves and respond to hunger and fullness cues.

Rest Period

Exposing preschool children to seven or eight hours in a highly stimulating Day Care environment can be stressful. Children need an opportunity to rest during the day. As per Department regulations a daily rest period is part of our program. The rest period provides the children with a quiet, non-stimulating time to rest or sleep. Teachers may use soft music, or books to create a relaxing atmosphere.

Clothing

Children love to play and our program is designed to promote learning by encouraging the love of activity and active play. Please bring your child to the centre in hardwearing play clothes suitable to the season as well as for indoor and outdoor activity. Indoor footwear is essential for all seasons. Sneakers or rubber-soled shoes are the most appropriate choice for most activities. Please provide a complete change of clothes that can be kept in the child's locker. All **clothing should be labeled** so it is easily identifiable.

Toys

There are many toys at the centre for the children. It is advisable to discourage your children from bringing toys from home. A special "treasure" may become lost during clean up. A time for "show and tell" is provided every Friday for the children to share their treasures with the other children.

Grievance procedure

Daily concerns of parents should be addressed to the Director. If the parent's concerns have not been satisfied by the Director, the matter can be referred to the Board of Directors.

Parents should state their concern in writing and direct it to the Chairperson of the Board of Directors. The chairperson may present the matter to the full Board of Directors on or before the next scheduled Board meeting.

Legal Responsibility to report child abuse

It is the Centre's policy to follow the rules and regulations as set out by the Department of Community Services. As a result of the Department's recent requirements in regards to Child Abuse, the Day Care has had to adjust its policy accordingly to meet the requirements of the Family and Children's Act. In summary, Section 23 of the act states that everyone who has information that indicates a child is a victim of Child Abuse (physical, sexual, emotional, neglect) or is in need of protective services, is required by law to report that information.

It is therefore the policy of this Centre to immediately report any suspected cases of child abuse.

A copy of the Child Abuse Protocol is available in the office for your viewing.