



# Parent Handbook

1105 Pritchard Road, Comox, BC V9M 3S8  
250-339-1200 | [office@gaglardiacademy.ca](mailto:office@gaglardiacademy.ca)  
[www.pjgaglardiacademy.ca/preschool](http://www.pjgaglardiacademy.ca/preschool)

## **Our Philosophy**

At Little Sprouts Christian Preschool, we believe that each child is a unique masterpiece created by God to love Him and to love others. While we believe that parents are the primary caregivers and teachers, our goal is to support, encourage and work alongside families in their endeavour to educate the whole child so as to develop competent, confident, and contributing people who desire to be lifelong learners.

## **Program**

Our play-based program will include age-appropriate activities that support children in developing confidence and competence and foster cognitive, social, physical and spiritual growth in the following ways:

### *Cognitive*

We will guide children as they make sense of how our world works through reasoning, inquiry, planning, problem-solving, creativity and experimentation in their play.

### *Social*

We will help children to navigate through social interactions, cooperation, and communication and assist them in developing self-control, self-confidence and independence. We teach values through our communications with each other and play that reflect the character of God: honesty, kindness, empathy, love, trust, generosity, gratitude, self-control and responsibility.

### *Physical*

We will provide activities that will help to develop fine and gross motor coordination, and foster enjoyment for physical

activity. We will practice and teach good hygiene and health habits.

### Spiritual

We will guide them in exploring an awareness and appreciation of a relationship with the Loving God who is our Creator, character development and moral awareness.

### **Active Play**

Physical activity with moderate bursts of high energy which raises heart rate is important for the healthy development of children's minds and bodies. An important component of our program is our outdoor play time. Organized activities such as games in addition to free play time in which children are encouraged to run, jump, throw balls, and climb help build strong bones, improve balance and coordination and help to develop fine and gross motor skills.

### **Screen Time**

At Little Sprouts Christian Preschool, we facilitate play-based learning through traditional manipulatives and experiences, so we do not offer any technology-based games, stories or activities. Though technology plays a significant role in the 21st century, we feel that most children have ample opportunities for such experiences in alternate settings.

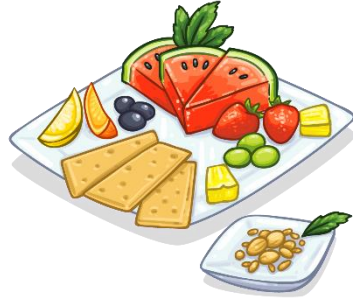


## Nutrition

Please provide a nutritious snack consisting of 2-3 items for your child to eat during our designated snack time as per our daily schedule. We ask that you refrain from including snacks such as fruit bars and gummies, chocolate covered granola bars, cookies, candies, chips and the like and reserve these for dessert times at home.

Healthy snacks include:

- fresh fruit and vegetables
- hummus and dips
- cottage cheese
- yogurt
- crackers and cheese
- deli meat
- pickles
- fruit cups
- dried fruit
- seeds
- bagels



Some foods pose a choking risk to young children: nuts, popcorn, whole grapes, carrots, and cherry tomatoes. We ask that you not pack these items unless they are cut into manageable bite-sized pieces. Please send your child with water to drink instead of juice boxes and other such drinks.

**We are a peanut free center at all times.** In addition, allergies will be posted on the wall and will be treated on a case by case basis. Please inform the staff of any allergies your child may have including any information regarding treatment plans (ex. EpiPen).



## **Care and Supervision**

We understand that supervision is one of the most important aspects in keeping your children safe as they play. Along with thoughtful design and placement of equipment and materials offered, active supervision will reduce the likelihood of accidents and mishaps and will ensure that children have a positive and enriching experience in our center. This includes knowing each child's abilities, establishing clear and simple safety rules for each area and for the materials being offered, and being aware of potential hazards. In addition, staff will intentionally scan the room on a continual basis, move with the flow of activity, redirect and intervene when necessary.

## **Discipline**

Little Sprouts Christian Preschool is a warm, nurturing and safe place for your child to grow and mature. Our aim is to assist children in developing self-confidence, respect, self-control and sensitivity toward others and guide them in making wise choices in an environment that upholds their emotional and physical well-being and security.

To that goal, discipline is based on loving guidance and care, first through prevention, and then if needed, through intervention. We work to prevent inappropriate behaviour by creating, establishing and consistently reinforcing appropriate boundaries, limits and expectations that will help children understand what is expected of them. Positive behaviour is reinforced and children are offered choices as a prevention strategy. If intervention is necessary, feelings are acknowledged first and natural consequences will be emphasized and/or challenging behaviour will be redirected. Disciplinary processes take into consideration the nature,

age and circumstances of the child and are tailored to encourage positive growth and maturity.

Behavioural challenges are always discussed with the parents, and together we will develop a behaviour plan to help the child become successful in the group setting.

## **When You Arrive**

Each child will be given a cubby for his/her coat, footwear and personal belongings. Children should have comfortable indoor shoes or slippers with a hard sole and clothing suitable for the weather. Toys and items of value must remain at home. Please escort your children into the childcare facility and sign them in for the session. Please make notes in the parent communication book of any changes in your child's schedule and diet, as well as who will pick them up. Also leave a note regarding changes to your child's health and well-being (ex. Johnny didn't sleep well last night) to assist staff in knowing how to support your child.

For each session, your child should bring a snack, water, a change of clothes, underwear, and socks (these can be left in a bag in your child's cubby), and outerwear that is appropriate for the weather and season (e.g. boots, winter hats, mittens in colder months and summer hat, shoes or sandals, light jacket for warmer months). Please ensure that all your child's belongings are labeled with his/her name. In the spring months, please apply sunscreen to your child before dropping him/her at the center.



## Daily Schedule

**8:50 Center opens**

**9:00 Play-based learning**

Choice of centers to play in include book corner, art, blocks, house, and special centers of the day

**9:50 Clean- up**

**10:00 Group learning time**

Songs, activities, stories which include themes, pre-reading and writing skills, and participation

**10:30 Snack**

Practice table etiquette, manners, pleasant table conversation and healthy food choices.

**11:00 Active play**

Outdoor play unless there is extreme weather

**11:30 Parent Pick-up**



## Hours and Center Closures

**Hours of Operation:**

Monday / Wednesday / Friday: 9:00-11:30 am

The center operates on a ten-month schedule (September through June) and observes all statutory holidays. In addition, we will be closed for Christmas break and Spring Break as per the Phil & Jennie Gaglardi Academy (PJGA) school calendar year, but the exact dates of these breaks will vary from year to year (dates will be posted each year).

In the event of an unforeseen school closure due to heavy snowfall, parents should check the Phil & Jennie Gaglardi Academy website where the closure will be posted.



**Please notify us if your child will be not be attending due to illness or family holiday.** Call or text Michele Dyck: 250-465-0684.



# **POLICIES**

## **Child Release Policy**

A child will not be released to an individual who has not been authorized by the parent of legal guardian.

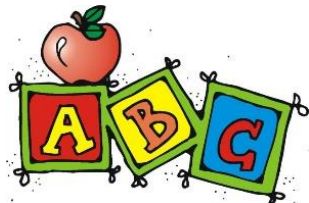
If the person picking up a child appears to be intoxicated or incapable of providing safe care for the child, a family member or friend from the child's contact list will be notified. If an individual who is impaired chooses to drive a vehicle, the Comox Valley RCMP will be notified. Under no circumstances will the child be released to any individual who is authorized if we feel that the child may be harmed, and the appropriate authorities will be notified.

In the unlikely event that a child needs the assistance of an ambulance or medical practitioner, the child will be released according to a signed consent form in the registration package.

## **Illness and Medication**

Children will not be admitted to the child care center if the following conditions occur:

- Complaints of unexplained pain
- Excessive runny nose that is green in colour
- Fever of 101\* F (38.3\* C) or higher
- Unknown or suspected communicable disease
- Sore throat or trouble swallowing
- Infected eyes, skin or mouth
- Vomiting or diarrhea





Children may return once these symptoms have disappeared for a minimum of 24 hours or with the approval of a healthcare practitioner.

If a child is prescribed medicine, the center will provide a medication instruction form to be fill in and signed by a parent allowing and instructing staff in administering the medication.

## **Payment Policy**

### **Fee schedule**

Mon-Wed-Fri - 9:00-11:30 am - \$225/month (plus a \$35 non-refundable registration fee)

Payments are made on a 10-month payment plan. They can be set-up with one of the following options:

- an automatic withdrawal
- with post-dated cheques for the 1st **OR** 15th of every month
- online payments. Other payment options are not accepted (i.e. credit card).

Cheques are to be made out to *Northgate Christian Education Society* and brought to the office at Phil & Jennie Gaglardi Academy. Payments must be for the full month; no part payments are accepted.

## **Outstanding Tuition and Fees**

As part of Phil & Jennie Gaglardi Academy, Little Sprouts Christian Preschool is a community and values the education of the children who attend. However, if families do not honour the negotiated payment plan, the school commitments to staff and the educational programs cannot be met. **Repeated** difficulty collecting tuition fees owing from families will result in withdrawal from the program. All outstanding tuition at the end of any school year must be paid before the beginning of the next school year. Should

there be a balance owing, PJGA, using the banking information on file, is authorized to collect unpaid tuition. Families will be notified via email of amounts outstanding before payments are automatically processed either by credit card or auto-debit. All applicable processing fees will be added to the outstanding amount owing.

\*\*\*There will be no adjustment to the fee schedule for days missed due to illness or other absences such as family activities.

## Withdrawals

If a family withdraws from the school *for any reason* before the end of the school year, they must do the following:

- Notify Little Sprouts program Director via email at [mdyck@gaglardiacademy.ca](mailto:mdyck@gaglardiacademy.ca)
- To avoid a withdrawal penalty (see the explanation below) families must notify the finance department at Phil & Jennie Gaglardi Academy at least one full-calendar month before attendance changes occur. Contact via email [accounts@gaglardiacademy.ca](mailto:accounts@gaglardiacademy.ca).
- Those who qualified for the Affordable Child Care Benefit (ACCB) must contact the ACCB with the changes to attendance **no later** than two weeks (14 business days) prior to withdrawal date. Failure to contact the ACCB may result in additional fees.

## Withdrawal Penalty

If a family withdraws from the school for any reason before the end of the school year, they must give a minimum of one full-calendar month notice to the school. Tuition for the current month plus the notice month are payable as a penalty for early withdrawal without notice.

For example, if a family withdraws on April 5<sup>th</sup>, tuition for the entire month of April plus the month of May is due and payable. Moreover, a family who enrolls before June expecting to attend in September must provide notice on or before August 1<sup>st</sup> to avoid an early withdrawal penalty.

## **Emergency Preparedness Plan**



Our emergency plan will be taught to the children and practiced regularly. A fire extinguisher is located just outside the door of our classroom.

A well-stocked first aid kit, emergency backpack containing all the children's information, and parent contact information plus the earthquake kits are near our classroom exit door.

In the event of an emergency and if we must evacuate the building, we will use the exits - if they are safe - as mapped out and posted in the preschool room.

### **In the Event of an Emergency**

A teacher will blow a whistle to gain the attention of the children who will be given instructions and proceed as directed. Teachers will ensure all children are accounted for then lead them in exiting the building, closing all doors, and using the appropriate and safest exit, taking with them the emergency backpack and the first aid kit. The designated meeting area is the enclosed play area.

### **In the event of an Earthquake**

If there is an earthquake, we will follow the same procedure as outlined above except the children will be instructed to take cover under tables or in doorways, cover their head and face, in a crouching position, facing away from the windows. Ten minutes after the last aftershocks, we will ensure all children are accounted for and evacuate the building, gathering in the enclosed play area where we will have access to our earthquake kits.

The contact number outside of our area is Monique Weir in Mission, BC (telephone: 604-768-6233). In the event that there is a road closure due to an earthquake and you are unable to reach the center, all information regarding our situation will be given to this number.