

## **CHILD CARE CENTRES AND BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS**

### **Background**

Quality accessible and affordable child care provides significant social and economic benefit for the community. Research shows that quality child care has a direct relationship to school readiness, literacy development, poverty reduction, and community engagement.

While the funding and regulation of licensed child care is primarily a provincial government responsibility, the District along with the community stakeholders can play an important role in planning, developing and coordinating childcare for children in the Comox Valley.

### **Procedures**

#### **1. Principles**

- 1.1. The School District encourages and permits the use of vacant school facilities or appropriate surplus space by licensed child care providers that operate licensed child care centers as per the principle outlined in Administrative Procedure 550 – Use of School District Facilities.
- 1.2. Such permit use, however, is granted provided that external use of school facilities and grounds during school hours by these programs does not interfere with the normal operations of regular curricular and extra-curricular programming and student safety. The School District does not endorse or represent any external group that rents its facilities or grounds.
- 1.3. Rental rates are to be assessed as per this Administrative Procedure with fees established on the basis of recovering operating costs incurred by the School District rather than generating surplus revenue.
- 1.4. The School District reserves the right to modify the rates to this Administrative Procedure to accommodate a child care centre at one of our sites for student parents attending school.
- 1.5. When space for Child Care Services is available in a District facility, a Request for Proposal (RFP) will be released. The RFP will include a preference for an operator who will deliver a program.
- 1.6. Responses to the RFP must be submitted to the Secretary Treasurer and will be reviewed by a panel comprised of the Secretary Treasurer or designate and other District staff as appropriate as per Administrative Procedure 515 – Purchasing and Tendering. Child Care Providers will be interviewed to determine suitability. The Board will then be advised of the successful proponent.

- 1.7. Child Care providers must meet Ministry of Health standards and licensing guidelines before final approval is granted and a District License Agreement must be signed.
  - 1.8. In operating a childcare program, whether through a licensee or by the Board, the district will ensure that it is operated by qualified early childhood educators as per clause 1.9.
  - 1.9. Is inclusive and consistent with the principles of non-discrimination set out in the BC Human Rights Code;
    - 1.9.1. Fosters principles of Indigenous reconciliation in childcare, following the principles of the BC Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act;
    - 1.9.2. Reflects developmentally appropriate educational activities and utilization of the BC Early Learning Framework;
    - 1.9.3. Aligns with the Board's Strategic Plan;
    - 1.9.4. Encourages partnerships with parents and with the community;
    - 1.9.5. Includes appropriate licensing and accreditation procedures;
    - 1.9.6. Conforms to the School's code of conduct and school rules that may pertain to the successful operation of the childcare service;
    - 1.9.7. Complies with Child Care Policy and this Administrative Procedures.
  - 1.10. Protocol with respect to Maintenance Issues that affect Licensing Regulations: In the event that maintenance issues arise that will affect the Child Care Service Provider's license, work orders are to be submitted by the Principal indicating that this work is required for licensing purposes so it may be expedited by the Facilities Department. In the event that there is a delay, the Principal and/or Child Care Service Provider may contact the Director of Operations, who may follow up on the work order to ensure that the work is done in a timely manner.
  - 1.11. Protocol with respect to Resolving Concerns that Arise: In the event that issues arise that cannot be resolved by the Child Care Service Provider and the Principal, the Superintendent or designate will meet with the Child Care Service Provider and the Principal to resolve the issue. In the event that individual parent(s) have concerns regarding waitlists, they will be referred to the Director of the Child Care Service Provider.
2. Reservations and Priority for Use
    - 2.1. The use of school facilities will follow management procedures regarding priority for use as outlined in Administrative Procedure 550 – Use of School Facilities. The rental reservation form, Application for Use of School Facilities, will be used to initiate the license to occupy or lease of space for an annual term for this Administrative Procedure.
3. Notice of Termination
    - 3.1. The applicant, at the time of the issuance of the license to occupy or lease, will be notified that the agreement may be terminated at any time should the space and facilities be required for School District purposes or should the school and its operation no longer be required for school purposes and the School District wishes to dispose of subject property. If this becomes necessary, however, every attempt will be made to notify the group concerned well in advance of the date of termination to enable it to seek other accommodation.

#### 4. Risk Management

- 4.1. A School District employee must be on site when a school or school facility is being used by the public. A Principal, administrator, teacher or operations staff member may represent the School District. Additional security cost-recovery charges apply when programs operate in non-school operating hours or days. A program operating from a portable or a secured program area separate from the balance of the school is exempt from the requirement for a School District employee to be on site.
- 4.2. The Application for Use of School Facilities form includes a User Group Agreement Waiver/Indemnity clause which the user is required to accept, as well as to agree to conform to the “Conditions Governing Rental of School Facilities” set out on the reverse of the Application for Use of School Facilities form.
- 4.3. Users are to comply with this Administrative Procedure and all of its requirements.

#### 5. Hours of Operation

- 5.1. Child care providers operating in surplus vacant space will do so only during the September to June school year unless the School District and the child care provider are able to agree otherwise. Access to schools during the winter, spring and summer breaks will be dependent upon the availability of space, the availability of security staff and any planned and scheduled maintenance or capital works. Hours of operations will normally be 7 am to 5 pm daily. Additional hours to be reviewed on site as required with the Principal.

#### 6. Requirements and Application Process

- 6.1. Individuals or groups wishing to establish a child care centre must receive various approvals before being licensed and established in a school building or on school property.
- 6.2. The individual or group is to initiate discussions with the Principal and seek agreement in principle that the program would be beneficial to the school. This agreement is generally based on the Principal’s discussions with the school staff and the school’s parents’ advisory council, and on a written survey of parents to determine the extent of local need for the program. The group is then to submit a request to the Secretary Treasurer.
- 6.3. The Director of Operations will coordinate all arrangements for the placement of the program and will notify the group that the School District procedures require that the program be licensed as per licensing requirements, as set out in the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act and Child Care Licensing Regulation*.
- 6.4. The Director of Operations will meet on site with the Principal, a representative of the child care centre, and the Community Care Facilities licensing care consultant, and provide any technical information required. The Director of Operations will then make the necessary arrangements to ensure that all School District requirements regarding the placement of the program are met. The Director of Operations will prepare a final report for Board consideration.
- 6.5. Final approval of current or new child care operations rests solely with the School District.

## 7. Tenant Responsibilities

- 7.1. The child care centre provides their own custodial services, however, limited custodial services can be provided by the School District under the standard rentals' agreement, Administrative Procedure 550 – Use of School Facilities. In order to avoid an increase in the custodian's workload, centres are to ensure that the room used is kept in tidy condition and that only designated washrooms are used.
- 7.2. The provision of furniture and equipment is the responsibility of the child care centre. However, if a school has extra furniture and equipment that are not required either by the school or by any other school in the School District, the Principal may recommend that it be made available on loan to the child care centre until such time as it is needed by the system. The child care centre will be responsible for reimbursing the School District for any breakage or loss as a result of misuse of school equipment or damage to school facilities. Responsibility for inventory, inspection at start and conclusion of lease agreement, and condition reports of furniture and equipment along with the reimbursement process rests with the Principal.
- 7.3. The child care centre cannot expect to use the school telephone, except in an emergency. Any centre wishing to have a telephone installed must seek approval from the Principal and from the Director of Operations and must accept responsibility for all costs involved.
- 7.4. The school has no legal obligation in the area of supervision of the child care centre. However, the Principal has overall responsibility for the operation of the school and, therefore, has an interest in all programs operating within the premises.
- 7.5. Responsibility for children in the program lies with the Supervisor of the centre, should the children in the program become ill while attending the child care centre or not be picked up from the centre in the evening.
- 7.6. Responsibility for the transportation of children, to, from or during care, rests with the parents and the child care provider.
- 7.7. All procedures identified in Administrative Procedure 550 – Use of School Facilities with respect to responsibilities, condition of premises, financial responsibility, authorities, supervision, parking, smoking, summer use of facilities, intruder systems, telephone, use of school grounds, janitorial supplies and equipment apply to this Administrative Procedure.
- 7.8. Appropriate operating licenses, permits and insurances are to be provided by the licensee or leasee to the School District that satisfies all relevant regulations and authorities and the Schools Protection Program.
- 7.9. The child care centre is to participate in all fire, earthquake and other critical incident drills that take place at the site and work with the Principal on how the group works within the drills and alarms structures at the school as well as reporting their safe evacuation of the school.
- 7.10. The child care provider is to provide picture identification to all staff and volunteers and ensure identification is worn in a clearly visible location by staff and volunteers at all times on school property. Criminal record checks of staff and volunteers working in the child care centre will be provided by the School District Director of Human Resources.

- 7.11. Change of ownership of the operations is prohibited during term of contract unless all requirements of this Administrative Procedure are met and approved by the appropriate authorities and the Board. Sub-letting of space is prohibited.
- 7.12. Child Care Service providers will ensure that Child Care Licenses are posted in a visible location at each school site and that the District Office has a copy. The specific locations and number of children that meet the licensing agreement will also be posted with the license.

## 8. Contract Term and User Fees

- 8.1. The term of any license to occupy or lease agreement is generally for a three-year term but reviewed and renewed annually for the license to occupy or lease period of September 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup>. The process for the provision of this type of program space will be reviewed annually and competitively tendered to licensed centres. User fees at a minimum shall comprise four parts:
  - 8.1.1. Administration fee
  - 8.1.2. Facility and grounds rental fee
  - 8.1.3. Custodial and security rates, and
  - 8.1.4. Ancillary charges
- 8.2. Tendering will identify minimum rental requirements as identified in the Appendix. The School District will annually review its rates structure to ensure market competitiveness and to ensure the School District is not undercutting other similar service businesses in the area. Thirty days' notice to users will be provided for any rate changes being considered upon this annual review of rates.

Reference: Sections 22, 23, 65, 85 School Act  
Community Care and Assisted Living Act  
Land Titles Act  
Liquor Control and Licensing Act  
Tobacco Control Act  
Trespass to Property Act  
Child Care Licensing Regulation  
Disposal of Land or Improvements Order M193/08  
School Opening and Closure Order M194/08  
SD71 Policy 25

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