



Parent Handbook

SCHOOL YEAR 2021-2022



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Inquiring Little Minds Child Care Early Education Centre

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Communication

Accurate and clear communication is essential in maintaining high quality standards of child care. Communication provides critical information for making certain your child's daily visit to Inquiring Little Minds (ILM) is safe, educational, and fun. ILM welcomes questions and comments of any nature that are beneficial to the children. At an appropriate time, parents or guardians, ILM staff, and the manager can meet together to discuss any matter related to your child's care. If you have any questions, or concerns, regarding the information contained within the Inquiring Little Minds Child Care Parent Handbook, please contact us at:

- inquiringlittleminds@gmail.com
- Facebook Messenger is available in the Google Play Store and the Mac App Store
- 250-924-7774 (Saltair Centre)
- 250-924-1222 (3rd Ave Centre)
- 250-585-4619 (Pipers Centre)

Enrollment Policy

ILM's policies adapt as required for each individual child's needs. Before a child's enrolment is confirmed, the documents contained within the registration package must be completed by the parents or guardians and submitted to ILM. Staff members can help clarify any questions about the registration package's forms. The Medical Insurance Plan Number is the child's Care Card Number. Children are not permitted to attend daycare or preschool without a fully completed registration package (no exceptions).

Payment Procedures

All payments are **non-refundable**. A successful, high quality child care centre is reliant on prompt payments by clients. The payment for your next month's enrollment is due on day 30 of each month (the exception being February 28). Upon completing the next month's payment, your child's enrolment is guaranteed for the full month and cannot be refunded. This procedure occurs for liability reasons. If your child's government subsidy lapses, **you will still be charged in full** for the next month. A five dollar late fee shall be charged for each day the monthly payment has not been fulfilled. Repeated late fees are grounds for termination of enrolment. After three missed payments, the parents or guardians forfeit their child's spot at ILM.

A child's enrollment at ILM guarantees one, non-transferable spot in child care. Regardless of absence, payment is required for each day a child is enrolled to attend an ILM centre. Unused days are forfeited. Registered days cannot be shifted to accommodate absences (sickness, statutory holidays, vacations). For example, if a child is enrolled to attend Monday to Thursday, and a statutory holiday occurs on a Monday, the lost day cannot be reclaimed on the Friday. Moreover, a registered spot cannot be temporarily assigned to another child. Please note, the Government of British Columbia's policy for child care limits daily seating—each child care spot belongs to a specific child.

The annual implementation of fee and policy changes occurs September 1. Fee alterations derive from changes in government funding and increases to operating expenses. Enrolment fees have been approved by the Government of British Columbia and are representative of the current cost per space at your child's ILM child care centre. Payments are processed from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday to Friday. Payments occurring after 5 p.m. will be processed the next business day. If a client's payment has not been received during centre hours, the next morning's pick up shall not be provided.

Saltair and 3rd Ave Enrolment Fees

2021-2022 Infant Toddler Enrolment Fees					
Days Per Week	Drop-In	2 Days	3 Days	4 Days	5 Days
Monthly Fee	80/day	780	1060	1330	1550
BC Government Fee Reduction Initiative		-140	-210	-280	-350
Total Monthly Fees		640	850	1050	1200
Max. BC Gov. Subsidy 0-18 months		-500	-750	-1000	-1250
Max. BC Gov. Subsidy 19-36 months		-424	-636	-848	-1060

2021-2022 Three to Five Enrolment Fees					
Days Per Week	Drop-In	2 Days	3 Days	4 Days	5 Days
Monthly Fee	60/day	515	700	840	1020
BC Government Fee Reduction Initiative		-40	-60	-80	-100
Total Monthly Fees		475	640	760	920
Max. BC Gov. Subsidy		-220	-330	-440	-550

2021-2022 Preschool Enrolment Fees					
Days Per Week	Drop-In	2 Days	3 Days	4 Days	5 Days
Monthly Fee	17/day	132	198	264	330
BC Government Fee Reduction Initiative		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total Monthly Fees		132	198	264	330
Max. BC Gov. Subsidy		-90	-135	-180	-225

2021-2022 Before School Care Enrolment Fees					
Days Per Week	Drop-In	2 Days	3 Days	4 Days	5 Days
Monthly Fee	9/day	72	108	144	180
*Fees cover one (1) Pro-D day per month					

2021-2022 After School Care Enrolment Fees					
Days Per Week	Drop-In	2 Days	3 Days	4 Days	5 Days
Monthly Fee	18/day	144	216	288	360
*Fees cover one (1) Pro-D day per month					

2021-2022 Before and After School Care Enrolment Fees					
Days Per Week	Drop-In	2 Days	3 Days	4 Days	5 Days
Monthly Fee	27/day	257.50	355	435	535
BC Government Fee Reduction Initiative		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total Monthly Fees		257.50	355	435	535
Max. BC Gov. Subsidy		-84	-126	-168	-210
*Fees cover one (1) Pro-D day per month					

2021-2022 Summer Camp Enrolment Fees					
Days Per Week	Drop-In	2 Days	3 Days	4 Days	5 Days
Monthly Fee	52/day	400	600	800	1000
BC Government Fee Reduction Initiative		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total Monthly Fees		400	600	800	1000
Max. BC Gov. Subsidy		-166	-249	-332	-415

Pipers Enrolment Fees

2021-2022 Infant Toddler Enrolment Fees					
Days Per Week	Drop-In	2 Days	3 Days	4 Days	5 Days
Monthly Fee	88/day	840	1190	1530	1820
BC Government Fee Reduction Initiative		-140	-210	-280	-350
Total Monthly Fees		700	980	1250	1470
Max. BC Gov. Subsidy 0-18 months		-500	-750	-1000	-1250
Max. BC Gov. Subsidy 19-36 months		-424	-636	-848	-1060

2021-2022 Three to Five Enrolment Fees					
Days Per Week	Drop-In	2 Days	3 Days	4 Days	5 Days
Monthly Fee	60/day	515	710	870	1070
BC Government Fee Reduction Initiative		-40	-60	-80	-100
Total Monthly Fees		475	650	790	970
Max. BC Gov. Subsidy		-220	-330	-440	-550

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Ladysmith Primary and Fairview Elementary Enrolment Fees

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Days Per Week	Drop-In	2 Days	3 Days	4 Days	5 Days
Monthly Fee	9/day	72	108	144	180
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Additional Charges

- \$200 monthly fee, or \$5 daily fee, per extended day requiring child care for 10 hours or longer.
- \$50 annual fee for art supplies occurs in May.
- \$30 registration fee for each child's initial enrolment.
- \$20 administrative fee for back tax documents.
- \$5 per day late fee will be billed by invoice.

A deposit totalling 50% of the enrolment fee and a fully completed registration package is required to process your account (confirming your child's space). Enrolment deposits are **non-refundable**, but can be credited toward fees occurring in the final month of the contract. Surplus funding and payments will accumulate in your account to provide a maximum credit equalling 12 months of fees. Funding and payments in excess of 12 months' fees will be refunded. Completed registration forms shall be held at the ILM center for 10 days. After this time, registration forms will be destroyed if the deposit has not been paid.

Hours of Operation

Hours of operation at ILM Saltair are 6:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The ILM building at Saltair is accessible from 6:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Hours of operation at ILM Third Ave are 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Hours of operation at ILM Pipers are 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Office hours for speaking with a manager are from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Lesson activities within ILM classes begin by 10 a.m. To prevent interruptions in learning, drop off is not permitted after 10 a.m. unless prior arrangements have been confirmed.

Non-working parents or guardians, and clients not attending studies, have a set 3 p.m. pick up time.

For a late pick up, clients are charged \$15 for the first ten minutes that they are late. Each additional minute will be billed at \$1 per minute. For example, if the parent or guardian is 17 minutes late for pick up, they will be billed a \$22 late fee. Exceptions are at the discretion of the centre director/manager.

Closures

ILM child care centres are closed for all statutory holidays. In synchronization with the local school district's operating calendar, and following provincial government standards, ILM child care centres are closed for two weeks in December, one week during the school district's spring break, and an additional one week for staff training in summer.

- December Break: December 18, 2021 – January 3, 2022.
- Spring Break: March 12, 2022 – March 20, 2022.
- Summer Staff Training: July 24, 2021 – August 2, 2021; and July 23, 2022 – August 1, 2022.
- ILM may participate in school district Pro-D days, which may result in centre closures up to six times per year. Closure dates will be determined by workshop scheduling.

As required by the Government of British Columbia's regulations (April 1, 2018), closure dates are factored into billing calculations to create consistent monthly fees.

Please note that child care plans will not change in months that have scheduled closures. In addition, child care days scheduled for statutory holidays cannot be switched by parents and guardians.

Snow, Power, and Emergency Closures

Environmental or safety related concerns may require that ILM staff issue an emergency closure during operational hours. ILM child care centres are authorized to close in conjunction with emergency closures by school districts. However, situations may require ILM to close when the School Districts have not closed. In these situations, ILM may not have the same building requirements or available staffing to safely remain open. When determining whether a centre is operational, ILM evaluates all accessible information to verify that conditions uphold the health and safety of children and staff.

Regarding COVID-19, the Government of British Columbia has advocated for child care centres to remain open during public school closures. Accordingly, ILM child care centres continue to follow the direction of the province's Chief Medical Health Officer.

Occasionally, public schools are open, yet their buses do not run due to environmental reasons. When this occurs, ILM child care centres follow the same protocol by not providing transportation.

Gradual Entry

Gradual Entry is a two week process: the first day for an infant or toddler stays one hour, then dependent on how well the child adjusts, the duration of each subsequent day increases by one hour. For example, an infant or toddler attends child care for one hour during day one, and works towards attending a full eight hours by day 10.

Gradual Entry Schedule:

Monday: 9 a.m. to 10 a.m.

Tuesday: 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Wednesday: 8 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Thursday: 8 a.m. to noon.

Friday: your planned drop off time to noon.

Monday: regular drop off time (RDT) to 1 p.m.

Tuesday: RDT to 2 p.m.

Wednesday: RDT to 3 p.m.

Thursday: RDT to 4 p.m. or regular pick up time.

Friday: RDT to regular pick up time.

Medications

Medication cannot enter an ILM child care centre without all relevant paperwork having been properly completed and submitted to the manager or director.

Staff cannot administer medication to your child unless you have submitted all required paperwork.

Medication must remain in original containers with the pharmacist's label, containing clear print of your child's name, medication name, dosage instructions, current date, and time(s) to be administered.

Please note that children suffering from any cold or flu symptoms cannot enter an ILM Child Care facility. Parents/guardians who falsely sign their child's morning health check will have their contract terminated.

Meals

In addition to lunch, two snack times occur daily at ILM child care centres. Please provide your child with food for both snack times as well as lunch. Each day, please add nutritious snacks and lunches which include fresh fruit and vegetables. Thank you for providing healthy choices.

Personal Belongings

Children need to dress in clothing appropriate for all types of B.C. weather. Learning activities can be messy, and ILM classes go outside daily. Please ensure that your child is wearing clothing suitable for outdoor play. Please provide a pair of indoor shoes and make certain that your child has an extra set of clothes available in their cubbie for spills and accidents. All items must be placed in one bag for transporting back and forth. Additionally, any extra belongings that you want kept on site may be stored within a separate bag at the centre.

ILM child care centres are not responsible for personal belongings. Each child has their own coat hook for outerwear and a designated cubicle to store their belongings. Unless it is a special toy, which is used at naptime to help your child adjust to resting in the centre, please *keep all personal belongings at home*.

Each week, parents are required to provide the following items:

- An adequate supply of diapers, pull-ups, and training pants (if applicable).
- Two full changes of clothes, including undergarments.
- A napping blanket.
- Rain suit.
- Sun hat and sunscreen (summer months).
- Warm outerwear (fall, winter, early spring).
- Every Friday, parents should bring cuddly nap toys and blankets home for washing.
- Please note that all items must be labeled.



Cleanliness and Hygiene

In case of accidental soiling, please make sure your child has multiple changes of clean clothes. On a daily basis, please take home your child's dirty or soiled clothing to ensure ILM can provide the cleanest possible environment for all children.

Liquid hand soap and individual hand towels are used for hand washing. Children and staff will wash their hands before and after food preparation and eating. Children and staff shall also clean their hands before and after diapering, after toileting, nose wiping, or sneezing, and after outside play.

To ensure privacy, toileting will be supervised from beyond the bathroom door. Other children shall be required to wait outside the washroom. After each use, the child will be asked to flush the toilet, and when the child is ready, a staff member will enter the bathroom to supervise handwashing.

During potty training, a child must be comfortable with regularly using a toilet to successfully use the bathroom. For the child's bladder health, and the facility's sanitization, a child who is not secure in frequently using the bathroom needs to continue wearing pull ups.

Single use tissues are available for facial cleaning. Tissues will be disposed of after each use. To prevent the spread of germs and viruses, children will be encouraged to *cough or sneeze into the inside corner of their elbow.*



Emergency Drills

Each ILM child care centre is required by law to conduct monthly fire drills and an annual earthquake drill. The dates and times for practicing emergency procedures are varied to ensure children do not become complacent.

Special Needs

The director and managers will make all reasonable modifications to ILM policies and practices to assist children with special needs. When a specific need is significant, the curriculum will be altered to fit the child's needs. Each child will be individually evaluated to determine eligibility. Parents are responsible for any needed extra support—additional information can be found in ILM's Inclusion Policy.

Gender and Diversity Policy

Parents and Guardians cannot request classroom and/or teacher changes for their children based on any person's age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, name, political beliefs, religious beliefs, and/or sexual orientation.

Parental Involvement

You can become involved with your child's learning at ILM. Parents and guardians are encouraged to participate in learning activities, including:

- Reading books to children once they arrive at the centre.
- Talking with the class about their profession.
- Providing food for special curriculum.
- Volunteering at any time (example, for field trips).
- Helping with the learning activities that your child brings home.

Activities and Curriculum

Curriculum and learning activities are planned with a child directed focus. Learning activities are designed to meet the developmental needs and interests of each child. Curriculum based lessons are safe, developmentally appropriate, and fun.

Outdoor play is an important part of a child's development and has a meaningful role in ILM's curriculum design. Each day, your child will engage in 120 minutes of outdoor time. Information about daily activities can be found posted on each ILM centre's bulletin board. Parents and guardians are required to ensure that their children are properly dressed for seasonal weather. Please make certain your child attends child care with clothes that can get dirty. Learning can become messy and your child will be encouraged to participate in all activities. Children are allowed to play in puddles and may dig in the sand and the mud.

Field trips and walks occur regularly and are carefully supervised. Frequently, walks within a centre's neighbourhood will take place without prior planning. Parents and guardians shall be notified before any field trip that travels beyond the immediate neighbourhood.

Unless essential for a specific lesson, ILM's educational policy limits children's access to screen time.

ILM Centre Rules

At ILM child care centres, children are taught three rules:

- Respect Yourself.
- Respect Your Neighbour.
- Respect Your Environment.

ILM's three rules will be included, referenced, and discussed throughout daily learning activities.

Abuse Policy

Except for the strict purpose of comforting, physical contact with any child is prohibited at ILM child care centres. ILM has zero tolerance of physical abuse between children, parents, and/or staff members. Aggressive behaviour or language from children, parents, or staff members shall not be tolerated. Regardless of whether care plans exist, children who fail to *respect each other's bodies will* be asked to leave the centre for the remainder of the day. Repeated abuse will result in termination of contract. Abiding by the Code of Ethics, ILM staff are required by law to report any suspicions of neglect or abuse to the Ministry of Child and Family Development.

Illness Policy

Due to COVID-19, each ILM centre's illness policy is updated every 24 hours. *Pandemic Illness Policy* remains in effect until further notice. Parents or guardians will be notified about each change in policy.

When a child becomes ill at child care, a parent or guardian is immediately contacted. If the parents or guardians provide daily transport to the ILM centre, they must pick up their child straightaway. Should the parents or guardians be unreachable, the alternate emergency contact person will be contacted to pick up the child. While waiting to be picked up, the ill child will be closely supervised while they rest in a quiet space. This procedure ensures the child has privacy to rest and limits further spread of illness—if ILM supplies the child with daily transport, a staff member provides drop off at the family home, a medical clinic, or hospital whenever possible.

Children can infect their siblings with viruses (example, the common cold and seasonal flu). A child may show symptoms 48 hours after their sibling has become ill. If any family member is sick, everyone should remain at home until the illness is over.

Emergencies

Should a child require emergency medical attention, ILM staff shall immediately call 911 to request an ambulance. Once the 911 call has been completed, parents or guardians will be directly notified about the emergency, and provided with the correct hospital destination. If a parent or guardian cannot be contacted, an alternate emergency contact shall be notified. ILM staff shall continue making attempts to contact the parent or guardian to pass on the information about the incident.

Termination Policy

We reserve the right to terminate a contract for the following (but not limited to):

- Repeated late pick ups for a child.
- Lack of parental cooperation.
- Insufficient compliance with handbook regulations.
- Neglecting to complete required forms.
- Failure to pay.
- Physical or verbal abuse of any person or property.
- Child has not adjusted to the centre within a reasonable time.
- Serious illness of child.
- ILM's inability to meet the child's needs.
- Any discrimination against our staff, including, but not limited to their gender identity, ethnicity, religion, and/or sexual orientation.
- Negative speech against any centre and/or staff on social media platforms.

If you are considering terminating your contract, ILM staff appreciate being provided with as much notice as possible. In return, you will be shown the same courtesy. Parents and guardians are required to give 30 days written notice before the date of contract termination. Regardless of whether the child is in attendance, the 30 days before contract termination must be paid in full. Any outstanding balance needs to be settled before written notice of termination will be accepted. No matter the amount owed, accounts not settled within 30 days are turned over to a collection agency. Once turned over to collections, a late fee totalling \$20 per week, as well as an additional 35% collections fee, will be added to any balance owed.

Discipline and Guidance Policy

The goal of discipline and guidance is for children to learn how to guide and direct their own behavior while interacting positively with other people. Guidance is a *process* of helping children build positive behaviors. Learning leads to self regulation. At ILM child care centres, children are guided toward becoming responsible for their own behavior. Many inappropriate or unacceptable actions by children are preventable when ILM staff practice appropriate guidance strategies.

When teaching children about class routines, equipment usage, participation in activities, et cetera, ILM staff adhere to the following rules:

- Model appropriate vocabulary and body language.
- Respect one another's need for personal space.
- Use clear, concise, and appropriate language during explanations.
 - Verify that each child understands how they are expected to behave.
 - Make certain the child realizes the consequence of inappropriate behaviour.
 - Offer an acceptable alternative, or modification, prior to the child experiencing difficulty or becoming frustrated with an activity.
 - Focus on positive behaviour, recognize appropriate responses by children.
 - Encourage positive interaction with peers.
 - Acknowledge each child's strengths.
 - Be alert for children testing boundaries (considering an inappropriate choice).
 - Implement appropriate strategies to reinforce the importance boundaries.
- Offer suitable choices, and after the child selects an option, accept their decision.
 - Give clear, advanced warnings of change, allow children sufficient time to implement the transition.
 - Be physically available to provide a child with comfort, support, and/or refuge.
- Be consistent in behaviour and expectations.
 - Be dependable, fair, and kind regardless of circumstances.
 - Know which situations require adult intervention (standing back and observing, helping in close proximity).

The intervention techniques applied at ILM child care centres are designed to foster appropriate behavior. This list is not exhaustive, but instead, illustrative of the range of techniques utilized by staff. Supplementary intervention methods will be implemented by staff members when particular circumstances warrant.

A child may require a care plan. In agreement with the parents or guardians, an ILM staff member will lead the creation of the individual child's care plan. In some instances, parents or guardians may need to contact the Child Development Centre to seek additional aid from support staff.

ILM centres have a zero tolerance policy for abuse. A child shall be immediately sent home if they are abusive to staff. Abusive safety risks include hitting, kicking, punching, and/or spitting. Furthermore, a child who runs away from their child care group creates a safety risk. If a child runs away they shall be promptly sent home for the remainder of the day.

Conflict Resolution Policy

Compliments, concerns, and complaints can be emailed to inquiringlittleminds@gmail.com or communicated directly to an ILM centre manager before being posted/voiced on social media. Communications from parents and guardians are documented in ILM parent meeting record forms. Additionally, ILM parent meeting record forms are also used to record any concerns for children brought forward by staff. A manager will schedule a meeting with parents or guardians to address all matters. If any issue is not immediately resolved, the manager will either contact the Regional Director, or contact Licensing to address the concern. Licensing is an intermediary for conducting investigations regarding all complaints other than payment. If changes are needed, Licensing will recommend edits to ILM policies. Alternatively, parents or guardians can request a meeting to document concerns with the ILM centre manager. Information brought forward by parents and guardians will be used to guide ILM staff learning and can factor in termination of employment.

Screen Time Policy

Digital Entertainment:

Digital devices, such as desktops, laptops, and tablet computers, as well as e-readers and mobile phones, are not accessible for use by children at ILM child care centres. Cable television and digital streaming services are excluded from ILM daily curriculum. As a special occurrence, twice per year ILM's child care activities may feature a movie.

Digital Learning:

Screens have a limited presence in ILM curriculum, and more often, will not be used during child care. However, educational videos accessed from online video-sharing platforms can be used to introduce new learning and/or explore curriculum, which cannot otherwise be accessed within a classroom (example, exploring the daily lives of young animals in nature).

Activity Policy

ILM staff understand the importance of planning, encouraging, and promoting daily activity for children at all developmental levels. Activities are scheduled for prioritizing use of gross and fine motor skills, both inside and outside the child care centre. Licensed child care centres are required by activity regulations to document the following:

- Type of activity planned.
- Play space location where the activity has taken place.
- Time the activity occurred.

Each type of activity is documented in the classroom's curriculum planning book. The time and location of activities are recorded within the daily attendance record.