



Parent Handbook

SCHOOL YEAR 2022-2023



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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:

- General: inquiringlittleminds@gmail.com
- Invoicing/Accounts: accounts@ilmchildcare.com
- Brightwheel: Child Care App is available in the Google Play Store and the Mac App Store
- 250-585-7898 (Office: Accounts and Registration)
- 250-924-1222 (3rd Ave Centre)
- 250-327-1575 (Fairview Elementary Centre)
- 778-268-3578 (Ladysmith Primary Centre)
- 250-585-4619 (Pipers Centre)
- 250-924-7774 (Saltair 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. 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 enrolment 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 enrolment 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.

Children turning three (3) years of age are charged at the infant/toddler rate for the full month of their third birthday. They are then charged at the 3–5 rate in the month following their birthday. This is a BC provincial government provision.

Saltair and 3rd Ave Enrolment Fees

2022-2023 Infant Toddler Enrolment Fees					
Days Per Week	Drop-In	2 Days	3 Days	4 Days	5 Days
Monthly Fee	85/day	800	1090	1370	1605
BC Government Fee Reduction Initiative		-140	-210	-280	-350
Total Monthly Fees		660	880	1090	1255
Max. BC Gov. Subsidy 0-18 months		-500	-750	-1000	-1250
Max. BC Gov. Subsidy 19-36 months		-424	-636	-848	-1060

2022-2023 Three to Five Enrolment Fees					
Days Per Week	Drop-In	2 Days	3 Days	4 Days	5 Days
Monthly Fee	65/day	535	730	880	1095
BC Government Fee Reduction Initiative		-40	-60	-80	-100
Total Monthly Fees		495	670	800	995
Max. BC Gov. Subsidy		-220	-330	-440	-550

Pipers Enrolment Fees

2022-2023 Infant Toddler Enrolment Fees					
Days Per Week	Drop-In	2 Days	3 Days	4 Days	5 Days
Monthly Fee	95/day	860	1220	1570	1870
BC Government Fee Reduction Initiative		-140	-210	-280	-350
Total Monthly Fees		720	1010	1290	1520
Max. BC Gov. Subsidy 0-18 months		-500	-750	-1000	-1250
Max. BC Gov. Subsidy 19-36 months		-424	-636	-848	-1060

2022-2023 Three to Five Enrolment Fees					
Days Per Week	Drop-In	2 Days	3 Days	4 Days	5 Days
Monthly Fee	65/day	535	740	910	1120
BC Government Fee Reduction Initiative		-40	-60	-80	-100
Total Monthly Fees		495	680	830	1020
Max. BC Gov. Subsidy		-220	-330	-440	-550

Pipers Enrolment Fees

2022-2023 Preschool Enrolment Fees (4 Hours per Day)					
Days Per Week	Drop-In	2 Days	3 Days	4 Days	5 Days
Monthly Fee	32.50/day	267.50	370	455	560
BC Government Fee Reduction Initiative		-40	-60	-80	-100
Total Monthly Fees		227.50	310	375	460
Max. BC Gov. Subsidy		-110	-165	-220	-275

2022-2023 Preschool Enrolment Fees (2 Hours per Day)					
Days Per Week	Drop-In	2 Days	3 Days	4 Days	5 Days
Monthly Fee	20/day	155	230	305	380
BC Government Fee Reduction Initiative		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total Monthly Fees		155	230	305	380
Max. BC Gov. Subsidy		-90	-135	-180	-225

Pipers Enrolment Fees

2022-2023 Before School Care Enrolment Fees					
Days Per Week	Drop-In	2 Days	3 Days	4 Days	5 Days
Monthly Fee	14/day	105	140	170	210
*Fees cover one (1) Pro-D day per month					

2022-2023 After School Care Enrolment Fees					
Days Per Week	Drop-In	2 Days	3 Days	4 Days	5 Days
Monthly Fee	24/day	175	250	315	390
*Fees cover one (1) Pro-D day per month					

2022-2023 Before and After School Care Enrolment Fees					
Days Per Week	Drop-In	2 Days	3 Days	4 Days	5 Days
Monthly Fee	35/day	277.50	385	475	585
BC Government Fee Reduction Initiative		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total Monthly Fees		277.50	385	475	585
Max. BC Gov. Subsidy		-84	-126	-168	-210
*Fees cover one (1) Pro-D day per month					

2022-2023 Summer Camp Enrolment Fees					
Days Per Week	Drop-In	2 Days	3 Days	4 Days	5 Days
Monthly Fee	55/day	430	640	850	1050
BC Government Fee Reduction Initiative		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total Monthly Fees		430	640	850	1050
Max. BC Gov. Subsidy		-166	-249	-332	-415

Additional Charges

- \$50 waitlist fee for each child
- \$50 registration fee for each child's initial enrolment
- \$100 annual fee for art supplies (occurs in May)
- \$100 monthly fee for transportation
- \$200 monthly fee, or \$5 daily fee, per extended day requiring child care for 10 hours or longer
- \$20 administrative fee for back tax documents
- \$5 per day late fee will be billed by invoice

A deposit totalling 50% of the monthly enrolment fee and fully completed registration forms are required to process your registration and confirm your child's space. Enrolment deposits are non-refundable, but can be credited toward fees occurring in the first 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 for 10 days. After this time, registration forms will be destroyed if the deposit has not been paid.



Hours of Operation

ILM 3rd Ave

- 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Hours of Operation
- 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Office hours for speaking with a manager

ILM Fairview

- 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Hours of Operation

ILM Ladysmith Primary School

- 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Hours of Operation

ILM Pipers

- 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Hours of operation
- 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Office hours for speaking with a manager

ILM Saltair

- 6:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Hours of Operation
- 6:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Building accessible
- 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Driving (transportation)

Lesson activities within ILM classes begin by 10 a.m. To prevent interruptions in learning, drop off is not permitted after 10 am 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.

Mandatory Pick Up

When ILM Staff notify a Parent/Guardian to pick up their child(ren), the Parent/Guardian must arrive to pick up their child(ren) within one (1) hour. Should the Parent/Guardian not arrive, ILM will call the child(ren)'s Emergency Contacts. In the event that the Parents/Guardians and Emergency Contacts do not arrive to pick up the child, ILM will contact Family Services to pick up the child(ren).

Closures

Closures occur whenever an ILM child care centre's attendance totals less than five (5) children. 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 17, 2022 – January 2, 2023.
- Spring Break: March 11, 2023 – March 19, 2023.
- Summer Staff Training: July 29, 2023 – August 7, 2023; and July 27, 2024 – August 5, 2024.
- 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. **As such, fees are the same each month regardless of closures.**

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.

Environmental 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.

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 and 3 to 5 is one hour, then depending 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. Based on the manager's discretion, gradual entry can be prolonged as required if a child is not adjusting well.

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.

The gradual entry does not apply to Out of School Care.

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. ILM cannot give Advil, Aspirin, Tylenol, or any other non-prescribed pharmaceutical drugs.

Please note that children suffering from any illness symptoms cannot enter an ILM Child Care facility. When child(ren) have been/are exhibiting signs of illness or physical injury, their parents/guardians are required to inform ILM staff. Parents/guardians who falsely report about their child's health/wellness will have their contract terminated.

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. Please note that ILM uses bleach for cleaning, as instructed by BC Health.

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



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. Individual ILM Centres may have their own allergy restrictions. Special treats may be provided, including hot lunches. A notice will be sent home for these events.

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. Please note that each child's participation is mandatory. If a child is not actively participating on a regular basis, the child's schedule may be changed or care may be terminated. We are an interactive centre and do not have additional staff to watch children that are sleeping outside of scheduled nap hours or refusing to participate.

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

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.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy

ILM promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout our centres. Employment with ILM is governed on the basis of merit, competence, and qualifications. ILM educators strive to become aware of unconscious biases towards age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, nationality, religion/spirituality, sexual orientation, or veteran status.

While diversity, equity, and inclusion is promoted throughout recruiting, hiring, training, education, and promotions, individual qualifications related to the requirements of the position still require necessary certifications and qualifications (e.g., first aid certificate).

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 biting, 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.

Thank you for enrolling your child with Inquiring Little Minds. We look forward to working with your child, supporting their development and growth, and helping them reach their full potential.