



Welcome to Little Oysters Child Care

Welcome to Little Oysters Child Care. We are ready to start a new year of fun, learning, exploring and making new friends. We embrace outdoor learning. Please ensure that children have adequate outdoor gear that is available to them every day they are at child care. We play outside no matter what the weather is doing. It's important for children to get familiar with the rain, wind and cold (and sometimes snow). It is best if children have outdoor gear they can keep in their cubbies that does not go home so it is not forgotten. Children will need:

- **rubber boots;**
- **rain coat and pants/muddy buddies (waterproof);**
- **sun hats and toques for winter (please no hats with long strings);**
- **mittens or gloves (waterproof); and**
- **two sets of spare clothes to change into including pants, shirt, underwear and socks.**

If you would like your child to wear sunscreen at school please apply it before your child arrives at school. If they need sunscreen reapplied during the day, please provide the sunscreen in its original container along with a written note with the instructions, the name of the sunscreen, and your signature.

Please also make sure your child has a pair of **"SLIPS-ON-EASILY"** shoes to keep in their cubbies. It's best to make sure at home that your child can put this pair of shoes on all by themselves before bringing them to school.

PLEASE MAKE SURE ALL YOUR CHILDREN'S BELONGINGS ARE LABELED. We will provide a large plastic bag to put two complete changes of clothes in at the beginning of the year. As items come home wet or soiled, please replace them the next day.

Please remember to provide your child with a healthy snack and lunch. Please make sure you leave all juice boxes, sugary treats and candy at home. (After Halloween please do not send any treats to school; thank you!) Whole foods are best for a child to thrive all day. Check out Canada's Food Guide for tips on food groups.

Child Care Licensing requires that each child has healthy food and drink according to Canada's Food Guide and that we promote healthy eating and nutritional habits. All food should be prepared (apples sliced, oranges cut or peeled, grapes must be cut in half, pits removed from plums and carrots thinly sliced).

If your children have any allergies or chronic medical conditions please make sure to let the Preschool Teacher know. Care plans will be made up if needed.

We may rely on family volunteers for our field trips. A criminal records check is required and we can provide you with the form that needs to be filled out and taken to the RCMP station in Courtenay; there is no cost for this, but appointments are required. As well, we will provide you with a volunteer agreement that outlines the roles and responsibilities of our volunteers, for your review and signature. All volunteers are required to have this done. If you have any special skills or curriculum ideas please feel free to let us know.

A calendar of the school year will be provided to you with all the important school dates, including our school holidays. The school has a fall break, winter break, spring break and is closed on Mondays.

A monthly newsletter will be emailed out to all families with photos and information about our program. Please make sure you provide us with all the proper emails you wish to have this sent to.

If you know you are going to be late picking up your children please make sure you call and let the Admin Office know by phoning 778-427-4007 or emailing admin.beachcombers@shaw.ca. If you are picking up your child early please also let the teacher know at drop off. If you need someone who is not a parent/legal guardian or an emergency contact to pick up your children we require written consent before hand and the person must provide photo ID at pick up time.

All children who attend Little Oysters Preschool **MUST BE TOILET TRAINED**. We do not have the facilities and so are not equipped to have children in diapers or pull ups, or those with regular 'accidents'. Being 'toilet trained' means that your child knows when they need to use the bathroom, can tell an adult if they need assistance to get to the bathroom (ie. if we are outside playing at the time, or on a field trip), and are independent with all aspects of toileting, including their own personal hygiene. (wiping, handwashing, etc.) If you are concerned about your child having the occasional 'accident' please make sure you provide several changes of spare clothes.

Please feel free to speak to us about anything you wonder about or are concerned about.

We are very happy to welcome you all!



Parent Information

Welcome!

We welcome you to the Little Oysters Child Care. Please find below information and policies; please let staff know if you have any questions. We have a lovely environment and we look forward to sharing a year full of learning and exploration.

Program Overview

Little Oysters Child Care is a fine balance between indoor classroom learning and outdoor experiential learning. The program includes nature and science study, numeracy, creative building, learning about the calendar and the seasons, and plenty of creative play. We enjoy cooking and life skills, storytelling and other early literacy activities, organic gardening, arts projects and seasonal school celebrations. We have fun with music activities and yoga.

Our outdoor program encourages exploration and play-based emergent curriculum with a focus on coastal science and creative arts. We enjoy plenty of time outside in our beautiful playground and walking trips to the local beach, rain or shine.

Beachcombers' Respect & Kindness Program creates a space where children learn about kindness, friendliness, being helpful and a range of "virtues". We teach children positive communication and conflict-resolution. Preschool teachers encourage children's self-sufficiency, patience, focus, respect for self and others, and communication.

The Little Oysters Child Care offers a fun, stimulating and loving program where children are encouraged to be themselves, and care about one another and the environment.

Guidance and Behaviour

Our primary goal is to model kindness and respect. We establish clear and consistent limits/boundaries with the children. We use positive language and provide choices for each child. We use natural and logical consequences and children are guided to talk out any problems they have with one another or teachers.

We encourage the children to talk about how they are feeling. We encourage children to ask for help but also teach children how to work towards resolving concerns within their own environment. We model how to problem solve, give constant reminders of appropriate behaviour and redirect when needed.

When there has been an incident between two or more children we talk it out and hear all sides and then discuss how the incident has made a child feel. If a child has been hurt (feelings or physically) staff will support the child and give them choices about what they may need to feel better (a sorry, hug or high five) and are aided in asking for this from the other child. Learning to negotiate relationships with other children is an important part of childhood development.

If any serious concerns arise they will be discussed with families so that we can all work together to encourage and support solutions and appropriate behaviours. Consistency in the home and school is very important to the overall wellbeing of a child and our guidance strategies in both places go hand in hand so children are nurtured and on a good path to self-awareness.

Wellness (Injury and Illness)

In the event of a child becoming ill or injured at child care the family will be notified. Providing staff with necessary cell phone numbers is helpful with this policy so families are easily contacted. If a child needs to be sent home the people who are listed as emergency contacts will be contacted if the primary caregiver is unavailable.

Please keep your children home if they have any symptoms of illness. If they had a fever, vomiting or diarrhea, please keep them home for at least 24 hours after the last symptom and fever is absent without the use of fever reducing medication.

Please keep your children home until they are well enough to attend.

Any medicine required to treat the above symptoms will mean the child is too ill to attend. This includes over-the-counter medications such as Tylenol, Advil, and Gravol.

Allergies

Please make sure you inform the Preschool Teacher in writing of any allergies your children have. Allergies will be posted in a place where all teachers can view it. A care plan will be written up with the steps needed to take if the child has an allergic reaction. Families will be informed immediately if any allergic reactions occur.

Immunization

If your children are immunized it is required for families to provide an up to date immunization record for our files. If you have chosen not to vaccinate then please provide us with a letter signed and dated stating that you have chosen not to. If an outbreak occurs, families whose children have not been immunized will be asked to remove their children from the program until it has been determined that children's health is no longer at risk.

Medicine at School

Staff are not permitted to administer medication at school and medications may not be brought to school. The exception is a child with a care plan. If a child has a chronic medical condition a care plan will be established.

If a care plan is in place, and doctor-prescribed medication is part of the care plan, then the following is required: medication must be brought to the child care program in its original container with instructions from your doctor on how to administer it. The label must clearly show:

- *Child's name.*
- *Name of medication.*
- *Proper dosage.*
- *Route (oral, nasal etc.)*
- *Physicians name.*
- *Care of medication (shake well, refrigerate).*
- *Date to end administration of medication.*

In addition, please put in writing the time the medication is to be given. Only our staff with current First Aid will be permitted to administer medications. All medications will be stored in a locked box out of the children's reach.

Quiet/rest time

After lunch there is quiet play time. We do not have a nap time, nor places for children to nap during the day.

Nutrition: Food and Drink

We do not provide snacks and lunches at Little Oysters Child Care. We do on occasion bake or make sharing snacks. All ingredients we use are from an approved food source and we aim for mostly organic. We will provide an ingredient list to families at the end of the day of any food we make.

It is very important that all children bring healthy snacks and lunches to school. Whole foods are best with no sugar or as little sugar as is possible. Please do not send your children with juice boxes or any candy. Please make sure you bring a WATER bottle for your child each day, with their name on it.

Toileting

All children who attend Little Oysters Child Care **MUST BE TOILET TRAINED**. We do not have the facilities and so are not equipped to have children in diapers or pull ups, or those with regular 'accidents'. Being 'toilet trained' means that your child knows when they need to use the bathroom, can tell an adult if they need assistance to get to the bathroom (ie. if we are outside playing at the time, or on a field trip), and are independent with all aspects of toileting, including their own personal hygiene. (wiping, handwashing, etc.) If you are concerned about your child having the occasional 'accident' please make sure you provide several changes of spare clothes.

Safe Release

Please wait for the teachers to open the classroom door at the beginning and end of class. This is for your child's safety. Children will only be released at the end of the day to a parent/legal guardian or to the people listed as emergency contacts. If you require your child to be picked up by someone not on our list then we must have this request in writing, it can be an email to admin.beachcombers@shaw.ca or written down at drop off. Photo ID is required of everyone not on our list at pick up so please make sure you inform anyone you have asked to pick up your child to have this available. No one under the age of 12 may pick up a child.

If a parent/legal guardian or emergency contact appears to be intoxicated at pick up staff will not release the children. We will offer to call someone else or call a cab (not paid for by Beachcombers Academy/Little Oysters Child Care)

Late fee - If you are running late to pick up your child a text or phone call is needed to the Admin. Office; fees apply for late pick-ups more than 5 minutes late. If you plan to pick up your child early at any time please also notify the teacher at drop off. If your address or phone number changes, please notify the Admin. office as soon as possible.

Safety

Beachcombers Academy and Little Oysters Child Care has been designed to ensure it is a safe and comfortable environment that accommodates the abilities and needs of all children. The health and safety of children is a priority.

To make sure all children are within sight and on the premises at all times **we must have the front gates of the school closed and latched at all times.** Please make sure as you enter and exit the playground each time to close and latch the gates behind you.

Active Play Plan

Little Oysters Child Care encourages outdoor learning. We are outside in all kinds of weather, using our bodies to keep a healthy mind and spirit. We have several hours each day where the children have the opportunity for gross motor development, group play, balancing, climbing, running, digging, swinging, building, walking, exploring and having fun. It is an important part of our program to be outside no matter the weather so the children begin to enjoy their outdoor environment in all its many forms. If we learn to enjoy the "bad" weather we start to learn how to weather all other storms that happen in life.

We do not have any 'screen time' at Little Oysters Child Care.

Field Trips

Little Oysters Child Care incorporates walking field trips into the regular curriculum. Walks to the beach at the bottom of Station Road is a favorite location. We may spontaneously take a bus ride to the Fanny Bay hall or local forests with no notice; please ensure you have signed the annual field trip permission form for local trips. Please make sure you let us know on any given day in advance if you will be picking up your child early. There may be additional fees for field trips when we use the school bus, or are required to pay admission for some locations.

We may also use the schools bus from time to time to take field trips. For bus trips and walking field trips outside of our local area we will provide a permission form for all families to sign ahead of time. There will always be a notice left at the facility with all the information of our whereabouts. Please make sure you let us know on any given day in advance if you will be picking up your child early.

For all field trips there will always be a teacher with a valid First Aid Certificate. We carry with us a first aid kit, working phone, emergency cards and photos of each child and staff.

Please make sure your child always has rain gear available at preschool.

When crossing the Old Island highway at the bottom of Station Road, staff don high visibility vests, hold up bright red STOP signs and children all walk in a line. We wait until all traffic is clear from both directions before we begin crossing. We use 'sandwich walking' which means there is always a teacher in the front and one at the back and, when available, staff in the middle.

On any given field trip children are ALWAYS within sight.

Volunteers

We will need families to volunteer from time to time for our various field trips and to share any talents you may have with children in the classroom (i.e. musical/craft/science).

If you can be a volunteer please fill out the form we provide and take it to the police station in Courtenay to get a criminal record check. This is a mandatory procedure if you would like to volunteer with us. The form we provide will allow the criminal record check to be free of cost to you. We appreciate you and thank you for your help!