



Beachcombers Academy

& Little Oysters Preschool



Parent & Student Handbook

Updated: 2023-08

Welcome to Beachcombers Academy

Dear Parents, Caregivers, and Students:

It is our pleasure to welcome all families to Beachcombers Academy. We enjoy the sound of sea lions, nearby eagles; and our view of Baynes Sound, the fisheries wharf, and the Fanny Bay Estuary.

Beachcombers is a special place that strives to provide a safe, nurturing environment in which each child can flourish. We promote peace building in the classroom, and developing healthy relationships between the school and home. Our staff looks forward to working with you towards these goals.

As part of our character education curriculum we follow The Virtues Project. There are 52 virtues that are honoured by all cultures and traditions as the "best within us". We are pleased with the success of this program as we develop a school community that encourages students to support each other in developing self-confidence and living respectful treatment of others.

We believe that education is a partnership between parents and the school environment. Parents are a child's first and most influential educators. Beachcombers Academy gives limited homework in the early years; however, we do encourage parents to read with their child daily.

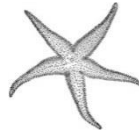
We are continually improving our facility and welcome parent involvement. Each year we have a volunteer project. Please let us know if you wish to get involved.

Our Parent & Student Handbook provides you with a wealth of important information about our school and our policies. Please take the time to read it and share the information with your children.

We wish you all a happy and fulfilling school year and we look forward to meeting and collaborating with families old and new.

With very best wishes,

From all of us at Beachcombers Academy & Little Oysters Preschool.



BEACHCOMBERS ACADEMY CORE VALUES

- ✧ We are committed to offering an exceptional, affordable educational experience consistent with the BC Ministry of Education curriculum standards.
- ✧ Our vision is to raise self confident, thoughtful, and spirited youth, who are self-motivated active learners.
- ✧ We will foster a sense of stewardship for the natural environment and encourage our students to have respect for themselves and their community.
- ✧ We support peace building within the classroom and our school community.
- ✧ We are a small school where teachers and students are connected through positive relationships, where a sense of belonging is evident among our students and where a sense of community governs our relationships with one another.

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WHEN YOU COME TO SCHOOL

Arrival

Students should arrive 5 to 10 minutes before school start. It is important that everyone is on time to avoid disruption to the start of the day. During COVID-19 parents are not permitted in the building during pick-up and drop-off unless wearing a mask and they have an pre-arranged appointment. Thank you!

Parking Lot

When picking up and dropping off your child, please be aware of young children moving around the parking lot and take extra care. Please back into a parking space, as this improves safety when drivers are leaving. We ask that all pedestrians, especially children, use the walkways on the perimeter of the parking lot.

School Supplies

All school supplies are provided for your child, and are paid for under the school supply portion of tuition fees. The only thing we ask you to supply is a plain washable art shirt (no logos please).

FOOD POLICIES

Lunches and Snacks & Potlucks

Please provide your child with a nutritious, healthy snack and lunch every day. Please do not pack candy or sweets for your child, and ensure your child has an adequate supply of water suitable for outdoor activities. We recommend that snacks, lunches, and drinks be in reusable containers to cut down on waste. Please use the same considerations when bringing food for school potlucks.

Nut policy: Beachcombers has a “NO NUT POLICY” due to potentially life threatening allergies.

NUTS OR NUT PRODUCTS OF ANY KIND ARE NOT ALLOWED IN SNACKS OR LUNCH KITS OR ON SCHOOL PREMISES.

OKAY: Fruits and seeds are okay to bring to school. This includes: pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds, sesame seeds, pumpkin seed butter, tahini, and coconut.

Food Provided by Beachcombers Academy

On occasion, Beachcombers Academy may provide food to students. We try to provide healthy quality food on these occasions. The school will attempt to provide food which is organic or recognized as having low-pesticide residue, non-GMO, and natural sweeteners.

CLOTHING

Uniform

We ask parents to please ensure students are dressed in the uniform at all times. We hope that our uniform will help to eliminate unhealthy competition in dress, and will ensure that our students are always appropriately dressed for the elements. Please consult with the Principal if you have questions. We recommend that **uniform items and boots be clearly labeled with your child's name** to avoid confusion. Uniform is required for all primary students. For preschool students the uniform is optional (please no logos or advertising on preschool clothing).

Outdoor Wear & Change of Clothes

We anticipate going outside every day “whatever the weather”. Please ensure your child is suitably equipped for whatever the West Coast can throw at us! Rain pants and rain coats, rubber boots, good walking boots or running shoes, and occasionally snow gear will all be required items. All children should have a complete change of clothes, including socks, at school so they can be warm and comfortable at all times.

Indoor Shoes

Please provide a pair of indoor shoes for school. These can be slippers, comfortable slip on shoes (but please no flip-flops) or runners for indoor use only. Students should change into indoor shoes immediately on entering the school. Slippers should have a sole so that they can go outside in case of inevitable fire drills.

DON'T BRING/DO BRING

No Weapons

Weapons of any description, including play items, are strictly prohibited at Beachcombers.

No Toys Please

Occasionally some of our younger students wish to bring toys into school. We respectfully ask that all toys be left at home. This includes cards that are collected and swapped (such as sports cards or Pokémon Cards).

No Cell Phones, I-Pods, or other Electronic Devices/GAMES

Please discourage children from bringing any of these items to Beachcombers. They will not be allowed in class and will have to remain in backpacks until the end of day. If students have an emergency they will be able to use the school phone to contact parents.

Items Students are Welcome to Bring to School

Children are welcome to bring family photographs, items of interest from a recent trip, or interesting nature items to school to share with the other children.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Medical Emergencies

In the event of an accident or sudden onset of illness, the school will immediately seek proper care for a child. The child's individual health and emergency instructions on file at the school are consulted and the parents are called. If necessary, the child will be transported by ambulance to hospital accompanied by a member of staff, if staffing levels allow, and if the parent is not on the school premises. Important health and emergency data, including parental consent, will accompany the child so that treatment can be given immediately in the absence of a parent.

The school is required to have a complete health history and emergency information on file for each child enrolled. *It is the parents' responsibility to keep this critical information up to date at all times.*

Fire and Earthquake

The school has policies in place for regular practice of fire and earthquake drills. Should there be an emergency on the school premises such that we cannot use the school building (i.e. earthquake, flooding, fire, etc.), students and staff will gather, if possible, outside the school.

Parent's efforts to reach the school with local phone lines may be unsuccessful. **In the event of an earthquake or natural disaster, parents should:**

- ✦ Remember to leave a message with your Out-of-Province Contact Person as to your whereabouts and condition.
- ✦ Please program your Out-of-Province Contact Person's number and information into your cellular phone NOW. It is important that you remember who you have identified as your Out-of-Province Contact Person, and that this is the same contact information that you give to Beachcombers. It is with this person that Beachcombers will leave a message for you regarding your child in the event of disaster.

In a crisis, staff will remain with the children at the school until all the children are safely collected by a parent or authorized adult. Do not attempt to collect your child if it is unsafe to do so.

Inclement Weather

We may need to close the school in the event of extreme weather conditions. We can have widely varying weather conditions between Bowser and Comox. There are times when the weather in Courtenay/Comox is very different from Fanny Bay.

Please listen to local radio stations for updates regarding weather and school closures. Also check your email; Beachcombers will email all families in the event of a school closure, *if power is available.*

UNDERSTANDING HEALTH, RISK AND SAFETY

If treatment of any kind needs to be given, a child needs to stay at home. Whether a parent chooses to seek treatment, or dispense medication or not, is at the parent's discretion.

Just because a child can move about, it does not mean they are well enough to attend school successfully. If they are fatigued, lethargic in any way, unusually uncommunicative and out of sorts, a child is not well enough to attend school with an alert and positive manner.

It is important to remember that sick attendance undermines a child's positive perspective of school, as children are not always sure why they are feeling the way they are about things; thus sick/uncomfortable feelings are directed to others, their own performance and the school experience as a whole. **Keep your child's school experience a successful, happy and safe one!**

Health and Illness Policy

A child should NOT attend school if s/he has or is developing ANY of the following:	A child MAY return to the school when:
A fever of 100F (38.3 C) or higher.	Fever has remained below 100 F for 24 hours without medication.
Frequent episodes of diarrhea (more than 1 every 4 hours) or diarrhea that the child cannot control.	Child has had at least 1 normal bowel movement.
Any of: Acute onset of a sore throat; runny nose or eyes; uncontrollable and frequent coughing; or vomiting.	Symptoms have subsided.
Skin infection, undiagnosed rash, sore infected eyes, hand, or signs of any contagious disease.	Child has been examined by a doctor and has received medical clearance.
Has been on oral/topical antibiotics less than 24 hours.	After 24 hours has passed.
Hand, foot and mouth disease	The child's fever has remained below 100 degrees ferenheit for 24 hours, without the use of medication. No open sores.
Any parasite related condition (impetigo, scabies, etc...)	Child has been examined by a doctor and has received medical clearance.
Conditions treated at home for example head lice and pink eye.	Child is fully treated and remains home for 24 hours.
COVID-19 symptoms: fever,chills, cough or worsening or chronic cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, runny nose/stuffy nose, loss of sense of smell or taste, headache, fatigue, diarrhea, loss of appetite, nausea and vomiting, muscle aches, pink eye, dizziness, confusion, abdominal pain, skin rashes or discoloration of fingers or toes.	The child's fever has remained below 100 degrees ferenheit for 24 hours, without the use of medication. Symptoms have subsided. See appendix for COVID-19 Daily Health Check.

You are required to keep (or take) your child home when the child:

- ✘ is suffering from one or more of the above symptoms, or
- ✘ is not well enough to take part in Beachcombers regular program.

Please Contact Beachcombers if Student will be Absent

For ANY absences or significantly late arrival, please notify staff prior to class start. If it is due to illness please let us know the symptoms.

If your Child is Away Due to Illness

When your child has been absent from school, please to provide an email or letter outlining the reason for the absence. According to Environmental Health requirements, a description of any and all specific symptoms of illness that you may have observed shall be noted. Remember - your child needs to be symptom-free for 24 hours before returning to school.

Attendance Requirement; Funding; Note from Parent/Caregiver

The BC Ministry of Education requires that students attend all classes. Ministry of Education funding for your child(ren) is based on this requirement. Please ensure that you contact Beachcombers stating the reason for absence by email to admin.beachcombers@shaw.ca or by phone. Thank you!

Head Lice

Most schools have students with head lice at some time during the school year. Head lice are indiscriminate and can affect anyone. **If your child contracts head lice please treat your child before sending them to school**, and please inform school staff immediately so that we can alert other parents to do head-lice checks.

Medication

The school is not able to dispense any prescription medications, 'over-the-counter' drugs or homeopathic medicines, with the rare exception of in some first aid emergencies, or if a health care plan, for a student with a chronic health condition, is in place. If a child should become sick during school, the child will rest until the parents or authorized adults are contacted and arrive to take the child home.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT & PLEDGE

We are committed to providing a safe and comfortable learning environment for all our students so that they may have a positive learning experience. We are also committed to our staff being able to give their best to students who are interested and keen to learn.

It is essential that all students and parents understand and follow the behaviour expectations at Beachcombers. As an ongoing condition of enrolment at the School, students and parents are expected to support the requirements of the *Student Code of Conduct* and *Parent/Child Declaration of Understanding*. Parents are asked to assist their children to sign the Student Pledge, and to sign and return the *Parent Support/Student Pledge* page to acknowledge their understanding of the bullying and abuse policy. These documents are signed as part of the registration process.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

1. RESPECT

I will listen to my teachers at all times. I will follow the rules of the classroom and the school. I will be a proud member of Beachcombers Academy.

2. COURTESY

Beachcombers expects polite behaviour and courtesy from everyone. I will not swear, make rude expressions, lie, threaten, insult or bully anyone.

3. RESPONSIBILITY

I will be responsible for my belongings, my schoolwork, and myself. I will take care of my classroom and school environment.

4. ATTITUDE AND WORK ETHIC

I am a special person and my teachers will help me to be the best person that I can be. My teachers are there to help me learn and I will do my very best to listen to them. I will pay attention in class and do all the work they ask me to. I will be the best person I can be.

5. FREEDOM TO LEARN WITHOUT DISTRACTION

Everyone has the right to learn as much as they can at school. I will help make this happen by not disturbing other students or making noise in class.

6. HANDS-OFF POLICY

At Beachcombers we have a “hands-off” rule. I will not touch, push, poke, trip, play fight or hurt another person. “Hands off” means just that – I will keep my hands to myself. I will also not use bad or hurtful words. Respectfully holding hands is fine.

7. THE RIGHT TO A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

It is important that everyone is safe at Beachcombers. I will not do anything that will make things unsafe. I will let a teacher know right away if I find anything that is unsafe.

8. FIGHTING, HARASSMENT OR BULLYING

I understand that fighting, bullying, harassment, intimidating other students, or threatening other students is not accepted at Beachcombers. Harassment is repeated behaviour that can be calling other people names, saying or writing nasty things about them, leaving them out of activities, not talking to them, threatening them, making them feel uncomfortable or scared, taking or damaging their things, hurting them, or making them do things they don't want to do. Bullying is repeated or on-going, targeted behaviour that humiliates and involves an inequity of power. I could be suspended or asked to leave Beachcombers if I behave in these ways. Cyber bullying (using a computer to bully via email or instant messaging), even when conducted outside of school hours, will be treated in the same way. For more information please see the following section.

9. SCHOOL PROPERTY

I will not damage, write on, or destroy any property or things that belong to the school. If I see anyone doing this I will tell a teacher right away.

10. PERSONAL PROPERTY

I will respect my things and the things of other people, and I will borrow someone else's things only with the owner's permission. If I see anyone taking something without permission I will tell a teacher right away.

11. ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

I will respect our natural environment and understand it is everyone's responsibility to care for our planet. I will use the recycling facilities at school and I will not damage or destroy plants, animals or their habitats.

12. ABSENCE

Regular attendance is extremely important to a student's achievement. All students are expected to remain in school until dismissal time on the last day of class each term. If I am to be absent, my parent/guardian must email or phone the School prior to 8:45am. My parent/guardian will provide the reason for absence by email or I will bring a note of explanation from my parent/guardian upon my return to the School.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT: DEFINITIONS, REPORTING, FORGIVENESS

Normal Childhood Conflict

Learning to navigate normal childhood conflict is one of the most important learning opportunities at school in the younger grades. When a conflict arises, Beachcombers staff use the experience as a learning opportunity. Normal childhood conflict is not bullying. It is important to differentiate between normal childhood conflict and more serious harassment and bullying.

Harassment

Harassment is targeted behaviour that is intended to embarrass, intimidate, demean or humiliate, and is typically repeated. It includes any offensive comments, behaviour, or gesture which you know, or should know, is unwelcome. It includes unwelcome physical contact; verbal abuse or threats; unwelcome invitations or requests; remarks including jokes, innuendo, or taunting about such things as a person's body, race, gender, attire, sexual orientation, ethnic or religious origins; unwanted sexual comments, looks, suggestions or requests; sexually aggressive behaviour; or any comment or behaviour that undermines a person's dignity or worth. This kind of behaviour by students or parents is grounds for student suspension or expulsion. Harassment is *not* normal childhood conflict.

Bullying

Beachcombers is committed to being a bully-free zone. Bullying is repeated, targeted, on-going behaviour that humiliates and involves an inequity of power; this kind of behaviour by students or parents is grounds for student suspension or expulsion. Normal childhood conflict is not bullying. When normal childhood conflict is mislabeled as bullying, it devalues the seriousness

of bullying. At Beachcombers we take accusations of bullying very seriously. Bullying is *not* one-time incidents or normal childhood conflict.

Reporting

We encourage anyone who feels intimidated or uncomfortable by the behaviour of another member of our school community to report this incident immediately to a staff member. It is important for students to understand that they should tell a teacher *at the time of the incident or as soon as possible. It is difficult for teachers to intervene, or use an incident as an opportunity to teach students about appropriate behaviour, if the incident is reported days or weeks later. Early reporting also enables staff to intervene before a situation escalates.* Students should be encouraged to talk about incidents that bother them to a parent or a member of staff so that a resolution can be found. Repeat abusive behaviour by students or parents is unacceptable and is grounds for student suspension and expulsion.

Tolerance & Forgiveness

Children are constantly learning how to interact socially, how to act respectfully, and how to engage in conflict-resolution. This is difficult, not only for children, but for adults too. None of us are perfect; we all make mistakes. Apology and acceptance of apology allows us all to grow and change. Tolerance means that we can forgive others and that others can forgive us. Tolerance means accepting and honouring our differences including race, beliefs, how we think, culture, sexual orientation, gender, etc. Tolerance and forgiveness is an important part of working together as a school community.

Right to a Safe & Respectful Environment

Our students have the right to be educated in a non-hostile environment where they feel safe, comfortable and valued. This is also true for our staff and our parents. ***Everyone in the school community is responsible for role-modelling respectful behaviour.***

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURE

Students will be made aware at the beginning of the school year of behavioural expectations. This is communicated through the student Respect and Care poster and the Parent-Student Handbook. All students will be expected to sign a behavioural contract indicating that he/she/they understands the expectations and is willing to abide by them.

Students are taught appropriate behaviour daily, and as part of the weekly Virtues Program. Staff are proactive in addressing behaviour issues with students on an ongoing basis. Incidents in the classroom are often used as learning opportunities.

The staff will recognize students who consistently display appropriate conduct. Students will be taught and encouraged to use proactive and appropriate decision-making and social skills.

Should intervention be required to help students follow the Code of Conduct, the following progressive and logical consequences may be applied:

Level 1

For behaviours that are minor violations of the Code of Conduct, a staff member will speak directly to the student. The following consequences may be used to encourage more positive behaviour:

- Reminder/informal discussion
- Use of problem solving techniques
- Verbal or written warning
- Contact with parents/guardian by the classroom teacher
- Separation from peers
- Written or verbal apology
- Restitution for damage

Level 2

For behaviours that are repeated or are more serious, a staff member will speak directly to the student. A problem-solving sheet may be sent home to parents with a request to review the Code of Conduct and to return the signed sheet back to the school. The following consequences may be used to encourage more positive behaviour:

- Any from Level 1
- Verbal or written warning
- Contact with parents/guardian by the teacher and/or administration
- Creation of behaviour contract or plan
- Removal from the classroom/situation

Level 3

For incidents of a more serious nature, students will be referred to an administrator. The nature and severity of the infraction, the intent behind the infraction and the frequency of the infraction will be considered when determining the level of consequence. It should also be noted that all disciplinary decisions are made in consideration of individual circumstances. The following consequences may be used to encourage more positive behaviour:

- Any from Level 1 and/or Level 2
- Referral to principal
- Administration involved in discussion/planning consequences
- Official written documentation of the incident
- Directly supervised recess/lunchtime activity
- Lunchtime suspensions
- In school suspensions

Level 4

In accordance with the School Act, the directors of Beachcombers Education Society authorizes the principal to suspend or expell a student. Students may be suspended or expelled because their behaviour has a harmful effect on the character or persons of other students, e.g. physical fighting or name calling; or because of vandalism to the school, student or staff property. The Parent or Guardian will be asked to return with their child to meet with the administration and make a commitment to improve behaviour. Some of the consequences from Level 3 may apply.

Please note that if there is a violation of a very serious nature, suspension or expulsion will be immediate. Parents will be contacted by phone, email or letter.

Note: It is hoped that this system will encourage students to monitor their behaviour, know what is expected of them, and strive toward maintaining and/or improving their academic and social skills.

COMMUNICATION

It is our belief that a successful education requires a three-way partnership between student, parents/caregivers and the School. Parents and teachers are encouraged to develop open lines of communication in order to address any questions or areas of concern at the earliest possible stage.

Who do I talk to if I have a concern?

- 1. Should parents have any questions, they should first contact the class teacher.** These are the professionals who have the most direct contact with, and knowledge of, the student and so any issues are most likely to be successfully resolved with their teacher.
- 2. In those few circumstances when a satisfactory resolution cannot be achieved by speaking with your child's teacher, please bring your concerns to the Principal.**

Appeals Process

- 1. If you feel that your concern has not been satisfactorily resolved, or that you have not been adequately heard, please provide a written letter to the Principal.**
- 2. If you feel that your concern has not been satisfactorily resolved by the Principal, you may provide a written letter to the President & Operations Manager who will investigate your complaint.**

Communication with Teachers and Principal

We invite you to communicate with staff with any comments, questions or concerns. We are always pleased to hear your comments! The Principal is available Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons. Please email admin.beachcombers@shaw.ca to make an appointment.

We ask that any conversations with teachers, regarding students, take place at school and between 8:00 am and 4:00 pm. Our teachers need to have their evenings and weekends free in order to be fresh to teach the class the following day and week.

Staff have dedicated email addresses. Parents may contact staff via email to make an appointment or for brief notifications, but email should not be used to discuss student issues in depth.

Drop off and pick up times are busy times, when teachers are unable to give you their full attention. Please no morning conversations, unless it is an urgent issue that arose over night. If

you wish to chat for more than a couple minutes after school, we recommend setting up a time with staff when they can give you their full attention. In the morning, we ask that parents leave the building by class start time, so as not to disrupt class start. Thank you!

Parent-Teacher Consultations

Parent-teacher consultations will take place on in the fall and spring, following the issuance of report cards. Parents will be able to make a 15 to 20 minute appointment on a designated Monday, or during school hours, to discuss their child’s progress and to set goals for the future term. Please check the annual school calendar for dates.

Thank you

Thank you for being a respectful part of the Beachcombers’ school community!
We wish everyone a good school year full of learning and self-reflection

APPENDIX

Beachcombers Academy – COVID-19 Daily Health Check

Before sending your child to school each day...

1. Is your child ill with?

- Fever
- Chills
- Cough or worsening or chronic cough
- Shortness of breath
- Sore throat
- Runny nose/ stuffy nose
- Loss of sense of smell or taste
- Headache
- Fatigue
- Diarrhea
- Loss of appetite
- Nausea and vomiting
- Muscle aches
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Dizziness, confusion
- Abdominal pain
- Skin rashes or discoloration of fingers or toes

2. Have you or anyone in your household returned from travel outside Canada in the last 14 days?

3. Are you or is anyone in your household a confirmed contact of a person confirmed to have COVID-19?

If you answered 'YES' to any of the questions and symptoms are not related to a pre-existing condition (e.g. allergies) your child should NOT come to school.

If they are experiencing any symptoms of illness, contact a health-care provider for further assessment. This includes 8-1-1, or a primary care provider like a physician or nurse practitioner.

If you answered "YES" to questions 2 or 3, use the COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool to determine if you should be tested for COVID-19.