



RICHMOND
JEWISH
DAY SCHOOL

2025-2026

Early Learning Centre Parent Handbook

POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Welcome, and bruchim habaim!

We are a fully licensed child care program and an extension of Richmond Jewish Day School. Our inclusive, play-based early years programming combines quality care with a deep appreciation of Jewish religion, culture, heritage and values. Extending from 0 to 5 years of age, RJDS Early Learning Centre, along with Richmond Jewish Day School for kindergarten through grade 7, represents the entire spectrum of the Jewish Community.



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Mission

RJDS Early Learning Centre is committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment where young children feel confident to express their most authentic selves. Inspired by Jewish values and traditions, we are an inclusive centre that welcomes children and families from all backgrounds.

Values

- Secure relationships between young children and their caregivers are the foundations for healthy development.
- Children are capable, whole human beings and deserve unconditional respect.
- Security, play and curiosity provide the opportunity for children to push boundaries and ultimately reach their fullest potential.
- Positive community relationships are built through transparent communication and family participation.
- Educators serve as nurturers, researchers and collaborators, honouring children's individual rights, needs and interests.

Director's Message

Dear Families,

As we begin our fourth year at the RJDS Early Learning Centre, I want to thank you for being part of this growing and vibrant community. With each year, our program becomes stronger—not only because of the dedicated work of our educators, but also because of the incredible support of our families. Your word-of-mouth referrals, volunteer efforts, and thoughtful feedback have helped us grow and improve in meaningful, lasting ways.

This year, we'll continue to deepen our child-led, inquiry-based approach. Curiosity (*sakranut*) is one of the Jewish values we see come alive in the classroom every day, as children explore their questions and ideas in thoughtful, creative ways. Acts of kindness (*chesed*) and caring for our world (*tikkun olam*) show up in small acts of care between children and the social-emotional learning woven throughout our day.

We're excited to welcome both new and returning families this year, and proud to see some of our graduates continuing on to Kindergarten right here at RJDS. It's incredibly meaningful to watch our little learners grow into confident, capable students. Their continued presence in the school helps strengthen the bridge between the Early Learning Centre and the K-7 community (*kehila*). Through shared traditions, celebrations, and daily interactions, our youngest children begin to feel part of something bigger as they grow into their identities.

We're so glad to be on this journey with you and grateful to share in these foundational years alongside your families. We look forward to another year of curiosity, connection, and shared growth.

Sincerely,

Sara Solomon
Director of Child Care and Early Learning



Philosophy of Early Learning and Care

Early Learning Framework

The [BC Early Learning Framework](#) is a comprehensive document designed for educators, parents and families to utilize as a guide towards positive relationships, inclusive practices (culture, social and children with diverse abilities), and reconciliation within learning communities. While it was originally published in 2008, a revised version was released in 2019 after a collaborative process of consultation with early childhood educators, primary teachers, academics, Indigenous organizations, Elders, government, and professionals. This new version makes a purposeful effort to “resist language, concepts, and pedagogies that perpetuate legacies of colonization and marginalization of Indigenous people...(and)... strives to contribute to lasting reconciliation with Indigenous people.”

The revised version expanded its focus on children from ages 0-5 to 0-8, making its principles especially relevant in early learning settings, as the philosophies and concepts directly connect with the Ministry of Education in B.C.’s Curriculum and Core Competencies. Pedagogical philosophies in B.C.’s progressive educational system have a more interrelated approach than in the past, which reflects the holistic nature of learning that has influenced this framework. Understanding this evolution in education should have a direct effect on how we perceive the early years and the types of opportunities, experiences and learning environments we provide for children before they enter the education system.

An Emergent and Responsive Curriculum

A traditional classroom may involve teacher-led themes and activities, however, the RJDS Early Learning Centre employs a responsive, constructivist play-based approach that is imperative for 21st-century learners. Such a setting provides opportunities, experiences, and materials that are responsive to our children’s interests, passions and play behaviours relevant to the children in our care.

Young children learn best when their curiosity is encouraged and nurtured. Through a child-centered and personalized approach, our children will develop a true love for learning. Not only will they feel respected as co-constructors of the curriculum, but having this flexible approach to learner outcomes means unlimited opportunities to build on concepts that relate to every aspect of their world.

One major component of the BC Curriculum is its focus on inquiry-based learning. This multi-modal approach fosters critical thinking and collaboration while giving children a sense of ownership over their learning. By fostering curiosity, we invite inquiry from our children to build an emergent curriculum with the highest potential for engagement.

The Philosophy of ‘True’ Play

We often talk about play as something that we can only engage in when our work is done. With children, we are constantly trying to look for purpose in their play, or structuring their activities,

thereby infrequently allowing for 'true' or free play. Many things masquerade as play, like board games and crafts, but these are not considered true play as they are structured activities, designed by adults, with a goal or intended outcome. But true play – that is, child-centred with no external agenda, -- is critical to a child's development. True play, in and of itself, is how children learn to solve problems and develop skills, free from any real-world consequences. Within safe boundaries provided by their adults and a physical environment with open-ended materials, children can be free to explore, tinker, create and experiment for long, uninterrupted periods of time.

There are already plenty of rules and expectations for young children in their everyday routines, so having this time when they can create the rules to process their life experiences, is critical to their development. In play-based learning, children choose their own activities each day and the learning environment is often broken up into sections or stations. For example, a room may have a block or lego area, a dramatic play area, a reading nook, and others. Play-based programs are also sometimes called 'child-centered' because the children guide their own learning with their curiosity and interests. This should not be confused with a lack of routines and expectations. Children in the RJDS Early Learning Centre will also be provided with the opportunity to participate in more structured activities offered, however, we believe that the children should be the directors of their own learning experiences.

The most recent scientific evidence emphasizes the crucial role true play can have on a child's development, rather than the hasty push for early instruction and academics. As local clinical counsellor, developmentalist and author, Dr. Deborah Macnamara, states, "In play, the goal is not to push a form onto a child but rather to free their spirit to explore, discover, and to express itself."

Exposure to open-ended experiences and play in the early years contributes to positive socio-emotional outcomes, enhances creativity, and encourages self-esteem. Being allowed to make mistakes during the early years, through open-ended exploration also helps children develop a growth mindset, in which they believe in their own potential, have improved self-confidence, and develop resiliency. These are the foundations for future academic learning, innovation and creative expression.

An Integrated Judaic Curriculum

At the RJDS Early Learning Centre, Judaics are weaved into their everyday experiences in natural ways through the emergent and play-based approaches. Judaic concepts and history may be introduced through storytelling, while language and traditions may be experienced through conversations and songs. The idea is to immerse the children in the culture through their natural environment, to invite further inquiry as they grow older.

As a pluralistic school, RJDS recognizes that the Jewish community is very diverse, both in terms of practice and identity. We welcome all perspectives as long as they are respectful to each other and acknowledge RJDS's core values - integrity, compassion, learning, resilience, community and respect. Laws of Kashrut are followed for any food served and all of the major Jewish holidays are observed in child-friendly ways.

Holidays and traditions may be introduced in different ways to reflect our community's varied perspectives. We also want to acknowledge our intersectionality with both our local and global community. While other religious celebrations won't necessarily be included in our yearly planning,



cultures and celebrations may be acknowledged, as long as they are relevant to the children's real-life exposure and/or inquiries, the content is secular in nature (food, dance, non-religious symbolism), and does not overshadow or undermine our Mission and Jewish values.

A Guiding and Caring Learning Environment

The foundation of the RJDS Early Learning Centre is heavily reliant on healthy, positive relationships between the children and our educators. A healthy attachment means that the child looks to the adult for guidance and safety through trust. We take it upon ourselves to understand the individual needs of each child and their different personalities, so we can set appropriate boundaries and be a safe space for them to work through their emotions. This helps them learn how to adapt to various real-life situations and creates resiliency. Understanding the developmental needs of a child is the first step in helping them mature. Children have a natural hunger for contact and closeness and cannot move forward until those basic needs are met. Once they feel safe and secure, children begin to actively seek learning opportunities to explore the world around them.

As children are capable, whole human beings, we must trust they will develop and grow at the pace nature intended, without skipping stages or trying to speed up the process. There is a misconception that "attachment" or allowing children to express their emotions is overly permissive. However, research in child development tell us that the opposite is true. We can be authoritative without being authoritarian, and providing a safe space for children to work through their emotions is necessary to lay the foundations for self-regulation, which ultimately prevents more negative behaviour.

RJDS's educators maintain strong relationships with the families and practice a collaborative strength-based approach that focuses on the meaning of a child's behaviour, rather than the behaviour itself. Expectations of self-regulation are adjusted to developmentally appropriate levels and we never use a child's behaviour as a condition for affection. Children must know they are unconditionally loved, so they can be authentic with their emotions and always be accepted. It's through this emotionally-safe space that children learn resilience and build enough confidence to "spread their wings" and become independent, thoughtful and socially responsible individuals.

Faculty & Staff 2025/2026

Administration	
Principal	<i>Sabrina Bhojani</i>
Business Manager	<i>Janet Ragetli</i>
Administrative Assistant	<i>Stacey Szeplabi</i>
Office Communications Coordinator	<i>Jordan Sukkau</i>
Director of Child Care and Early Learning	<i>Sara Solomon</i>

Early Learning Centre Educators	
Gan Aleph: Ages 0-3 Years	Gan Bet: Ages 2.5-5 Years
<i>Josie Ng – Team Lead</i>	<i>Megan Kornfeld – Team Lead</i>
<i>Mandy Lee</i>	<i>Crystal Chan</i>
<i>Jacqueline Gao</i>	<i>Julia Lee</i>
<i>Koey Cheng</i>	<i>Kanchan Dimri</i>

K-7 Teaching Staff	
Teacher's Name	Subject and Grades
<i>Tammia Bowden</i>	<i>Grade 4/5 BC Curriculum Music 2-7 PE K -7</i>
<i>Hadas Klinger</i>	<i>Grade 6/7 BC Curriculum Israeli Dance K-7 Morning Care Teacher</i>
<i>Laura Martin</i>	<i>Grade 2/3 BC Curriculum Food Lab 4-5 Art 2-7</i>
<i>Maura Smolensky</i>	<i>Grade K/1 BC Curriculum</i>
<i>Bettina Jacob</i>	<i>Grade 4-7 Spanish Grade 2-7 Hebrew</i>
<i>Batsheva Michaeli</i>	<i>Grade K-7 Judaics Grade K/1 Hebrew</i>

Support Staff	
Counsellor	<i>Malki Moshkovitz</i>
Student Life Coordinator & Educational Assistant	<i>Reesa Pauer</i>
Educational Assistant	<i>Bettina Jacob</i>
Educational Assistant & After School Care	<i>Nicola Eriksen</i>
After School Care	<i>Chantel Grabi</i>

Closures/Early Dismissal

Please note that dates and times are subject to change. For the most accurate and up-to-date schedule, we encourage you to subscribe to our [digital Google Calendar](#).

SEPT	Monday, Sept. 1 Tuesday, Sept. 2 Tuesday, Sept. 23 Tuesday, Sept. 24 <u>Monday, Sept. 29 4:30pm*</u> Tuesday, Sept. 30	Labour Day Admin/Pro D Day Rosh Hashana Rosh Hashana <u>Early Dismissal, Staff Meeting</u> National Day for Truth and Reconciliation
OCT	<u>Wednesday, Oct. 1, 3:30pm*</u> Thursday, Oct. 2 Tuesday, Oct. 7 Wednesday, Oct. 8 Friday, Oct. 13 Tuesday, Oct. 14 Wednesday, Oct. 15 <u>Monday, Oct. 27 4:30pm*</u>	<u>Early Dismissal, Kol Nidre</u> Yom Kippur Sukkot Sukkot Thanksgiving Day Shemini Atzeret Simchat Torah <u>Early Dismissal, Staff Meeting</u>
NOV	Tuesday, Nov. 11 <u>Monday, Nov. 24 4:30pm*</u>	Remembrance Day <u>Early Dismissal, Staff Meeting</u>
DEC	Monday, Dec. 22 Tuesday, Dec. 23 Wednesday, Dec. 24 Thursday, Dec. 25 Friday, Dec. 26 <u>Monday, Dec. 29 4:30pm*</u>	Winter Break Winter Break Winter Break Christmas Day Winter Break <u>Early Dismissal, Staff Meeting</u>
JAN	Thursday, Jan. 1 Monday, Jan. 5 <u>Monday, Jan. 26 4:30pm*</u>	New Year's Day Pro D Day <u>Early Dismissal, Staff Meeting</u>
FEB	Monday, Feb. 16 <u>Monday, Feb. 23 4:30pm*</u>	Family Day <u>Early Dismissal, Staff Meeting</u>
MAR	<u>Monday, Mar. 30 4:30pm*</u>	<u>Early Dismissal, Staff Meeting</u>
APR	Thursday Apr. 2 Friday, Apr. 3 Wednesday, Apr. 8 Thursday, Apr. 9 <u>Monday, Apr. 27 4:30pm*</u>	Pesach Good Friday Pesach Pesach <u>Early Dismissal, Staff Meeting</u>
MAY	Monday, May 18 Friday, May 22 <u>Monday, May 25 4:30pm*</u>	Victoria Day Shavuot <u>Early Dismissal, Staff Meeting</u>
JUN	Friday, June 26 <u>Monday, June 29 4:30pm*</u>	Admin/Pro D Day <u>Early Dismissal, Staff Meeting</u>
JUL	Wednesday, July 1 <u>Monday, July 29 4:30pm*</u>	Canada Day <u>Early Dismissal, Staff Meeting</u>
AUG	Monday, Aug. 3 Tuesday, Aug. 4 Wednesday, Aug. 5 Thursday, Aug. 6 Friday, Aug. 7 <u>Monday, Aug. 31 4:30pm*</u>	B.C. Day Summer Break Summer Break Summer Break Summer Break <u>Early Dismissal, Staff Meeting</u>

Unplanned Closures

If we must close for the day, for any reason (snow, power outage, flooding, communicable disease outbreak, staffing shortage, etc.), we will do our best to contact each family as early as possible.

In the case of heavy snowfall, listen to CBC AM 690 Radio, check your e-mail or the Brightwheel app for notifications, rjds.ca or check the RJDS Facebook page for updates.

Refunds cannot be issued due to brief, unplanned closures, as RJDS still has necessary overhead costs.

Daily Routine

- The following schedules are general guides showing the flow of each day and may vary; however, unless a child is in a sleep transition or gradual entry, the windows of time for naps are firm, i.e., naps can be shorter, but to ensure appropriate supervision, they cannot start or end outside of these times.
- Planned activities, handwashing, bathroom breaks and dressing are included at appropriate times throughout the day,
- Indoor open play time occurs throughout the day whenever children aren't engaged in a routine activity.
- Children may start and finish routine activities at different times – sometimes in small groups and sometimes individually.
- Additional group/circle times may be added when appropriate.

Gan Aleph

8:00	Doors Open
9:15-10:00	Morning Snack
9:30-10:30	Optional Morning Nap
10:00 - 11:30	Outdoor Play
11:00 - 12:15	Lunch Time
12:00 - 4:30	Afternoon Nap
3:15-4:00	Afternoon Snack
3:30-5:20	Outdoor Play
5:30	Doors Close

Gan Bet

8:00	Doors Open
9:00 - 9:50	Morning Snack
10:15 - 10:45	Group/Circle Time
10:30 - 11:45	Outdoor Play
11:50 - 12:45	Lunch and Quiet Activities
12:45 - 2:45	Nap and Quiet Activities
2:30-3:30	Afternoon Snack
3:45-5:20	Outdoor Play
5:30	Doors Close

Gradual Entry

Entering a new environment is a big event for a young child. To make the transition as comfortable as possible for both the child and the family, we implement a gradual entry period for a minimum of four days. The amount of time they spend at the centre is short for the first day, and then that time increases incrementally each day. If your child shows signs of needing an extended gradual entry period we will discuss a modified schedule on an individual basis. Our teachers intend to work closely with the families to help meet the needs of each family.

Upon enrollment, you will be provided with the appropriate schedule for your child's class and developmental stage. We understand that taking time away from work and other responsibilities is a challenge, but keeping your schedule flexible for this period is necessary. The times indicated in your gradual entry schedule reflect the amount of time the child stays that day, with instructions for parent assistance.

Tips for a Smooth Transition

- Stay accountable – If you say you are going to be back in 10 minutes, be back in 10 minutes. This is to establish trust and maintain a secure attachment with you, so your child knows that when they are at RJDS, you will always be back.
- Bridge the next connection – A healthy attachment to a parent means that when the child is at daycare, the goal is to hold on to that attachment. It's not about separating; it's about staying attached while apart. So, if your child is anxious, rather than talk about the time spent away from you, put the focus on your next connection. What will you do when you see each other again?
- Let your child have their emotions – It's normal for children to be nervous and sad in a new environment. Acknowledge the feelings and just be there for them.
- Be patient – Let your child decide when they are ready to engage in play and with other people. Find a home base for yourself in the classroom, so they know where to find you. Sit back and let them observe with you.
- Connect with the staff – To help your child feel safe and secure with new adults, they need to see positive interactions between them and their family members, the people with whom they already have strong attachments. Your child may not be ready to say hi, and that's ok, so let them sit on your lap or hold your leg while you get to know us.
- Say Goodbye – Although it can be tempting to sneak away when you see your child is engaged in play, don't do it. This can increase anxiety when your child notices you are gone and discourage independent play going forward, for fear that you may disappear. When you have decided it is time for you to leave the room, but anticipate some anxiety from your child, find a staff member that your child is comfortable with to assist and have a special, but brief goodbye routine for each day.

Enrollment

Enrollment Policy

- As a condition of the admission of a child to RJDS Early Learning Centre, the enrolling parent/guardian must agree to abide by the terms and conditions of the Enrollment Agreement (the "Agreement"), in the Enrollment Package.
- A non-refundable Registration fee of \$225 per child and a deposit of \$775 per family are required to be submitted with the enrollment package for the application to the RJDS Early Learning Centre to be considered complete.
- The enrolling parent/guardian is responsible for all tuition payments and any failure to pay tuition when due constitutes default of the Agreement. All tuition is due as per the "PAD AGREEMENT", which should indicate the 1st of each month enrolled. Interest of 1.5% per month (18% per year) will be added to accounts that are more than 30 days overdue. In the event of a default under this Agreement, RJDS shall be entitled to exercise all remedies available to it and the failure of RJDS to exercise a particular remedy shall not constitute a waiver of the right to do so.
- In the event of a default under the Agreement, the parent/guardian must pay all the costs of the RJDS Early Learning Centre associated with enforcing its rights under this Agreement, including, without limitation, collection agency fees, reasonable legal fees, arbitration costs, and any other costs associated with collecting any debt owed by parent/guardian to RJDS, with or without suit. RJDS reserves the right to restrict re-enrollment of a child whose accounts are not current.

Withdrawal Policy and Withdrawal Schedule

The enrolling parent/guardian is obligated to provide formal notice to the Director on the last day of the month, at least two months in advance of their child's last day of care. For example, if December 31st is the last day of care, then notice on or before October 31st is required.

The family is not entitled to a refund of any deposits, tuition fees already paid or additional fees paid, without appropriate notice as per the Withdrawal Policy and that tuition will be immediately due and payable in accordance with the Withdrawal Schedule.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the application of the Withdrawal Policy may be modified or waived in whole or in part, under exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of the Executive of the Board of Directors, upon written request from the family outlining in detail their reasons for requesting said modification or waiver. All such requests shall be kept confidential.

Upon ELC graduation or two months' withdrawal notice of last child, the \$775.00 security deposit will be subtracted from the remaining tuition due. Failure to pay tuition in accordance with this Withdrawal Schedule constitutes a default under this Agreement, entitling RJDS to all remedies available at law and in equity.

Tuition and Other Fees

B.C. Government Fee Subsidies:

Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative (CCFRI)

- The agreement is between the government and the child care centre, so no actions need to be taken by the family.
- Applies to all families, regardless of income.
- Amount is automatically subtracted from monthly tuition.
- Tuition savings are as follows:
 - o Under 3 years \$900
 - o 3-5 years \$545
- If at any point the government discontinues the CCFRI, full fees will be charged to the family.

Affordable Child Care Benefit (ACCB)

- The agreement is between the government and the family and is determined by household income.
- Once approved, the amount is automatically subtracted from future monthly tuition and the previous month's balance is refunded to the family (if approval comes after your child has already started care)
- If funding is denied or the family is in breach of the funding agreement (for example, child has been absent for longer than the allowable period), the family is responsible for the balance of fees owed to RJDS.

Monthly Fees

(based on the age of the child on the 1st day of the month)

	0 – 18 months	19 - 36 months	3 - 5 years
Full Fees before CCFRI Savings	\$1725	\$1668	\$1260
Parent Portion after CCFRI Savings	\$825	\$768	\$715

One-Time Fees

Non-refundable Registration Fee	Due immediately after the spot has been offered and accepted	\$225/child
Refundable Security Deposit	Due immediately after the spot has been offered and accepted <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will be subtracted from last child's final tuition fees upon ELC graduation or two months' withdrawal notice 	\$775/ family
Refundable Security Fob Deposit	Parents are expected to access the building with school-issued security fobs. Please contact the office to get set up.	\$20/fob

Drop off and Pickup

Parking Lot

Parking guidelines have been established with the help of our police liaison officer, parents and staff, and are designed for the safety of the students and children of Richmond Jewish Day School. Parents are not permitted to walk their children through the parking lot at any time as this poses a serious safety issue. Please park in the spots on the perimeter of the lot and walk on the sidewalks around the perimeter only. Cars should **NOT** be left unattended at the curb in front of the school entrance.

All parents, staff and students are to adhere to the parking lot etiquette and the parking plan for the 2025-2026 school year.

Drop Off

We expect all children to be dropped off by 9:30AM each morning. This helps reduce disruptions during busy transition times. If you are running late or your child will be absent for the day, you **MUST** inform your child's teachers as early as possible. If you arrive late, you may be asked to stay with your child until the teachers are ready to assist with the transition.

You must check your child in using the Brightwheel app and, at minimum, make eye contact with a teacher and be acknowledged before leaving. Please make sure your child has removed their shoes that were worn outside (their clean, indoor shoes should be left at school each day), puts away their lunch bag/backpack and water bottle, and leaves their cubby space neat and tidy.

Pickup

Remember to check out your child using the Brightwheel app and, if you haven't been greeted yet, please acknowledge the teacher before leaving with your child.

Late Pickup Policy

All families **must exit the school by 5:30pm** (or any designated early dismissal time). Teachers will do their best to prepare your child to leave at the end of the day, but if you require more time for additional tasks, then please plan to arrive earlier. If you are running late, please notify your child's teachers and keep them updated if possible.

A late fee of \$10.00 per 15 minutes per family will be charged if a child remains in care after closing time. These fees will be accumulated and charged on a quarterly basis. If parents/guardians are late on a regular basis, the Director will discuss solutions and/or next steps with the family. Teachers are required to issue a late pickup notice to the parent, which they are to sign and return to the teacher, who will then provide it to the Director for review.

Our teachers end their shifts promptly at 5:30pm and have their own personal obligations after work hours. Please understand that it is not the intent of RJDS to collect late fees, but rather use them as a deterrent.

Safe Release of Children Policy

Authorized Pickup List

Your child will be released only to an authorized adult on your pick-up list, as indicated on your registration form. If you authorize another person to pick up your child who is not on the pickup list, parents are required to tell a teacher in person with a signed note notifying us of this change, or electronically over email or Brightwheel. A photo ID will be required at pickup time any time the teacher does not recognize the pickup person. Without the parent's documented consent, the child will not be released.

Car Seat Provisions

Any adult with a minor in their vehicle is responsible for adhering to car seat safety laws. Educators have a duty to inform authorities if they are aware of a possible risk of harm and/or illegal activities that relate to a child. Therefore, your child may not be released if our staff determine that your designated pick-up person does not have sufficient child restraint installation. The following link provides information on the minimum legal requirements for car seat safety and best practices for car seats in Canada: [Car Seats For The Littles](#)

Custody Agreement

If an enrolling guardian informs the school that there is a legal custody agreement for the child, the guardian must provide a copy of the custody restriction and court order to dictate who can or cannot pick up the child.

Release of a Child to an Impaired Adult

The educators at RJDS have an ethical and legal responsibility to always ensure the well-being of the children when in their care. If an authorized guardian appears to be incapable of providing safe care for their child at the time of pickup, they will not be released under any circumstances.

Staff will take one or all of the following steps to ensure the safety of the child.

- Call a relative or friend to pick up the parent and child.
- Arrange a cab ride home.
- If the situation becomes violent or the parent insists on driving home in an impaired state, the police will be contacted.

Failure to Pick Up a Child

If a child is not picked up at the end of the day, staff will take the following steps, in the following order:

1. Contact the parents / guardians at all phone numbers provided and leave a voice message.
2. If parents are unreachable, we will contact the alternate authorized persons list.
3. We will contact the Ministry of Children and Family Development at 604-310-1234 or 604-660-4972 and follow directions given if a child is not picked up 60 minutes after closure and we have been unable to contact anyone in the child's file.







What to Bring

Please read the following list carefully. Keep in mind that the details outlined in this list are to ensure your child can effectively participate in all activities. For example, if their rain gear is insufficient, your child will still be required to participate in outdoor time. If their health and/or safety is at risk, a parent will be called to pick up their child. And please do not send umbrellas, as they are playground hazards.

- Please label **EVERYTHING** with your child's name in an obvious spot.
- Expect your child to get dirty. We encourage the use of smocks when doing art and try to only use washable materials, but often stains can't be avoided.
- All additional items should be left at home as our classroom environment is carefully designed with thoughtful attention to the materials included. Toys from home (other than comfort items to be held) should be left at home (not left in cubbies or backpacks).

Anything with an asterisk (*) should be left at the school in its designated place, unless sent home by a teacher for cleaning/replacing, etc.

Note: Each classroom has a slightly different organizational system, so please check with your children's teachers where everything should go.

<p>1. *Bedding/Sleep aides</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fitted crib sheet • Sleep sack (optional) • Soother (optional) • Blanket (optional) • Small stuffed toy (optional) <p>Note: blankets and stuffies are not permitted for children sleeping in cribs, or under 1 year of age</p>	<p>2. *Clothing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 extra underpants (if applicable) • 3 extra pants/shorts/skirts/leggings, etc. • 3 extra shirts • 3 extra pairs of socks • 1 pair of indoor shoes (comfortable, lightweight, easy to put on and remove) 
<p>3. Outerwear</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • *1 quality, well-fitting and waterproof rain suit. Many common brands (Tuffo, for example) are not fully waterproof. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Consider supplying 2 different seasonal styles. Thick, winter jackets are rarely waterproof, so they must fit underneath the rain suit. On warmer days, a versatile option would be a "bib" or "overall" style pant with separate jacket. • *Seasonal accessories i.e.: winter/summer hat, gloves (including good quality waterproof ones that go over sleeves) • *1 pair of rain boots • 1 pair of seasonally- and weather-appropriate shoes for outside <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Comfortable, lightweight, closed heel (strap ok), secure, easy for child to put on and remove themselves, non-slip/skid-proof • 1 seasonally- and weather-appropriate jacket     	
<p>4. Food</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lunch bag <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Balanced lunch (see food policies) ◦ Additional snacks (optional, as snacks are provided by RJDS in the morning and afternoon) ◦ Only dairy or pareve items may be microwaved. Warm, meat lunches may be provided by parents in an insulated container. • Full water bottle 	<p>5. *Self Care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bug spray (optional) and sunscreen (May-September) • Diapers, pull-ups, creams, etc. if applicable

Food and Wellness

Positive Eating/No-Pressure Policy

We support healthy eating practices by providing a positive eating environment and healthy snacks, while encouraging families to send healthy, balanced lunches.

To strengthen the children's independence and so they can learn how to recognize their bodies' needs, we avoid any time of coercion towards eating. We encourage the provision of a variety of balanced food items, based on the Canada Food Guide, and sufficient time to eat, but it's up to the children to decide how much of each item they will eat, how long it takes them, and often, even if they eat, within reasonable boundaries according to the class routine. We believe that the more we push, the less appealing a food option or the experience of eating is to a child and it's crucial that children be given as much control as possible in this area. We continually take note of what foods the children prefer and what isn't as popular and re-evaluate and tweak the snack menu based on these observations. We also observe the children's eating habits and document any behaviours that aren't developmentally appropriate or that negatively impact a child's health and ability to thrive.

Kashrut Policy

The Richmond Jewish Day School is committed to providing a positive Jewish educational setting that is comfortable for all members of the Jewish community. The school strives to impart Jewish practices through formal study and experience so that the students will be knowledgeable when making personal decisions about Jewish observance. This observance extends to the Early Learning Centre, where RJDS children have their earliest experiences in our Jewish environment.

Jewish dietary laws (Kashrut), regulations that prohibit the eating of certain foods and require that foods be prepared in a specified manner, play an important role in the life of the school community. It is presented in the classroom as an ideal and a mitzvah.

RJDS' Kashrut policy is as follows:

- a) Shellfish and pork are not permitted on school premises.
- b) Prepared food is only permitted from a certified Kosher Check (formerly BCK) establishment. In other words, meals and snacks are not permitted from non-kosher restaurants (e.g. Subway, Tim Hortons, etc.) regardless if the meal or snack is vegetarian or otherwise.
- c) Food items intended to be shared with other children for celebrations or activities must be Kosher Check certified or must have been prepared in the school's kosher kitchen with approval from school administration. Home-baked goods to be brought into the school for such events are not permitted.

- d) Lunch and snacks provided by a family for their child(ren) must not mix milk and meat.
- e) Students are permitted to bring meat in their lunches or snacks. It is strongly encouraged that all meat products are certified kosher.
- f) Children are not permitted to share their lunch or snacks with other children, unless they are from the same family/household.
- g) For events where the school intends to provide dairy food to students (e.g. Shavuot celebration, pizza Lunch Lab, etc.), advanced notice will be given and families are strongly encouraged to send only pareve or dairy lunches and snacks that day. **The Early Learning Centre** will offer dairy snacks regularly, separately from children's meat lunches. Meat items in children's lunches will not be permitted during snack time if dairy is being provided by the teachers.
- h) For events where the school intends to provide meat to students, advanced notice will be given, and families are strongly encouraged to send only pareve or meat lunches and snacks that day.

Families are asked to comply with RJDS values of inclusion and respect of other families' needs by only serving Kosher food at birthday parties and events.

The above policy applies to all school-related activities held outside the school where RJDS students are present or participate.

Food Allergy (Nut-Aware) Policy

At RJDS, we strive to provide a safe environment for all our children. To that end, we must respect the fact that some of our children have life-threatening allergies to peanuts, nuts and nut products. For some children, ingestion of or exposure to these products or unknowingly touching traces or residues of this food substance (e.g., on a ball, a hand, student desk or lunch table) could cause anaphylactic shock, and, without immediate emergency medical assistance, loss of consciousness and death.

In response, RJDS, like most other Early Learning Centre's throughout the Lower Mainland, is a "peanut/nut aware" school. This means that products containing peanuts, nuts or nut products in students' lunches will not be allowed in the school or on the playground. Food brought in for common consumption must not contain peanuts, nuts or nut products. We do not use the terminology "peanut/nut free" because we cannot guarantee that there will never be traces of peanuts/nuts in the school. Therefore, while the school cannot guarantee a nut-free environment, out of respect and concern for those in our school community with severe and/or life-threatening nut allergies, the Board requires that parents NOT SEND LUNCHES OR SNACKS OR ENTER THE SCHOOL WITH ANY NUT PRODUCTS.

Should a child accidentally bring peanut butter or nut products to school and staff members are aware of it, efforts will be made to provide an appropriate and safe substitute on that particular day.

Parents/Guardians are to provide RJDS with proper information and any medication (ie: Epi-pen) for the allergies regarding their child prior to the start date. It is the parents'/guardians'

responsibility to ensure they relay all important allergy information to RJDS upon enrolment. The staff will do their utmost diligence to ensure the child will not be exposed to the allergen.

All medical forms are updated each year. If a child requires a Medical Care Plan, the director will ensure that all paperwork is up to date, stored in the child's file, and posted in the classroom.

Special Diets

In addition to allergies and kashrut, if your child has any dietary restrictions, please add this information to the indicated portion of the registration form. The director will file and post an updated list of dietary restrictions whenever parents make changes in their child's diet. Cultural practices can dictate specific rules governing acceptable food preparation and parents are encouraged to speak with the director should this apply to their child. This may include different standards of Kashrut than the RJDS policy. We will do our best to accommodate special dietary needs in our snack menu and food preparation.

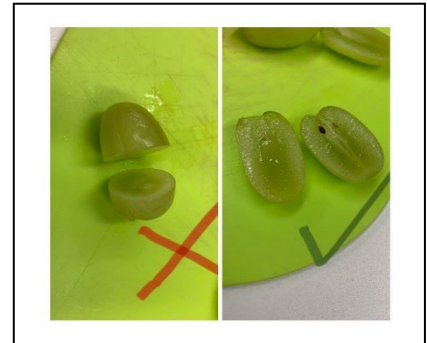
Food Safety

Certain foods are considered a choking or aspiration hazard and should not be sent to RJDS.

Some examples are:

gummies, hard candies, chewing gum, lollipops, marshmallows and popcorn.

Smooth, round foods such as **grapes, hot dogs, gnocchi, carrots**, cherry tomatoes and olives, may be sent but must be cut lengthwise beforehand.



Drinks

Please send a full spill-proof water cup with your child every day. We use them at meal times and have them available for drinking and refills throughout the day. Please do not send any juice or other sugary drinks. Milk may be provided in a separate spill-proof cup or bottle and be put in the class refrigerator at drop-off time.

Naptime and Rest

All children are provided with a safe, comfortable and quiet place to themselves for rest or sleep after lunchtime. Some younger children may require two naps per day, which would mean a different sleep schedule for them.

As per safe sleep guidelines, we ensure that each child is positioned for sleep only on his or her back unless the child can roll over without assistance. All cribs and sleep mats are equipped with a fitted sheet (supplied by the parents/guardians) and no loose items (other than a pacifier) are

permitted in cribs or for children under 1 year of age. This includes, but is not limited to, loose, soft bedding, blankets, bumper pads, pillows or toys.

Sleep spaces are kept at a comfortable temperature. Young children can be at risk of overheating, and it is recommended that they only need to wear a fitted sleeper. An additional layer of a wearable, well-fitted, thin sleep sack that allows leg movement is permitted in their crib.

Staff work with families to develop an appropriate sleep routine for each individual child, while keeping the needs of the group in mind. It is understandable that parents/guardians may have specific requests, for instance enforcing, skipping or shortening a nap. We will do our best to assist each child to achieve a healthy sleep schedule, however, sometimes this is not possible. Examples of when the staff may or may not intervene could include when a child shows extreme distress or is disruptive of other children's rest needs.

Diapering and Toileting

Our qualified educators assist the children regularly with diapering and toileting, depending on their individual needs. As children learn to use the toilet at their own pace, we follow their cues by helping them understand their physical and emotional needs and encourage them when they are ready.

We work closely with the families and want to support their goals. However, it is important for parents/guardians to respect the feedback of the teachers and understand that while you may have a particular method or plan at home, we can only participate if it is consistent with our policies and capacity.

Example 1: If a reward system is being used at home, the teachers will report toileting events to parents daily, however will not provide administer the rewards themselves.

Example 2: If parents insist that their child no longer wear diapers or pull-ups, they must be willing to keep them at home until they are consistently staying dry and clean and using the toilet, and/or to pick them up early if they have had soiled their clothes a number of times.

This can be a sensitive topic, so honest communication and transparency are important as we work together.

For children who still require diapers, families must ensure their supply of diapers, wipes and any required creams are regularly replenished.

Active Play Policy

In order to support children's healthy physical development, and to meet the requirements of the Director of Licensing Standards of Practice – Active Play, our full day programs, whenever possible incorporate a minimum of 120 minutes of active play and physical movement, and ensure a minimum 60 minutes per day of outdoor active play (indoor active play is acceptable when weather is poor or outdoor physical space is limited).

While we may use the gym at times, expect that your children will play outside daily, rain or shine, and ensure their cubby is fully equipped with all necessary outdoor gear, at all times. Being outdoors gives the children an opportunity for more adventurous and risky play. They can test their physical boundaries, release their energy, and explore new territory.

Your children will get dirty and wet, so please provide durable, weather-appropriate clothing (see page 15 for details). While we always encourage appropriate clothing, we don't enforce it at all times, and leaks do happen. Other than in extreme weather conditions, it is important that the children learn how to recognize what their bodies need to protect them, without it being forced upon them. Sometimes they just need to experience a little discomfort, which is more likely to encourage them to make appropriate clothing choices on their own. The educators will always make sure their gear is available to them, and that no lines are crossed in terms of health and safety.

Screen Use Policy

According to Vancouver Coastal Health's recommended best practices, all licensed child care programs must limit screen time (TV, computer, electronic games) to 30 minutes or less a day. Our programs do not include regular use of screens. Screen time is not offered to children under two years of age. Our staff demonstrate appropriate modelling of screen time.

Health and Safety

Illness Policy

RJDS Early Learning Centre adheres to HealthLink BC and BC Centre for Disease Control guidelines for illness policies and reporting procedures.

There are specific topics of concern that we take into account when determining whether or not your child is too ill to attend RJDS:

- protecting the health of all children in the facility
- providing the ill child comfort, rest, and safety
- the capacity of the staff to care for an ill child

Parents/Guardians are required to complete a health check on their child each day before dropping leaving them at RJDS Early Learning Centre. Staff will conduct an additional informal health check at the beginning of each day before the parent/guardian leaves the centre.

In the event that a child becomes sick at RJDS or the staff discover their symptoms from a recent illness are still present, the parent/guardian will be called and required to pick up their child immediately. Your child will be kept comfortable and monitored until you arrive.

There are no exceptions to this illness policy. Parents/guardians are encouraged to find alternative care options for children who are required to stay home for a period of time. We understand this can be a big inconvenience for families, but if we allow children to come to RJDS when sick, then not only will it spread to other families, but also to our staff. If we are understaffed, then we have to close, and that is a scenario we want to do our absolute best to avoid.

Unfortunately, fees cannot be refunded due to illness, whether for a child's absence or closure due to staff illness, as there are still ongoing operating costs.

Please keep your child home or seek alternate care arrangements if:

- They are not well enough to participate in regular programming and routines

AND/OR

- They are suffering from one or more of the following symptoms/conditions:
 - Pain - any complaints of unexplained or undiagnosed pain.
 - A common cold with listlessness, runny nose and eyes, coughing and sore throat.
 - Difficulty in breathing - wheezing or a persistent cough.
 - Fever
 - Higher than normal temperature (usually 37.6°C or higher when taken under the armpit)
 - General symptoms such as listlessness, sluggishness, or lethargy (this may also require a doctor's attention).

- Sore throat or trouble swallowing.
- Infected skin or eyes, or an undiagnosed rash.
- Headache and stiff neck (should see a physician).
- Unexplained diarrhea or loose stool (may or may not be combined with nausea, vomiting or stomach cramps). These symptoms may indicate a bacterial or viral gastrointestinal infection which is very easily passed from one child to another via the fecal-oral route.
- Nausea and vomiting.
- Severe itching, dry skin of either body or scalp if caused by head or body lice or scabies.
- Known or suspected communicable diseases.

*If the symptoms are caused by a diagnosed allergy (an official doctor's note is required to confirm) and they can be managed enough that the child is comfortable and not at medical risk, they may attend.

Your child may return to RJDS when they are:

- well enough to participate in regular programming and routines
- past the required isolation days/infectious period of a diagnosed or suspected communicable disease
- Symptom-free (without the use of fever-reducing medications) for **at least 24 hours** except for a lingering runny nose and cough (mild), as sometimes these symptoms last for weeks after an illness
 - gastrointestinal symptoms such as vomiting and diarrhea must be gone for **at least 48 hours** before returning to RJDS
 - depending on the circumstances, parents/guardians may be asked to keep their child home for longer than the minimum requirement

Important Notes:

- Please inform RJDS any time your child is unwell, along with symptoms and diagnoses whenever possible. This allows us to notice trends and signs of something going around, and in case extra, more particular precautions must be taken. Certain illnesses and symptoms may be communicated to the other families; however, children will never be identified in these notifications.
- If your child's illness is named on the BCCDC's list of Reportable Communicable Diseases, you must notify RJDS immediately and follow the BCCDC's guidelines for isolation and treatment. Any child who has not received their childhood vaccines for one of these illnesses must stay home until the exposure/outbreak has been declared over.

It is highly recommended to stay up-to-date on your child's immunizations, including the annual influenza vaccine and the Covid-19 vaccine, as long as your child is eligible.

Medication

Parents are required to submit a permission form for any medication – whether prescription or non-prescription – that needs to be administered by our ECE's. In some cases, you may be required to complete a Medical Care Plan as well. Please ask the Director for the appropriate forms as needed and note that non-prescription medication requires a physician's signature. All teachers' members are trained to administer an Epi-pen or asthma inhalers, if necessary. Medical Care Plans will be reviewed annually by caregivers and staff. Any medical treatment/administration of medication will be documented on the Administration of Medication Chart and kept in the child's folder.

Important Note: All medications and topical creams must be provided in their original packaging. I.e.: Do not pre-measure the doses. Staff are required to prepare the medication according to the prescribed directions, before administering it to a child.

Injuries

Minor Injuries

Accidents and falls are an inevitable part of learning, growing and playing sometimes. At RJDS we do our best to minimize these risks, but we do believe that children need to be able to push their personal boundaries and experience some risky play to encourage their development.

If a child has a minor injury such as a scrape or bruise, guardians are notified via phone call, e-mail, or in person, of the injury and the first aid treatment administered to them.

Minor Head Injuries

1. The parent/guardian or emergency contact will immediately be contacted, to be advised of the injury and that we are monitoring the child. It is up to the parent/guardian to determine if the child needs to be picked up at that time.
2. If the child's condition changes/deteriorates and the child has not been picked up, then a follow-up phone call to advise the guardian will be made immediately, as well as a call to 9-1-1.
3. The child will need to be seen by a doctor and requires a doctor's note before returning to the centre.

Serious Illness or Injuries

All staff are trained and certified to provide First Aid and CPR.

If for any reason we need to call 9-1-1, we will contact the child's parent/guardian immediately by phone to advise them of the situation and notify them where they should meet the ambulance. If a guardian cannot be reached then we will call the emergency contact right away.

All injuries that require First Aid are logged by staff.

Emergency Procedures

The school has implemented an Emergency Preparedness Plan. Please know that in the event of an emergency, our administration and staff will do their best to ensure everyone's safety and security. It is important for parents **not to call the school** in an emergency as the lines need to remain open for communication.

School Emergency and Telephone Communications Procedures

If the school switchboard is operational, the Telephone Tree will be set in motion as soon as the situation has been evaluated, information is available, and recommendations can be made to parents.

- ☐ In the event that the telephone lines are down, the school will use cellular telephones (and/or texts) to send out information, if possible, through the Telephone Tree or if needed to the local and national news stations regarding the status of Richmond Jewish Day School and its students.

Here is what Parents can do

- ☐ Wait to be contacted, by phone, for information dispersed through the Telephone Tree.
- ☐ Locate a battery-operated radio and tune into the news broadcasts in your area.
- ☐ A copy of the Richmond Jewish Day School Emergency Preparedness Plan is available in the office for your review.

Fire, earthquake and lockdown drills are held regularly for the entire school, and the Early Learning Centre holds monthly fire drills. Safety systems include a fire signal alarm, smoke detectors and fire extinguishers. In the event of a major disaster such as an earthquake, all children shall remain at school until released to parents or one of the designated adults listed on their emergency form. In the event of a disaster, students will be evacuated to the Sikh Temple, which is our designated safe area.

Early Learning Centre Fire Drill Procedure (slightly different than K-7 classes)

When the warning sounds:

- Evacuate the building – One teacher leads the children, while another does a sweep of the room, grabs the shoe basket and follows from the back, doing regular head/face counts. Any additional adults spread out throughout the group. Young children may be carried or pushed in a stroller. All windows and doors will be shut.
- Wait quietly away from the building at the outside assembly area – The lead teacher does a roll call check and two teachers do individual head/face counts to confirm everyone is accounted for.
- Return to classroom – The children are led back to their classroom in the same manner that they were led out.

Earthquake Drill Procedure

Step One When the warning sounds:

- Take cover - Everyone takes cover under desks or tables.
- Face away from windows.
- Assume "crash" position on knees, heads down, hands clasped on back of neck, or head covered with book or jacket.
- Count aloud to 60. (Earthquakes rarely last longer than 60 seconds, and counting is calming).

Step Two

- Evacuate the building – One teacher leads the children, while another does a sweep of the room, grabs the shoe basket and follows from the back, doing regular head/face counts. Any additional adults spread out throughout the group. Young children may be carried or pushed in a stroller.
- Wait quietly away from the building at the outside assembly area – The lead teacher does a roll call check and two teachers do individual head/face counts to confirm everyone is accounted for.
- Return to classroom – The children are led back to their classroom in the same manner that they were led out.

Lockdown Procedure

When the office announces "Lockdown," teachers immediately lock their classroom doors and direct children to be quiet and huddle in the safest corner of the room below window level and away from any doors.

- Teachers quickly look into the hall from their classroom in order to get any students into the nearest classroom.
- Doors are locked and dead bolted.
- The door is not to be opened for anybody at this point until administration convinces you that it is all clear (or law enforcement, when outside of school hours)
- Teachers do head/face count and help the children stay quiet and calm
- Designated and available admin staff and office staff will quickly sweep washrooms and hallways and then enter a room that is locked with a deadbolt.
- Teachers who are on prep time and support staff will proceed to the nearest room with a deadbolt.
- We reiterate the importance of checking in and out when dropping off and picking up your child.
- When police officers pound on your classroom door to determine if anybody is inside, do not open the door. Simply communicate that you are in there with children and whether everything is okay or not.
- It is extremely important for all children, students and staff to get out of the hallways as soon as possible when "lockdown" is announced.

Staffing and Supervision

Qualifications and Ratios

All of RJDS Early Learning Centre's regular staff members are certified Early Childhood Educators (ECE/IT/SN certified) or ECE Assistants. We prioritize high quality care by hiring experienced and passionate professionals with strong morals and respect for children's rights. When regular staff are away, qualified substitutes and/or other school staff members cover their absence.

Each staff member has their own unique personality and skillset, which is vital to facilitating a well-rounded team. Each new staff member is trained to understand RJDS values and standards and is expected to follow through with all our policies and procedures.

Our top priority is the safety of your child. We go to great lengths to meet their individual needs, so a safe, secure and nurturing environment is provided. As communication between staff is essential to the safety of all children in our care, each staff member is equipped with a walkie-talkie when away from the building and we do a head count each time the children leave and enter our classroom as well as periodically throughout the day. Attendance records are checked regularly in order to be accurate at all times.

The Early Learning Centre has a secure, fenced-in outdoor play space for the children. We are also fortunate to have a beautiful school property to explore, which includes a community garden, a fruit orchard, and a grassy field. While the property is fenced-in and secured from public space and main roads, it is shared by K-7 grades and not specifically designed for young children. Whether just transferring between the facility and the children's secure outdoor play space, or exploring the many natural areas of the property, extra attention is paid to keep the children safe from hazards.

From time to time, groups of children go on spontaneous short neighbourhood walks. The minimum staff-to-child ratio is always followed, and extra care and attention is considered to keep the children safe when away from the facility. Some of these extra steps may include hand holding, extra staff supervision, small groups, or using the 4-person strollers.

See the chart below for minimum **staff-to-child ratios** for each age group/program:

Gan Aleph (0 - 3 year-olds)	1 staff : 4 children
Gan Bet (2.5 - 5 year-olds)	1 staff : 8 children

Guidance Policy

The Educators of RJDS Early Learning Centre practice positive guidance. With respect for the child in mind, we approach guidance with empathy and compassion. Here are some examples of what this looks like:

- Maintaining strong attachments between educators and the children so we can understand and meet their needs.
- Using observational statements, rather than personal opinions or bias, and never shaming children for their actions.
- Using techniques such as prevention and substitution, we can gently guide children away from harm and contentious situations.
- Providing positive language through role modelling helps the children learn how to find positive solutions.
- Adapting the environment and routine to meet the children's needs and developmental levels.
- Acknowledging children's feelings and helping them express themselves in appropriate ways.
- Focusing on the root of the problem, rather than just the behaviour or situation.
- Occasionally using controlled, logical consequences, but only as a means to keep children safe in the moment or to take a break and deal with the issue together without distractions – never as a form of punishment.
- Providing limited, appropriate options for the children to choose from, giving them opportunities to feel empowered and in control, within safe boundaries.

Abuse Policy

We ensure that no child enrolled in our program is subjected to emotional, physical, sexual abuse or neglect while under our care.

If there is any suspected form of child abuse, including but not limited to, neglect, spanking, putting them in unsafe situations, etc. we are governed by law to report this to the BC Ministry of Children and Family Development. These steps are taken to protect the children and it is the responsibility of the MCFD to investigate the suspected abusive behaviour. Our #1 priority is the safety and well-being of all children in our program.

Inclusion Policy

The RJDS Early Learning Centre is committed to making all reasonable efforts towards inclusion, accommodating families of all backgrounds and children with diverse needs, where children of all abilities are able to participate meaningfully in all aspects of the program.

Procedures

If your child requires extra support, please contact the Director ahead of enrollment, so we can create a care plan on how to provide appropriate support. There are often long waitlists for public resources, so it is important to start this process as early as possible. These extra resources might include extra staffing, specialists, therapy, etc.

If the educators at RJDS have a concern about a child's development and/or behaviour, steps will be taken with the goal of providing optimal care and support for the child's individual needs. This is always a team effort with the child's family.

Some of these steps may include, but are not limited to:

- Documentation of incidents and/or concerning behaviour
- Suggestions to the family to seek medical assessments and/or supports
- Meetings and discussions with child's parent(s)/guardian(s) and health care professionals to create a care plan
- If applicable and reasonable, efforts to source funding for additional staffing to provide extra and individualized support for the child.

All employees of the RJDS Early Learning Centre are required to read, understand, and adhere to the inclusion policy.

Inclusion Definitions

Inclusive Child Care supports individual strengths and makes accommodations for the needs of each child. Valuing and supporting each individual child, regardless of abilities, allows them to participate meaningfully in all aspects of the program. Efforts to support and accommodate in our inclusive program include but are not limited to:

- the reduction of physical barriers in the space
- the recruitment and retainment of qualified staff with experience in inclusive child care
- the creation and implementation of care plans
- connections with early intervention and family services
- children are given equitable access to all aspects of the program through play-based experiences

Equitable Access involves removing barriers and making accommodations for all children and families. Acknowledging the diverse needs and circumstances of each individual means different accommodations may be made for each situation.

Care Plans are official documents created by the child care provider and a parent/guardian of the child requiring support. Supported Child Care Development (SCDP) consultants and/or health care professionals may also help in the development of a care plan. The care plan outlines any relevant diagnoses made by health care professionals, the recommended guidance or intervention strategies for the child care provider and guardians, and any resources and accommodations for the program to ensure the child's safety and comfort.

Children with Extra/Additional Support Needs are experiencing, or at risk of, developmental delay or disability. A child with extra support needs may or may not have a diagnosis, however, they require support beyond that required by children in general. A care plan is created and implemented for a child with extra support needs.

Meaningful Participation means that a child's involvement and active engagement in an activity or experience is valued by everyone, including the child. Meaningful participation is more than being present in various environments and activities. Valuing and supporting the child by providing equitable access to experiences so the child can participate meaningfully is an important aspect of inclusion.

Communication and Involvement

Daily Communication

Parents are required to contact the teachers through our communication app, Brightwheel, if your child will be absent or arriving later than usual. The earlier you notify us, the better, as this information helps us plan our days. Please also let us know about upcoming planned absences as soon as they are confirmed.

It is very important to inform your child's teachers about any significant events in the child's home life (i.e.: new home, parent is away, sickness in the family, visitors, etc.), as this information provides us additional insight, which helps us assist a child with whatever may be impacting them.

If you ever have a sensitive subject you'd like to discuss, we will always make time to address your concerns. If your concern involves a specific team member, we encourage you—when possible—to speak with them directly first, as this often helps clear up any miscommunication and supports open, respectful dialogue. If that feels uncomfortable or you feel additional support is needed, you are welcome to speak with the Team Lead. From there, the Director and, if needed, the Principal are also available to help. We're here to listen and work with you toward a resolution that feels right for everyone involved.

As a family-centred school, RJDS encourages family involvement, and we do our best to incorporate any ideas that you may have into our celebrations. However, please notify us ahead of time if you plan a visit, as unexpected visits can sometimes cause anxiety in the children or can interrupt the flow of the routine.

Newsletters

Parent Newsletters (The Shofar) are sent to the entire school community via email on a weekly basis. The Early Learning Centre sends a monthly newsletter and other regular updates via Brightwheel. Please read these carefully, as important information and dates are communicated. Please visit the [school website](#) link for the latest school calendar, newsletters, recent news items, classroom updates and more.

Birthday Celebrations

Families have the option of celebrating their child's birthday and/or providing a treat to share with the class. Please refer to the Food Allergy Policy (Nut-Aware) and section "C" of the [Kashrut Policy](#) and notify your child's teachers in advance of your plans.

When you are preparing to celebrate your child's birthday, please consider their classmates' feelings. If all children in a class are invited, invitations may be distributed at the school. If you are only inviting select individuals, we ask that you please distribute invitations directly to the children's homes or electronically.

In keeping with the Jewish objectives of our school, we urge parents not to hold birthday parties on Shabbat or holidays.

No family should be put in the position of having to choose between the observance of Shabbat and kashrut or attendance at a social function. Additionally, please make sure to find out if there are children in the class who keep kosher at home; we urge you to be in touch with those parents in advance and arrange for something kosher to be offered at the party.

An appropriate way to celebrate a birthday or any other simcha is by marking the occasion with the donation of a book or a contribution to a school fund or program. Please contact the office for more details.

Privacy and Boundaries

While you are in the classroom, whether to visit, volunteer or for pick up/drop off, please respect the boundaries of the children. Although we encourage community, when the children are checked in and under our care, the teachers are responsible for their safety and well-being. When parents leave their children at RJDS, they must feel confident that their adult interactions are based on the standards and knowledge that our teachers have been trained in. Please do not hug or hold any children that are not your own, without clear consent from the child AND the teacher and do not engage in guidance or discipline. If you witness something of concern, please notify a teacher.

Please also be mindful of children's rights to privacy, particularly in regard to photos and other media. Any images shared by the school that include other children should not be kept for personal use or shared publicly without the parents' consent. We also ask that you do not take photos or videos of other children while they are in our care.

Anti-Bullying and Discrimination Policy

The following policy has taken portions of Richmond Jewish Day School's Anti-Bullying Policy and amended the language to be more appropriate for the age of the children in the Early Learning Centre and the responsibilities of their families.

Richmond Jewish Day School is committed to providing a school-wide culture of inclusion and respect for difference that embraces all members of our family. No meaningful learning or personal growth can occur unless all staff, students, children and families feel safe, valued and free to express their authentic selves. It is essential that we are committed to protect everyone's physical safety, social connectedness, and from all forms of bullying and discrimination regardless of gender, race, culture, religion, sexual orientation or gender identity and expression.

In striving to maintain an environment in which all members of our school community feel connected, safe, and welcome, we ask all of our Richmond Jewish Day School family to act in ways that exemplify the qualities of *menschlichkeit* which include treating others with respect, kindness, and empathy. This policy applies to all family members while at school, at school-related activities, or other circumstances where engaging in the activity will have an impact on the school environment. It's important to recognize that young children are still developing their understanding of expectations and have limited self-regulation skills. Consequently, it is up to their caregivers to intervene when needed.

Working Together

Everyone at Richmond Jewish Day School has a role to play to ensure that bullying and discrimination have no place in our school. Research shows that bullying of any kind is dramatically reduced when others stand up for someone being bullied. Jewish history has shown us the implications of standing idly by and not standing up for what is right. We ask all members of our Richmond Jewish Day School family to subscribe to the following four principles and to work together to keep bullying out of our school:

- Refrain from bullying of any kind, for any reason.
- Treat others with respect and kindness.
- Intervene, if it is safe. Or tell someone who can.
- Include instead of excluding or ignoring.

Continuation of Service

We are committed to doing our absolute best at providing a caring and supportive environment for all children and families. With the understanding that our environment may not be suitable for everyone, there may be situations where accommodation is not possible, and we must insist that the child and their family leave the program. Possible situations that may be cause for termination of care include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Unsafe Situations**
Physical, emotional, or verbal acts which result in placing your child, other children and their families, or teachers within the school in an emotional, physical, harmful, hurtful or unsafe situation.
- **Recurrent Late Pickup**
RJDS has exhausted all efforts to resolve problems of late pickup with a family.
- **Payment in Arrears**
Fees for service are not paid according to the signed Tuition Agreement form and successful resolution of differences cannot be achieved.
- **Change in Custody**
Custody status changes and the child's new custodial guardian wishes to withdraw.
- **Abuse and/or Harassment**
A family member harasses, threatens abuse or commits a violent act towards a staff member, child or other family involved at RJDS. We have a zero-tolerance policy towards abuse and harassment from family members. In some cases, the first step (and at the discretion of the Director) may just involve prohibiting said family member from the premises and further communication with staff.

Children's Records/Information

All personal information received is kept confidential, filed away and locked. Personal information includes, but is not restricted to, registration forms, consent forms, and special care information. To keep the information accurate, parents/guardians are reminded to report any changes to the information that they submit during registration (address, phone numbers, emergency contact persons, alternate pickups, custody agreements, medical information, etc.) Our privacy protocols comply with the privacy legislation and the Provincial Child Care Regulation.