

Updated January 2024

4Pillar Early Learning Centre

Group Care



Family Handbook

Please Note:

This Handbook is subject to change. Updates will be made available to parents and signed off on.

1. Contact Information

Address: 5110 MANSON AVENUE POWELL RIVER BC V8A3P1

OFFICE PHONE: 604-414-5757

MANAGAR PHONE: 778-636-4717

OFFICE EMAIL ID 4pillar.office@gmail.com

2. Philosophy

I believe that children are our future. It is our responsibility to create an environment that fosters positive emotional, social, cognitive, and physical development. This is best accomplished by providing opportunities for children to explore and discover through fun, meaningful activities, and play. As an Early Childhood Educator, it is my pleasure to provide your children with these experiences. My goal is to provide a warm, nurturing environment where they will feel safe and loved. My childcare program gives children the opportunity to learn through play but also introduces them to new activities. Families of my childcare program are respected and appreciated for their knowledge, understanding, and love that they have for their children. I value open communication with families and encourage involvement in their children's experience. I believe in an environment in which all individuals are respected, included, and celebrated for their unique cultures, diversities, and abilities.

Hours of Operation

3. Centre Hours

Childcare programs are available Monday – Friday 8:00am-4:00pm

4. Closures

The Centre will be closed on the following statutory holidays or on their designated day if they fall on a weekend.

New Year's Day
Family Day
Good Friday
Easter Monday
Victoria Day
Canada Day
BC Day

Labour Day
Thanksgiving
Remembrance Day
Christmas Eve
Christmas Day
Boxing Day

All Programs will be closed between Christmas Eve and New Year's. Opening on the first business day after New Year's

5. Inclement Weather

We follow the Qathet School District for all weather-related closures. If they are closed, we are closed. We will post on brightwheel by 6:15am if we will be closed. You may also follow Powell River on brightwheel for updates as well.

6. Unscheduled Closures

If the centre is unable to open due to an unforeseen issue, we will post on Brightwheel by 6:45am with any updates. At that time, we may postpone our opening time or be closed for the entire day. Fees will still be charged for this day.

Centre Operations

7. Sign-in / Sign-out

For the health and safety of your child, and as mandated by Childcare Licensing, it is required by 4 PILLAR EARLY LEARNING CENTRE that your child be signed in and out every day. If your login does not work or if you forgot to sign your child in/out, please let a staff member know immediately so that we can correct it for you.

Brightwheel App

Upon enrollment, you will receive an invite via email or text to set up your Brightwheel account. Through the app, you can communicate with your child's teacher or administration via messaging, as well as see your monthly tuition and receive your child's daily report. If you need help, please let a member of the administration team know and we can help.

1. Create a free Brightwheel account. When you receive an invitation via email or text, please create a free parent account using either the website or mobile app. Make sure to use the same email address or cell phone number that the invitation was sent to. Please note: the 4-digit code emailed to you is the same code you will use to sign your child in & out every day!
2. Confirm your child's profile. You will see your child's profile after you create an account - you can confirm information such as birthdays, allergies, and additional contacts. If you do not see your child's profile, please contact us with the email address or phone number you used to sign up. You will not see updates within Brightwheel until your child's first day of attendance.
3. Set your account preferences. You can adjust your notification preferences within your profile settings on the app.

8. Pick up & drop off

Please be sure to let staff know ASAP if you will be dropping off earlier or picking up later than your typical schedule. This allows us to ensure that we have enough staff on the floor in the morning and in the afternoon to accommodate all ratio numbers.

Drop off **MUST** be done **by 10:00am**. If you will be dropping your child off after 10:00am, you **MUST** call in or send a message by 9:30. 10:00am is when we do a final attendance and go over staffing needs. If you do not let us know by 9:30 that your child is coming, at 10:00 they will be taken off the attendance board and will not have a spot for the day.

Your Child's program closing time is when you need to be out the door with your child. If your program closes at 4:00, you and your child are expected to be leaving the centre at 4:00. Please do not show up for pick up at the time of closure as this puts staff into overtime for the day. Late pick – up is charged at \$1 per minute. In the event of an emergency, this will be waived.

If you will be late picking up, you **MUST** call in. If we have not heard from or gotten in contact with a parent/guardian within 15 min from closing time, we will begin to call emergency contacts for pick up. You may have another adult (18+) pick up your child from care, however they must be on your authorized pick-up list and **MUST** come with valid photo ID. If someone is picking up that is not on your pickup list, we must have parent/guardian permission in writing. This includes a handwritten note given to staff, a text message, or a message on Brightwheel. Your Child will never be permitted to leave the centre with someone who does not have a valid photo ID and where we do not have written permission for them to pick-up.

9. No Smoking

Our property is a NO SMOKING zone. This includes the parking lot and around the building as we have many entrances to the classrooms located at various sides of the building.

10. Confidentiality

All child and family information is kept in a locked file. These will consist of registration, medical reports, authorized pick up, daily notes, reports from other agencies, as well as copies and assessments made by staff. All information will be kept confidential and will only be accessed by centre staff. Some agencies are required access to your child's file; this includes Childcare Licensing, Medical Health officers, MCFD, and the RCMP.

We kindly ask that you **DO NOT** take photos of your child on your personal phone within the property. Staff cannot monitor if other children are in the photo, and to have them in the photo would be breaking confidentiality rules.

11. Custody Arrangements

We require a copy of all custody arrangements. If a parent arrives and can prove that they are the parent of your child, and we do not have a court order on file, we are obligated by law to release the child to their legal parent. With a court order on file, if a non-custodial parent attempts to pick up your child, staff will refuse to release the child to the parent and will contact RCMP to assist if necessary.

12. Abuse Policy

If the staff suspect any type of abuse, we are required to document and report to MCFD.

13. Parent Staff Communication

Parent staff communication is of high importance to us! Please speak with your child's teacher every morning regarding how their night was or regarding anything they should be aware of.

If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to talk with your child's teacher. Give us a phone call or schedule an appointment with administration.

14. Monthly Fees and Payment

Our centre is part of the Childcare Fee Reduction Initiative. Our prices are laid out below with the full cost of care, minus the available subsidy, totaling the amount owed before any additional childcare subsidies. If you qualify for, or are not sure about additional childcare subsidies, please ask for a childcare arrangement form.

We accept subsidy on the parents behalf, however it is the responsibility of the parents to ensure subsidy is in place for the first of each month. Parents will be responsible for full fees until subsidy is back in place.

All Fees are due on the first business day of each month. Fees may be paid by postdated cheques, e-transfers, or cash. Cash payments will be due on your child's first day present within the first week of the month. E-Transfers can be sent to: 4PILLAR.OFFICE@GMAIL.COM Any fees that are not received by the fifth day of the month will be considered late. There will be a \$5 per day late fee that will be applied.

<p>\$65 per day until childcare Fee Reduction Initiative</p>

15. Withdraw of Service

4 PILLAR EARLY LEARNING CENTRE requires 30 days written notice for withdraw of service. If you are unable to give 30 days' notice, you will be required to pay the monthly fee for the 30 days equivalent to notice. In an emergency or unexpected situation, please talk to administration.

16. Termination of Service

If your childcare account is outstanding and no payment arrangements are fulfilled, 4Pillar early learning centre will terminate services. If we are unable to reach, you in person or by phone and your child is absent for two consecutive weeks we will mark your spot as abandoned and services will be terminated. Non-compliance of this handbook or other serious cause for concern may also end in termination or service.

17. Positive Guidance

4 PILLAR EARLY LEARNING CENTRE takes pride in offering your child a safe place to learn and grow. We follow guidance techniques that are developmentally appropriate, non – threatening, respectful, positive, and consistent. During times of guidance, your child will be redirected to an area of positivity, given a limited choice of other activities, offered a quiet place to settle their body, offered water and guided breathing.

If there comes a time where your child has had a very hard day, staff will speak with you at pick up time regarding any incidents and how they were given positive guidance to work through them. If hard days become frequent for your child staff will request a meeting to work together to create a plan to best support your child.

The following Disciplinary actions are prohibited within 4 PILLAR EARLY LEARNING CENTRE:

- Any form of corporal punishment.
- Any harsh measures that could undermine the child's self-worth or humiliate that child.
- Depriving of basic needs such as food, shelter, clothing, bedding, or access to the washroom.
- Confinement.
- Yelling at or talking to in a threatening manner.

18. Staff, Students and Volunteers

All staff are hired in accordance with the B.C Child Care Community Licensing Regulations. Staff must have the qualifications and work experience to work with children. Upon hiring staff must have a valid license to practice, complete a criminal record check, complete reference checks, and pass the interview process.

Throughout the year we may have special programming, practicum students and volunteers in the centre. All guests will have documentation kept on file within the centre. They will always be supervised and never be responsible for the welfare of the children within the centre.

Health and Safety

19. Medication

For the health and safety of your child 4 PILLAR EARLY LEARNING CENTRE requires that all medication be in its original container and include the pharmacy label. All medication must be accompanied by Permission to Administer Medication form that must be filled out before staff can give medication. Staff will not administer any cold or flu related medication. If your child requires these, they should be at home. All medication will be locked away within the classroom of your child.

If your child has been prescribed a medication that they have not previously been on, 4 PILLAR EARLY LEARNING CENTRE requires that they stay home for the first 24 hours of receiving the new medication. This allows for a more focused observation in the case of any allergies or side effects presenting themselves. 4 PILLAR EARLY LEARNING CENTRE cannot provide medical observation for the entirety of a day.

20. Allergies

Please let staff know at the time of registration if your child has food allergies. At this time we will take the steps necessary to keep your child safe and limit their exposure to the allergen. At registration you must fill out an allergy awareness form, provide Benadryl (with doctors note) inhalers, and/or an Epi-Pen if required.

21. Head lice

4 PILLAR EARLY LEARNING CENTRE does regular head lice checks within the classrooms. If your child has head lice you will be called to pick up your child, along with all personal belongings to be washed. Your child is not permitted back to the centre until they are treated and have no live louse. Upon their return, staff will complete a lice check before they can be signed in for the day.

22. Illness

If your child is ill, please keep them home and call the center by 9:30am to let us know. If your child is displaying the following symptoms they must be kept home: green or yellow nasal discharge, fever of more than 100F, rash, diarrhea, vomiting, pink eye, listlessness, difficulty breathing, pain, sore throat, headache, or any known or suspected communicable illness. If your child shows any of the listed symptoms at daycare, 4 PILLAR EARLY LEARNING CENTRE will provide a comfortable isolated area for your child. You will be called to pick up your child immediately and they will not be permitted back to the centre for **48 hours symptom free**. Parents/guardians will also be called for pick-up if your child is inconsolable or unable to participate in programming.

23. Injuries

All 4 PILLAR EARLY LEARNING CENTRE staff is trained in first aid and Child CPR. In the event that your child becomes injured at daycare, staff will provide basic first aid and contact you, the parent/guardian, to let you know of the incident. At that time, staff may require you to pick up your child if further observation is needed or we believe that it would be beneficial for them to be checked over by a health professional.

In the event of a major injury, 911 will be called to do an assessment. You will then be called immediately after. If paramedics deem that a hospital trip is required, you will be notified immediately. Your child will be accompanied by a staff member and their Emergency Consent form.

Emergency Preparedness

24. Emergency Closures & Natural Disasters

In the event that the centre needs to close during service hours, you will be notified to come pick-up your child immediately. If the staff is unable to reach you, we will begin calling your child's emergency contacts. If no one can be reached in a timely manner staff will have to report to the Ministry of Child and Family development.

In the event of a natural disaster, the centre has an emergency preparedness procedure. Including the emergency pack, you are asked to supply, the centre has adequate emergency supplies to support both children and staff. We will remain on centre property unless it is unsafe to do so. In the event we need to relocate, we will move to the across the street Evangel church unless otherwise directed by health authorities.

25. Fire & Earthquake Drills

Fire Drills are conducted with the children monthly and earthquake drills are practiced at least four times a year. During the drills, we speak of the importance of the drills and what would happen in the event of a real emergency. We discuss this in a way that limits fear and promotes an overall understanding of the situation in a way the children will not feel overwhelmed or nervous.

Childcare Programs

26. Enrolment Requirements

Please call to schedule an enrolment meeting with our team. During this meeting, we will ensure that all forms are completed, and payment arrangements are made. All forms must be completed and on file before gradual entry can begin.

27. Classroom Requirements

Each classroom requires all children to have the following items: daily water bottle, change of clothes, indoor shoes, Muddy Buddies/splash pants, blanket for horizontal time, sunscreen, seasonal gear, icepack in their lunch kit.

Indoor shoes may be runners, sandals (no flip flops), crocks, fitted slippers or any footwear that easily stays on your child's feet. All footwears must have a blackstrap if needed and a hard or leather bottom in the event of needing to leave the building. This includes fire and earthquake drills.

Any supplies/belongings that are brought in must be permanently labeled with your child's name. If your child requires supplies to be replenished or they have expired, staff will place a slip in their lunch kit outlining what supplies are needed. Please bring in new supplies promptly to avoid your child running out. If you are unable to bring in replacement supplies in a timely manner, staff will purchase the supplies for you and you will be charged the amount due as well as an additional \$15 to cover staff time.

28. Gradual Entry

Gradual entry is of utmost importance to make sure that your child has an easy, and as stress free as possible, transition into daycare. Gradual entry will begin with a two-hour meet within their classroom during regular program time. You, the parent/guardian, will accompany your child in their classroom for this meet and greet. Children are very observant, when they see you happy, safe, and trusting of the environment, they will know that they are safe, and it allows them to feel comfortable within their classroom. The next step is an independent two-hour visit followed by three more days of gradual entry; One day ending at snack, one ending after quiet time, and the last one being a full day. The first two meetings are mandatory, however once complete you are more than welcome to have a discussion with staff about shortening or lengthening the gradual entry process.

29. Personal Belongings

Please label everything to hold their belongings. We kindly ask that you please label **EVERYTHING**. We often have multiple children with the same belongings, and we cannot be responsible for lost items. Please also refrain from bring outside toys to daycare.

Please send your child to daycare in comfortable clothing that can get dirty. We do many outdoor, art, and sensory exploration activities that we encourage children to enjoy to the fullest!

30. Daily Routine

Each classroom enjoys a variety of activities throughout the day including but not limited to:

Sensory Experience: Water, sand, play dough, and other various mediums.

Dramatic Play: Housekeeping, puppets, and dress up

Cognitive Activities: Puzzles, matching games, sorting, and counting.

Quiet Time: Books, audio recordings, calm music, and storytelling

Circle Time: weather, calendar, singing, dancing, storytelling and felt boards.

Gross Motor: Indoor and outdoor climbing, running, jumping and riding.

Science: Magnets, magnifying glass, nature studies, and experiments

Please see your classroom teachers for a specific Daily Routine.

31. Snacks and Meals

We encourage healthy eating. We ask that families provide a balance of healthy snacks along with any treats you may send. Staff will always encourage healthy choices first while also explaining the importance of choosing snacks that will give our bodies the energy and focus that we need to get through our day. Please ensure all foods are pre-portioned and cut to suit your child's development, warm-ups are in a non-glass microwave safe container, or in packaging that can be placed in the microwave. No cans please. If you choose to use a thermos, please be sure that the food is adequately warmed. We also ask that you please send a water bottle with your child EACH DAY so that they have access to water no matter where they are.

4 PILLAR EARLY LEARNING CENTRE does not place children's lunches in the fridge. We require all parents to pack an ice pack in your child's lunch that will last 8+ hours.

32. Outdoor/Active Play

Outdoor play is extremely important to a child's gross motor development. Playing outdoors allows the child to increase their ability to run, jump, climb, throw, balance, and so much more. Outdoor play also fosters an appreciation of nature. Children get to experience everything from different types of weather, different cloud formations, animals, insects, and plants, as well as how these all change throughout the different seasons.

Each classroom enjoys the outdoors for at least one hour every day. This will only change for SEVERE weather conditions! Please ensure your child has appropriate seasonal gear as well as rain gear to KEEP AT DAYCARE. Even in the middle of summer, we still have rainy days. If the weather is so severe that it is unsafe to go outside, active play will be made possible inside.

33. Screen Time

While in the care, we wish for all children to be present in the moment and to explore the learning opportunities each class sets out for them. Screen time is limited to 30 minutes for our 3-5

Outbreak and Pandemic Policy

34. 72 Hour Symptom Free

During an outbreak or pandemic, if a child becomes ill they will need to stay home for the duration of their illness and for 72 hours after they are symptom free. For example, if your child is sent home from care or develops symptoms at home, the 72-hour policy comes into effect after the LAST symptom has subsided - even if they are feeling well and have plenty of energy. If they are symptom free for an extended number of hours/days and another symptom arises then the 72-hour Policy will restart once they are again symptom free.

Signs of illness include, but are not limited to: colored nasal discharge, fever, cough, hoarse voice, sore throat, headache, body aches, chills, diarrhea.

35. Staff/Child Ratio

staff must follow the childcare ratios laid out by the Ministry of Health. our three-to-five-year programs must follow an 8:1 ratio, during an outbreak or pandemic it is expected that staff may also become ill or need to follow quarantine guidelines. In the event that enough employees are unable to come to work, and these ratios are not able to be met, 4 PILLAR EARLY LEARNING CENTRE may implement reduced operational hours or a rotating day off system between children. This decision will be made as required and communicated to parents in writing.

36. Sanitization and Cleaning

- Hand sanitizers will be placed at the front door and at all entrances to the classrooms.
- Classrooms will be sanitized twice a day using a ministry of health approved sanitizing solution.
- The centre including all doors and gates will be sanitized twice a day using a ministry of health approved sanitizing solution.
- Increasing hand washing within programs.

37. Health and Safety

- There will be NO shared food.
- Any food provided by our program will be served directly to children.
- Sensory play will be created in child specific bins.
- Play areas within the classrooms will be limited to two children only.

38. Fees during pandemic / communicable disease closures

In the event of a short-term closure due to an outbreak or pandemic less than 30 days, fees are due and payable as per usual operations. Fees payable during closures exceeding 30 days will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Fee reductions or Government subsidies may or may not be provided during **REQUIRED** pandemic or communicable disease closures. 4 PILLAR EARLY LEARNING CENTRE will update families in this event.

