

Flex Academy Junior Kindergarten

Parent Handbook



Welcome to Flex Academy Junior Kindergarten!

The Flex Academy Junior Kindergarten (JK) team would like to warmly welcome you and your family. From the very early years of development, we believe education is most meaningful when it is rooted in our identity in Christ and leads us into deeper relationship with Him. We recognize the importance of a strong community to help our youngest learners thrive. Scripture emphasizes the value of early childhood training, as evident in two verses from Proverbs:

*Train them and teach them the ways of the Lord as you raise them.
Proverbs 6:4*

*Train a child in the way he should go. When he is old, he will not turn away from it.
Proverbs 22:6*

Each child is precious in God's image and has a unique way of seeing the world. Our goal is to develop learners who are inquisitive, discerning, and full of wonder at God's world. We aim to draw out of each child those unique, God-given strengths and gifts through our creative and loving environment. Our program is play-based and utilizes creative and engaging resources to enable your child to freely explore, learn, and grow.

Flex Academy's Junior Kindergarten enrolment is open to families from all churches and backgrounds.

Please acquaint yourself with the policies and procedures in this handbook as these help us care for your children. We look forward to partnering with you and your family while supporting you in the most precious early years of your child's education.

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Note: Throughout this handbook, the usage of “parents” denotes parents, guardians, and other caregivers

Contact Information

Website:

<https://flex.academy>

Email:

office@flex.academy

Address:

905 Badke Road
Kelowna BC V1X 5Z5

Phone:

250-862-2377

Junior Kindergarten Hours

Mornings 8:30-11:15am

Afternoons 12:15-3:00pm

Junior Kindergarten Objectives

Our primary goal as Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) is to provide opportunities for children to become assured of God's love and grow in their knowledge that "Jesus Loves Me" and "Jesus Loves Others." This is the seed to grow all Christ-like behaviours and the teachings of Jesus Christ as Friend, Saviour, and Lord. We want children to know that Jesus was thinking about and loving them from the beginning of creation. He was waiting for this time for them to be born and become who they are - a unique design that belongs to Him, the One who has always loved them. He made the whole world and everything in it for them to enjoy because He loves them, and they are His good pleasure.

We aim to provide opportunities and activities to help all children develop a positive self-concept within a social environment. We foster self-acceptance, self-celebration, and a healthy sense of confidence in the child's talents and abilities, specifically in their voice to communicate to others their wants and needs. As children play and interact through various activities and in different situations, they develop the ability to verbalize solutions, to socially problem solve, and co-operate within a group.

We aim to provide experiences and activities for exploration for all children to love their neighbour through stewardship, servanthood, and community. With a focus on self-directed learning, children have ample opportunity to grow in all areas of their development: Spiritual, Social, Physical, Intellectual, Cognitive, and Emotional. Additionally, we aim to provide children with high quality resources and curriculum that support their readiness for school and their love of learning.

We aim to provide a positive learning environment in which children can thrive. We ensure that all children feel that our school is a safe and loving space where they can trust the staff they interact with. This relational connection is paramount to their learning and enriches every part of our program.

Our Program

Christian Living and Learning

We believe God made us and everything that exists. He continues to care not only for us, but for everything He has made. Our Heavenly Father loves everyone and we are very special to Him. We know our God loves us because He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, into the world to be our Saviour. Students will sing, share, and pray through Bible stories, present-day stories, puppets, and other creative media to learn how to love their neighbour through stewardship, servanthood, and community.

Learning Centers and Activities

Our program is play-based but is designed to help prepare the children for primary school academics. We believe that learning happens most authentically when it is experienced. At Flex JK, children are constantly exploring, creating, imagining and discovering indoors and outside. As children engage with God, with teachers, with each other and with the educational environment, they learn that they are valued and loved. As they explore the different learning centers and play-based activities, they develop confidence and begin to see themselves as capable learners. The following list of activities and learning centers demonstrate the many aspects of learning that occur in our program.

Literacy Centre

Exploration of letters and their sounds; pre-reading behaviours and concepts; rhyming and storytelling; emergent printing and drawing skills

Math Centre

Use of manipulatives and hands-on activities to explore numeracy concepts and skills such as number recognition, counting, patterning, sorting, comparing shapes, sizes and quantities; table and floor puzzles providing various levels of challenge

Circle Time Activities

Gathering together as a whole group to worship God and pray; to read stories and poems; sing songs; do calendar, weather, letter of the week activities; felt board and magnet board activities; music and movement; developing listening and speaking skills; opportunities for show and tell

Creative Art Center

Opportunities for personal artistic expression through painting, cutting, gluing and sculpting; color and shape recognition; exploration of basic elements of artistic design

Science Center

Encourages curiosity about the natural world around us and provides opportunities to observe, investigate and celebrate what God has created

Sensory Table

Engaging with various sensory materials and exploring volume measurement concepts

Playdoh Activities

Sensory experience and experimentation; small muscle development; tension outlet

Loose Parts Center

Various manipulatives and objects provide eye-hand coordination, small muscle development, creativity, exploration of size, colour and spacial relationships

Large Block and Construction Activities

Eye-hand coordination; spacial awareness; balance; recognition of 3-D shapes; number concepts; dramatic and cooperative play

Dramatic Play and Dress-Up Center

Acting out life roles as well as emotional and social experiences; stimulates the imagination and allows for more complex collaborative play

Cozy Corner (Quiet Reading and Listening Center)

A cozy area for regulating emotions by engaging in calming activities, such as reading quietly or listening to a CD story.

Music and Movement Activities

Sound and rhythm discrimination; body awareness; awareness of right and left

Free-Flow Snack Time

Developing awareness of body's hunger signals and independence in choosing when to eat; prayer of thanksgiving for God's provision; reinforcement of social skills and table manners while eating and having conversations at the table

Clean-Up

Developing responsibility, organization, cooperation and stewardship as children work together to care for materials and belongings

Self-Care and Practical Life Activities

Experience of taking care of self; promotes independence and self-confidence; practicing life skills

Outdoor Play

Large muscle development, coordination, self-confidence, sensory learning and hands-on discovery, engaging in complex play and cooperative games

Our Philosophy of Play

Preschoolers are naturally active because their rapidly growing bodies require activity for healthy development. The brain requires movement for development. Play is the ideal setting to meet all of their needs. When children play, they learn more about themselves, others, and the world around them. They become more creative thinkers and are better able to respond positively and sensitively when they encounter challenges and changes.

While every child's play is unique, they typically move through the following types of play between the ages of 2-5:

- **Solitary Play** (playing alone)
- **Parallel Play** (playing beside others)
- **Cooperative Play** (playing with others)
- **Complex Play** (playing with others, as in cooperative play, but usually including more imaginary themes, longer times, and more detailed agreements and rules)

Our goals are to encourage all kinds of play that will stimulate and promote the healthy development of your child. This is accomplished through planned developmentally appropriate activities that meet the wants, needs, and interests of each child individually and the class as a whole.

We believe play stimulates all areas of development: spiritual, social, physical, intellectual, cognitive, and emotional. We strive for excellence in our program planning by including activities in all these areas. Studies have shown that older children who were able to play well as preschoolers show a better ability to take on the perspective of others and fewer signs of fear, sadness, and fatigue. Additionally, children who are good at playing also typically display more empathy toward others, less aggression, and are, in general, more well-adjusted socially and emotionally.

Play leads to problem-solving. Children tend to communicate mostly with actions, expressing their thoughts and feelings through play. From a child's play we can gain an understanding of how he/she sees and construes the world, what his/her interests are, and what his/her strengths and needs are. A child's play reflects what words cannot. Uninterrupted play also helps to develop their attention spans. The ability to imagine what is not present (imaginative play) leads to skills in problem-solving in areas of math and science.

How Parents Can Help

You can help your child adjust to attending JK in the following ways:

- **Encourage** them to look forward to each day of school as a wonderful and exciting event.
- **Listen** to your child when they are ready to share with you their experiences of the day. Help your child tell you about their day by asking for specifics. For example: "Did you hear a story or paint today?"
- **Involve** yourself with your child's interests and achievements in the Flex JK program. Your involvement will help them attain their maximum potential. Parents are welcome to bring their own expertise and knowledge to our center. Children respond warmly to visitors. If you would like to share in the program in some way, feel free to make arrangements with the teacher.

Daily Schedule

Our program follows a consistent daily flow, but we also enjoy flexibility as we meet the needs and interests of the children. Some minor seasonal and weather-related changes may also occur.

8:30 – 8:40	Student Arrival & Greetings Hang up belongings in cubbies and put on indoor shoes
8:40 – 9:00	Circle Time
9:00 – 10:20	Free Play/Exploration of Centres & Free-Flow Snack
10:20	Clean-up
10:30 – 10:40	Circle Time
10:40 – 10:45	Get ready for home & transition to outside
10:45 – 11:15	Outdoor Play
11:15	Dismissal

Classroom Culture

Guiding and Caring

We believe students thrive when they are in deep relationships with others who love them in a safe and creative space. Our teachers adhere to the following guidelines when interacting with children at our centre:

- **Respect:** Respect for the child is conveyed by talking to them in a quiet, calm voice away from the other children if possible. The exceptions to this would be in potentially dangerous situations (e.g., a child pushing another child at the top of the playground equipment). In this situation, a fast, direct response takes priority. Once the immediate danger has passed, the child is quietly taken aside by the teacher for further direction.
- **Reminding:** Sometimes children need specific instruction that is more easily attainable. For example, at Clean-up Time, a teacher might say, “please put the trucks on the top shelf” instead of “time to clean up,” as it is more direct and attainable for a child who can easily follow one or two step directives at a time. Sometimes children need to be reminded of the classroom rules. The teacher will restate the rule: “The rule is that we walk in the classroom.”
- **Redirection:** A child may be asked to choose an alternative activity or be redirected to one as needed, while at the same time the teacher is verbalizing what is the expected behavior at any given center. This is done in a positive, matter-of-fact manner.
- **Problem Solving:** Sometimes, the best guidance is to step back and allow the child to work out a resolution with the teacher modelling problem solving skills as needed.
- **Natural and Logical Consequences:** Natural consequences state the inevitable. For example, “If you go outside without mitts, your hands will get cold.” Logical consequences mean we are enforcing a consequence related to the situation. For example, “If you spill your drink, you will have to wipe it up.”
- **Body Break:** This is used to help a child calm their body down, regroup, and think about his/her behavior. A child who is having difficulty controlling him/herself or is displaying unacceptable behaviour will be asked to go to the Cozy Corner to calm down, or choose a quiet independent table activity until

they're able to make acceptable behaviour choices. Teachers make it clear that while the behaviour might not be okay, the child is always loved and accepted.

- **Modeling:** Caregivers model appropriate Christ-like behaviors in all areas of our program.
- **Restitution:** Developing empathy and understanding restitution is the primary philosophy of behavior that we hope to convey. The Golden Rule says, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." This is communicated in a kind and respectful manner, like we would want to be spoken to.
- **Positive Reinforcement and Building Self-Esteem:** A verbal acknowledgment or a smile does wonders for communicating acceptance. We consistently look for ways to build healthy self-esteem by acknowledging children's efforts.
- **Sharing:** We promote the value of sharing. We also teach the children that it is okay to say no so that they can learn healthy boundaries in saying no. Children are taught to state in a kind manner when they will share (in five minutes, or when I am done).
- **Choices:** Children need choices to develop a healthy self-esteem and have a sense of their own power. It is amazing to watch a small child who is frustrated and unwilling to cooperate drastically change when they are given the power to make a choice. We believe that they have the power to choose to do what is right or what is wrong, and to take responsibility for their choices. We teach children to be wise with the choices they make by learning through experience.

By recognizing that each child is unique, we support their individuality and thereby increase their positive feelings about themselves - ultimately creating in them a desire to do the things they know that are right and praiseworthy.

Enrolment & Financial Policies

Junior Kindergarten – School Year

School begins in the fall with a gradual entry one-hour orientation in the first week of September. Full classes start in the second week. A detailed confirmation letter is sent home in late August.

Our year follows our K-12 Flex Academy Calendar for all statutory holidays and non-instructional days. These include: National Day of Truth and Reconciliation, Thanksgiving, Remembrance Day, a two week Christmas break, Family Day, a two week Spring break, Easter, and Victoria Day. Classes end the third week of June.

Junior Kindergarten – Probationary Enrolment & Program

As per the application process, upon enrolment of your child at Flex Academy Early Learning Center, should we recognize that your child needs academic, behavioral, or other supports beyond the scope of what our school is able to provide, we may request that your family seek additional support for your child through consultation with your pediatrician, counseling, behavioral assessments, etc. Ultimately, if we are unable to provide an adequate program that meets the educational needs and care needs of your child, we reserve the right to rescind your child's enrolment in our school.

Junior Kindergarten – Schedule

Morning – 8:30–11:15am

Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday

Afternoon – 12:15–3:00pm

Tuesday Thursday

****Schedule is subject to change based on enrolments****

Please indicate a first and second choice on the registration form. Tours of our facility are available prior to registration. Please call or email to arrange an appointment.

Program

Our Junior Kindergarten program follows a regular daily routine. Instruction time varies class to class, depending on the attention spans and interests of each specific group of children. All options are available to all children in each class.

Age Requirements

Children must be at least 30 months of age to enroll. Children must be potty-trained.

Junior Kindergarten – Registration Procedure

The Junior Kindergarten Registration Form must be completed, signed and returned accompanied by the registration fee of \$100.00 (new families only). This fee is **non-refundable**.

Monthly Fees

2024–2025 JK Tuition Scale

Age	Days	Times	Annual Tuition Per Learner	Monthly Fee (Sep–Jun)	CCFRI Discount	Net Monthly Payment
4 Year Old	Mon/Wed/Fri	Mornings (8:30–11:15)	\$2,625	\$262.50	-\$57.00	\$205.50
4 Year Old	Mon/Wed/Fri	Afternoons (12:15–3:00)	\$2,625	\$262.50	-\$57.00	\$205.50
3 & 4 Years Old	Tue/Thu	Mornings (8:30–11:15)	\$1,750	\$175	-\$38.00	\$137.00
3 & 4 Years Old	Tue/Thu	Afternoons (12:15–3:00)	\$1,750	\$175	-\$38.00	\$137.00

Junior Kindergarten Fees

Fees are payable through Pre-Authorized Debit (PAD) and automatically debited from your bank account on the 1st of each month (September 1st through June 1st). PAD forms and a void cheque must be completed and submitted together with the registration form.

The monthly fee represents payment for each calendar month, September to June, regardless of the number of school days in the month.

Fees may be pre-paid at any time. Note: Any fees for which an Official Receipt for Child Care Fees has been issued are non-refundable. There is a \$25.00 fee for all returned cheques/payments.

Any changes to the PAD must be made by the 20th of the calendar month preceding the change (eg. Nov 20th for Dec 1st change). For changes or termination of the Pre-Authorized Debit please contact office@flex.academy.

Arrangements for late payments must be made in **writing** to the Flex JK Office & Accounts Assistant. If arrangements are not made and fees are not collected by the 20th of the month, notice will be given to withdraw the child by the end of the month.

Official Tax Receipts for total Child Care fees paid during the year will be issued each February. Receipts are issued to the parent/guardian on file. Any fees for which an official receipt has been issued are non-refundable. Please maintain your current address with our school to ensure your official receipt for total child care fees can be mailed.

School Supply Fee

A one-time fee of \$25.00 will be charged upon enrolment to cover the cost of class supplies. This fee can be paid through our online payment system and is non-refundable.

Refund Policy

No partial months will be refunded. If a family prepays fees for the full year and then withdraws part way through the year, we will refund the amount beyond the one month's notice, unless an official receipt for total child care fees has been issued.

Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative (CCFRI)

Flex JK is currently operating under the CCFRI. This allows us to offer a reduced parent fee up to \$95.00/month. Parents/Guardians do not need to apply for the fee reduction. See Tuition Scale for pro-rated reduction.

Affordable Child Care Benefit Program (ACCB)

Funding is available for lower income families. Application forms for the ACCB Program can be found at <http://www.gov.bc.ca/affordablechildcarebenefit>.

Withdrawal Information

Termination of care requires a minimum of one calendar month's written notice by either party (except in the case where payments are not made, see note under "Junior Kindergarten Fees"). Once written notice of the intention to withdraw the child from Flex Academy is submitted, arrangements are to be made through the school office for PAD termination.

When a student leaves Flex Academy Early Learning Center for any reason, all unpaid accounts remain due to the school.

General Information & Policies

Facility

Our facilities are within the church building of Kelowna Christian Center and meet all the standards and requirements of a licensed daycare. Washrooms are located adjacent to the classroom and the playground is designated for our use.

Staff

All of our teachers are fully qualified, having an ECE certificate or diploma and are licensed by the B.C. Provincial Government. They have also received first-aid training and participate in ongoing professional development. Additionally, all of the teachers have received Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour and Lord and have a deep love for children with a desire to provide for the children's needs. At Flex JK, all classroom assistants have a genuine love for children, meet the requirements for licensing and are pursuing a career with children.

Prior to hiring, documentation is completed on each staff member including a criminal record check, reference checks, and an orientation to Flex, etc. New staff members receive support and supervision until they are familiar with the children, facility, policies, and procedures.

In order to meet practicum requirements from a College ECE Course, college students may participate in our program throughout the year. Special Assistants often accompany children with special needs.

Communication Between Home and Flex JK

General information for parents is available on the [Flex Academy website](#).

Additionally, JK info will be posted on a designated bulletin board and/or provided in the monthly newsletter (available in print and by email). Weekly information regarding classroom activities is listed on the door inside the classroom. Parents are encouraged to reach out to discuss the progress of their child with the teachers. A progress report indicating your child's growth in several different areas is distributed at the end of the school year.

Parental Access Policy

Parents are welcome to join us at any time throughout the JK program to observe or participate. Please arrange a mutually agreeable time with the teachers. If the parent will be attending on a regular basis, i.e. for the health needs of a child, a volunteer package must be completed including a Criminal Record Check.

Several times during the year, parents are invited to special classroom activities. Details will be in the monthly newsletters.

Field Trips

For the purpose of extended learning and enjoyment, field trips will be planned throughout the year. The children will be under supervision at all times. Parents are asked to sign a Field Trip Permission Form for each outing. This is posted with the sign-in/out forms.

Parents are responsible to get their child to and from the field trip location unless otherwise notified. Parents are welcome to accompany their child on field trips and will be asked to share in the responsibility of caring for all the children during the field trip. Some siblings may be able to attend if we do not exceed the number of children allowed by licensing. Prior arrangements must be made with the teacher.

Occasionally the children will go to the Flex Academy campus for Learning Commons (Library), Gym or other activities with other classes. Parents are welcome to attend Learning Commons days with the children.

Field trip costs will largely be covered by the school. In instances where there are field trip fees or other fees, parents can pay through our online payment system. If parents would like to attend on any of the field trips, they are responsible for their cost as well as the cost of any additional siblings/children.

Photos

Individual and class photos will be taken throughout the year. Please indicate on the registration form if you do not wish your child's photo to be taken or used in advertising.

Sign-In Procedures

Licensing requires that all children are signed in and out by the parents or an appointed guardian, and have been greeted by the teacher before the parent/guardian leaves. This means the parent/guardian must make eye contact

with the teacher and/or verbally make sure the teacher knows the child has joined the class. This also applies during field trips. Please record any pick-up changes, days your child will be away, or any other specific detail you would like us to know about in the 'Special Instructions' column on the Sign-In form.

Attendance

When children arrive to class on time and attend consistently, they are able to develop a sense of rhythm and confidence. Conversely, late arrivals and inconsistent attendance can have a negative effect on a child's enjoyment and success in the program. If your child will be late or absent, please call to let us know as soon as possible. In the event of absenteeism due to illness, vacation, etc., the parent is responsible for full payment. We are not able to accommodate make-up classes for statutory holidays or missed days.

Authorized Pick-Up

The safety of our students is a top priority, so we are vigilant to make sure that only adults who are authorized on a child's Registration Form and Emergency Card are allowed to pick up a child. If someone you have not previously authorized on your child's forms will be picking up your child, please let us know in writing and inform that person to bring photo I.D. with them, as we require this of all unknown adults who come to pick up a child. We also ask that you verbally communicate directly to the teacher prior to or on the affected day for pick-up/drop-off changes, and record it on the sign-in sheet under "Special Instructions."

Late Pick-Up

It is important to a child's feeling of security and trust that he/she gets picked up on time. As well, the teachers need time for class clean up and program preparation. Therefore we greatly appreciate your co-operation and respect in ensuring you arrive on time to pick up your child. If an unforeseen circumstance arises which delays you from picking up your child on time, please call the school as soon as possible to let us know. If repeated late pick-ups occur, a late fee of \$10.00 per every 5 minutes late may be applied.

In the event that a child is not picked up and we have not received a phone call, the teacher will attempt to call the parents/guardians. If unsuccessful, we will then call the emergency contacts listed on the registration form. If the child has not been picked up within 60 minutes, the teacher is required by law to contact the Ministry of Children and Family Development, who will take the child until the parents can be located.

The safety and well-being of the children are of top priority to our teachers, so in the event that an adult arrives to pick up a child and is suspected to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, it is our moral, ethical and legal obligation to intervene. We will voice our concerns to the adult picking up, and offer to contact another person on the registration form or call a taxi.

Clothing

In the course of exploration and play, things can sometimes get messy, so please dress your child in easy-wash play clothes. To help us avoid lost items and mix-ups, **Please label ALL your child's belongings.** Appropriate indoor footwear is very important for safety in the classroom and gymnasium, as well as in the event of a fire drill, so children must have a pair of indoor running shoes (not slippers) to wear and leave at Flex JK. It is important for children to develop independence in putting on and taking off their footwear, so please choose shoes that your child is able to manage with minimal help. Please dress your child appropriately for the weather each day. We also ask you to provide a complete set of extra clothing (including underwear and socks) in a large labelled Zipoc bag, for occasions when spills or accidents occur.

Toys From Home

Toys from home are not always conducive to cooperative play and can create problems if they happen to get misplaced or broken. We, therefore, ask that toys and items from home not be allowed to come to school. We will have special "Show and Tell" days for your child to share their special treasures with the class.

If a child has a special "lovey" blanket or stuffed friend, they are welcome to bring that to the center and have it with them as they need it. We recognize that these objects can help ease the transition to our center and provide the child with comfort and reassurance throughout the day.

Snacks and Water Bottles

Snack time is a wonderful opportunity to encourage children in healthy eating habits. Please send a nutritious snack for your child each class. Please include 2-3 items from the [Canada Food Guide](#). The children will be encouraged not to share their snacks with other children unless it is a birthday celebration. For birthdays, you are welcome to bring a treat, but advanced notice is required.

Please provide a water bottle for your child each day that he/she is able to open and close independently.

Allergy Alert

Please make the teachers aware of any food allergies that your child may have. There may be specific allergies to consider in each class; the teacher will make the families aware of other foods that need to be avoided. Flex JK is a “nut-aware zone”. All snacks brought in must be free of nuts or nut products. Some children can be dangerously allergic to foods even if they are just in the room or near someone who has just eaten them.

Health & Safety

Illness Policies

If a child is not well, parents are asked to keep him/her at home and call the Flex JK center to inform the teacher. Reasons to keep your child home include:

- Any type of fever
- Vomiting or diarrhea within the last 24 hours
- Contagious illness (please inform the teacher)
- “Hacking” cough or difficulty in breathing
- Any coloured discharge from the nose
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye) that has not been treated
- The presence of nits or lice in hair

In order to stop the cycle of germs spreading, and in the best interest of all concerned, please keep your child out of the classroom when any of the above symptoms are present.

If the child should become ill while at Flex JK, the teacher will notify the parent/guardian to come and take the child home.

If an accident occurs involving a child while in our care, we will attempt to contact the parent/guardian. In the case of an accident where a child was severely hurt and requires emergency care, an ambulance will be called and then the parent/guardian will be notified. The parent/guardian is responsible for the ambulance fee.

Medications will be administered ONLY as prescribed by the child’s physician, and/or provided by the parent/guardian in the original labeled container and will be kept in a locked box. Administration of the medicine will be recorded on a medicine administration chart.

Flex JK is required by licensing to have a record of who has been immunized and which immunizations they have received. If you have chosen not to immunize your child, please indicate so on the registration form. (If an outbreak occurs to which

your child may be at risk, a medical health officer will determine when the child may return to class). There is no tuition refund available in this event.

Since the health of each child is very important, please notify the teacher of any special circumstances regarding your child's health. We appreciate knowing about hurts, bruises and emotional upsets that occur away from Flex JK or if anything changes through the year concerning their health or well-being.

If your child has any speech, hearing, or vision difficulties, or behavioural challenges, we recommend your child be assessed by a physician. Additionally, Starbright Children's Centre exists to serve children with special needs from birth to school entry. Feel free to contact them directly if you have any concerns: 250-763-5100

We are required by law to report any suspected neglect or abuse of a child. It is our responsibility to protect children from any ill-treatment of any form.

Flex JK is a smoke-free zone. Smoking is not permitted on the church or school property at any time. We appreciate you refraining from smoking anywhere on the premises.

Fire Drills

In keeping with the Provincial Law, Flex JK is inspected periodically and is fully equipped with the necessary chemical extinguishers required by law. Fire evacuation drills are held monthly. The teachers escort the children outside the building to a safe meeting place next to the open field where attendance is taken. The children wait there until we receive permission to re-enter the building.

Local Evacuation

In the case where an evacuation of the neighbourhood is required, we will exit the building as in the case of a fire drill. We will proceed (walk) with the children to the McDonald's Restaurant on the corner of Highway 33 and Hollywood Road. We will then call parents or contact persons on the emergency cards to come and get the children. We will then await a message via the news, other media or door-to-door as to further instructions. It is our responsibility to stay with the children until they have been picked up.

Community Evacuation

In the case where an evacuation of the Rutland area is required, we will exit the building as in the case of a fire drill. We will proceed via staff's vehicles with the children to one of the following safe locations: North – EnergyPlex on McCurdy Road; East – Plaza 33 Shopping Center, either the Regional Library or back entrance area; South – Parenting Room at Orchard Park Mall. We will then attempt to call the parents or contact persons on the emergency card to come and get the children if possible. We will then await a message via the news, other media or door-to-door as to further instructions. It is our responsibility to stay with the children until they have been picked up.

Reporting Abuse

All children in our care have the right to be free from abuse (physical, emotional, sexual) and neglect. Flex JK recognizes its responsibility to ensure the safety and well-being of all children within its care. The staff recognize their privileged relationship with the children and also that this relationship must not be exploited in any way. Our staff treats the children with respect and dignity at all times. They will not put themselves in any situation where they may be open to allegations of child abuse.

Any suspected or disclosed abuse or neglect will be reported to the MCFD and subsequently reported to the licensing officer of the facility. All disclosures will be documented in an objective manner including facts i.e. times, dates, and manner in which we became aware of the situation. A copy will be given to the Social Worker and we will keep a copy in the Flex JK files. Child abuse can be: physical, sexual, emotional or neglect.

If the alleged offender is a staff member, reporting and investigation procedures will be followed in the same manner as for persons outside the Flex JK. In addition, the suspected staff person will be immediately suspended until the investigation of that individual has been concluded at which time they will be asked back or dismissed based on the findings of the investigation. If the preliminary investigation indicates that the report is unfounded, no further action will be required. The Ministry of Children and Family Development will be responsible for ensuring that the parents of children who have been affected are notified of the investigation proceedings and outcome. Making a false accusation or failing to report could be subject to a fine of up to \$10,000 and/or 6 months in jail.

Personal Information Privacy Policy

In compliance with the Federal Government's Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA, governing the collection, use, retention and management of individual's personal information), Flex JK is committed to protecting the confidentiality of your personal information.

We require your personal information for the following purposes:

- Program planning and implementation, to meet the needs of your child
- Billing and year-end tax receipts
- Class lists

It is to be used within the Kelowna Christian Center Society only and for Health Care Officials or extra Care Providers, i.e. Children's Development Center, etc.

Flex JK will not collect, use or distribute your personal information beyond the above-mentioned purposes without your consent unless required by law. Your personal information is available to you at any time. **Please keep your information as up-to-date as possible** for use in the event of an emergency.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the privacy of your information, please contact the Flex JK Office Manager. If you wish to opt out of any of these uses, please notify Flex JK in writing.

Thank you for taking the time to read through our school handbook.

If you have any questions about the content of this handbook, please contact us. We are excited to partner with you in the growth of your child!



Appendix A

Staffing Suitability for Junior Kindergarten in British Columbia

Introduction

This policy outlines the criteria and procedures for assessing staffing suitability for the Flex Academy Early Learning Centre. The policy aims to ensure that qualified and competent staff members are selected, ensuring a safe, nurturing, and engaging learning environment for young children.

Qualifications and Credentials

2.1 Educational Requirements: Staff members in JK programs must hold a minimum of a recognized early childhood education diploma or an equivalent qualification as approved by the British Columbia Ministry of Education.

2.2 Valid Certification: All staff members must possess a valid Early Childhood Educator (ECE) certification or a Letter of Permission (LOP) issued by the Early Childhood Educators of British Columbia (ECEBC).

2.3 Continued Professional Development: Staff members should actively engage in professional development activities to enhance their knowledge and skills in early childhood education, staying updated with best practices and current research.

Experience and Expertise

3.1 Relevant Experience: Staff members should have relevant experience working with young children, preferably in early childhood education settings or similar environments.

3.2 Knowledge of Child Development: Staff members should demonstrate a solid understanding of child development theories and practices, including age-appropriate learning methodologies, social-emotional development, and behavior management techniques.

3.3 Specialized Expertise: Additional specialized expertise, such as experience with children with diverse learning needs or fluency in multiple languages, may be considered an asset.

Personal Qualities

4.1 Interpersonal Skills: Staff members should possess strong interpersonal skills, including effective communication, active listening, empathy, and the ability to build positive relationships with children, families, and colleagues.

4.2 Patience and Flexibility: Working with young children requires patience, flexibility, and adaptability to meet the individual needs and developmental variations of children.

4.3 Professionalism and Ethical Conduct: Staff members should adhere to high standards of professionalism and ethical conduct, including maintaining confidentiality, respecting cultural diversity, and upholding child protection and safety policies.

Recruitment and Selection Process

5.1 Job Posting and Advertisement: Positions in JK programs should be advertised widely to attract a diverse pool of qualified applicants. Job postings should clearly outline the required qualifications, responsibilities, and application process.

5.2 Screening and Interviewing: Applicants should undergo a thorough screening process, including the review of resumes, interviews, and reference checks, to assess their suitability for the position.

5.3 Criminal Record Check: All potential staff members must complete a criminal record check as per the regulations set by the British Columbia Ministry of Education.

5.4 Hiring Decision: The final hiring decision should be made based on the qualifications, experience, expertise, personal qualities, and alignment with the school's philosophy and goals.

Professional Support and Development

6.1 Orientation and Training: Newly hired staff members should receive comprehensive orientation and training to familiarize themselves with the school's policies, procedures, curriculum, and health and safety protocols.

6.2 Ongoing Professional Development: The school should provide opportunities for staff members to engage in ongoing professional development activities, including workshops, conferences, and collaborations, to enhance their knowledge and skills in early childhood education.

Performance Evaluation and Feedback

7.1 Regular Evaluation: Staff members' performance should be evaluated periodically, using a fair and transparent evaluation process, to ensure that they meet the expectations and standards set by the school.

7.2 Constructive Feedback: Feedback should be provided to staff members to support their professional growth and address areas of improvement or further development.

7.3 Recognition and Rewards: The school should recognize and acknowledge the contributions of staff members and provide incentives or rewards to motivate and retain highly qualified and dedicated educators.

Policy Review

This policy should be reviewed periodically to ensure its effectiveness and relevance in meeting the staffing needs of Junior Kindergarten programs in British Columbia. Any necessary updates or revisions should be made based on changes in regulations, educational requirements, or best practices in early childhood education.

Employee Plan

Ages: From 30 months to school age (Kindergarten)

Maximum group size: 25 children

Child-to-staff ratio:

1 to 8 children: 1 Early Childhood Educator

9 to 16 children: 1 Early Childhood Educator and 1 Early Childhood Educator Assistant

17 to 25 children: 1 Early Childhood Educator and 2 Early Childhood Educator Assistants

Staff qualifications:

Early Childhood Educator Certificate (approximately 900 hours of training)

Early Childhood Educator Assistant Certificate (completed one early childhood education course)

Employee Safety Plan for Transportation & Off-Site Activities

Safety Plan for Walking Children to and from the School Playground & Other Local Transportation Events

Introduction

This safety plan outlines the procedures and precautions to ensure the safety of children when walking to and from the school playground. It aims to prevent

accidents, address potential hazards, and promote a safe and secure environment for all students.

Supervision

2.1 Designated Supervisors: Assign trained and responsible staff members as designated supervisors for walking children to and from the school playground.

2.2 Staff-to-Student Ratio: Maintain an appropriate staff-to-student ratio to ensure adequate supervision and individual attention for the children.

2.3 Attendance Monitoring: Keep accurate records of the children participating in the walk, including their names and the supervising staff members.

Route Selection and Assessment

3.1 Safe Routes: Identify and establish safe walking routes from the school to the playground and other locations, taking into consideration factors such as traffic conditions, pedestrian crossings, sidewalks, and the absence of potential hazards.

3.2 Risk Assessment: Conduct regular risk assessments of the selected routes to identify and mitigate any potential hazards or safety concerns, such as construction zones, uneven surfaces, or busy intersections.

Preparation

4.1 Communication with Parents: When needed, inform parents or guardians about the activity and provide necessary details, including the designated route, duration, and safety measures in place.

4.2 Permission and Emergency Contacts: Obtain written permission from parents or guardians for their child's participation in the activity. Maintain up-to-date emergency contact information for each participating child.

4.3 Group Formation: Organize children into appropriate walking/travelling groups, with each group assigned to a designated supervisor. Ensure that each group has a clearly identified leader.

Safety Measures and Guidelines

5.1 Visibility and Identification: When needed, ensure that children and staff members wear brightly colored vests or other identifying markers to enhance visibility during the walk.

5.2 Traffic Safety:

a. Teach and reinforce pedestrian safety rules, such as looking both ways before crossing, using designated crosswalks, and obeying traffic signals.

b. Designate specific crossing points or use adult crossing guards, if available, to assist children in safely crossing busy streets.

5.3 Behavior Expectations:

a. Clearly communicate and reinforce behavior expectations, such as walking in a single file, staying on the sidewalk, and refraining from running or pushing.

b. Educate children about the importance of staying with their assigned group and not talking to or accepting anything from strangers.

5.4 Emergency Procedures:

a. Train staff members and children on emergency procedures, including what to do in case of separation, injury, or encountering an unfamiliar or potentially dangerous situation.

b. Ensure that each group is equipped with a first aid kit and that at least one staff member is certified in first aid and CPR.

Communication and Reporting

6.1 Communication Channels: Establish clear communication channels among staff members, including two-way radios or cell phones, to facilitate immediate communication in case of emergencies or incidents.

6.2 Incident Reporting: Develop a standardized incident reporting process to document any accidents, injuries, or safety concerns that occur during the walk. Ensure that parents or guardians are promptly notified of any incidents.

Ongoing Training and Review

7.1 Staff Training: Provide regular training sessions for staff members on safety procedures, emergency protocols, and effective supervision techniques.

7.2 Annual Review: Conduct an annual review of the safety plan, considering feedback from staff, parents, and any incidents that have occurred, to identify areas for improvement and ensure the plan remains up-to-date and effective.

Policy Dissemination

Disseminate this safety plan to all staff members, parents, and relevant stakeholders. Ensure that everyone involved understands and complies with the outlined safety procedures and guidelines.

Active Play and Screen Time Policy for Junior Kindergarten

Introduction

This policy establishes guidelines and expectations regarding active play and screen time for Junior Kindergarten (JK) programs. It aims to promote healthy development, physical activity, and appropriate technology use among young children.

Active Play

2.1 Importance of Active Play: Recognize the crucial role of active play in supporting children's physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development.

2.2 Scheduled Playtime: Provide dedicated periods of time each day for structured and unstructured active play, both indoors and outdoors, to encourage movement, exploration, and gross motor skill development.

2.3 Play Environment: Create safe and engaging play environments that promote active play, including age-appropriate equipment, open spaces, and opportunities for imaginative play and social interaction.

2.4 Educator Engagement: Encourage educators to actively engage with children during playtime, facilitating games, providing guidance, and promoting positive social interactions.

Screen Time

3.1 Limiting Screen Time: Recognize the importance of limiting screen time to ensure a balanced and healthy approach to technology use.

3.2 Guidelines for Screen Time:

a. Age-Appropriate Content: Ensure that any screen time activities are developmentally appropriate and aligned with the educational goals of the JK program.

b. Screen Time Duration: Establish specific time limits for screen-based activities, taking into consideration recommendations from reputable sources such as the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP).

c. Purposeful Use: Promote the use of screens for educational purposes or for quality, age-appropriate media that enhances learning or creative expression.

d. Prohibited Content: Prohibit access to violent, inappropriate, or unsuitable media content.

e. Parental Involvement: Encourage parents to monitor and regulate their child's screen time outside of school hours, fostering open communication and collaboration between home and school.

Parent Education and Involvement

4.1 Orientation and Communication: Provide parents with information during orientation sessions and regular communication channels about the school's active play and screen time policies, emphasizing the rationale behind the guidelines and the importance of their support.

4.2 Resources and Workshops: Offer resources, workshops, or educational sessions for parents to enhance their understanding of the benefits of active play and appropriate screen time use, as well as strategies for promoting healthy habits at home.

Staff Training and Modeling

5.1 Professional Development: Conduct regular professional development sessions for educators, focusing on the importance of active play, age-appropriate technology integration, and strategies for creating engaging play environments.

5.2 Modeling Healthy Habits: Encourage staff members to be positive role models by demonstrating healthy habits in their own use of screens and actively participating in active play with the children.

Policy Review and Evaluation

6.1 Regular Evaluation: Periodically review and assess the effectiveness of the active play and screen time policy in meeting the developmental needs of JK children and aligning with best practices in early childhood education.

6.2 Policy Updates: Revise the policy as necessary, based on new research, technological advancements, and evolving educational standards, to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness.

Policy Dissemination

Disseminate this policy to all staff members, parents, and relevant stakeholders, ensuring that everyone understands and supports the guidelines and expectations related to active play and screen time in the JK program.

Note: This policy should be adapted and tailored to the specific needs and context of the school and its community. It is important to consider local regulations, cultural norms, and any additional guidelines or recommendations provided by the Ministry of Education or relevant educational authorities.

Floor Plan