



**PARACHUTE EXPRESS**  
*playschool*

9565 B Hurricane Road  
North Saanich, BC  
V8L 5V5  
250-655-4476

**Family Handbook**

[www.parachuteexpressplayschool.ca](http://www.parachuteexpressplayschool.ca)

[parachuteexpress@shaw.ca](mailto:parachuteexpress@shaw.ca)

# Table of Contents

- Welcome to Our Community
- Our Core Values
- Our Early Childhood Curriculum Offerings
- Daily Schedule
- Open Door Communication Policy
- Philosophy and Guidance Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Hours/Days of Operation
- Monthly Fee Schedule and Tax Receipts
- Year-Round Enrolment Policy
- Child Care Subsidy
- Financial Arrangements, Returned Payment Charge, Late Pick-Up Charge
- Absence Policy and Switching Days
- Notice of Withdrawal
- Notice of Termination
- Immediate Pick Up Request
- Parking Lot Safety
- Emergency Drill Procedure
- Emergency Preparedness
- Registration Information
- What Does My Child Need to Start School?
- Policies - Screen Time, Active Play Policy, Sun Protection
- Your Child's Arrival and Departure
- Authorization To Pick Up Your Child and Release of a Child
- Alleged Impaired Authorized Pick-Up
- How We Help With Separation Anxiety
- Nutrition Policy
- Your Child's Health
- When Your Child Requires Medication
- Emergency Medication and Permission To Administer Medication
- What to Wear to School
- Birthday Celebrations
- Toys From Home
- Helpful Hints
- Family Handbook Consent Form

# Welcome to Our Parachute Express Community!

Since 1993, Parachute Express Playschool has been nurturing curious minds and kind hearts by providing and promoting early learning through play. Our innovative culture values our youngest citizens, engages educators, partners with families, and strengthens community.

There is a joy and optimism in our collaborative approach to early learning. As an early learning environment, we are committed to growing an emergent curriculum supported by pedagogical leaders. At Parachute Express, we wholeheartedly believe that childhood is celebrated and families are valued. We have a profound respect for nature, the environment, for ourselves, our friends, our community and for our surroundings. At Parachute Express, we encourage a lifelong love of learning; offering inspired, inclusive, and developmentally appropriate activities to nurture a child's physical, cognitive, emotional, social and moral growth. We believe that through play, children learn and grow.

We believe that children are competent, capable, natural explorers of their world. Each member of our teaching team envisions his/her role as a facilitator of learning opportunities in everyday experiences; we are curious alongside the children, and we actively reflect on our practice with our colleagues. We continuously work to make meaning of experiences and deepen our understanding of the learning and caring culture that we create inside our classroom. We nurture and empower our children to strive for excellence, demonstrate depth in character and confidence, and take initiative and responsibility for their choices. We foster capable life-long learners, who are driven by purpose and passion, and who serve with kindness, humility and grace. We believe in the enduring ability to learn from our surroundings, from each other, and from ourselves. At Parachute Express, we believe in limitless possibilities.

As the founder of Parachute Express Playschool, it has been my absolute privilege and honor to share in the lives, laughter and learning with so many families and children throughout these years. My decades of experience in the early years classroom has allowed me to see life through a different lens, where every new learning opportunity is magical. I have developed an insatiable appetite for new knowledge and skills as a lifelong learner, hand in hand with my wee students. I have embraced the joy of this wonderful early learning journey, and as I have walked along its path, many core values have deepened my teaching practice and played an integral role in crafting Parachute Express's unique approach to Early Childhood Education.

## Our CORE VALUES

At Parachute Express Playschool....

1. We savor the magic and the joy that is Early Childhood, and are continually inspired by the creativity, imagination, enthusiasm and laughter of our little friends.
2. We relish opportunities to anticipate, plan and deliver an enriched curriculum in a dynamic environment to encourage personal growth and intellectual curiosity.

3. We delight in being a part of their early years development, using observation and documentation as an ongoing process, to celebrate individual growth and change.
4. We cherish, recognize and value the unique differences and diversity that make up each individual child and his/her family.
5. We embrace a kind, peaceful, gentle environment - we encourage the kind of problem solving that respectfully expresses our needs and feelings.
6. We encourage inclusive play, mutual responsibility, cooperation, and self-respect as the building blocks for important first friendships outside the child's family relationships.
7. We foster a love of learning by supporting children's natural curiosity, joy of discovery, perseverance, confidence and risk-taking in a safe environment, with a program that equips children socially, emotionally, cognitively and physically.
8. We strive to create a loving, nurturing environment that meets individual needs with warmth, love, hugs, and security.

Parachute Express Playschool is a fully inclusive centre, in that our program strives to meet every child's unique needs, whether they are typical in development or requiring special assistance. The teacher/child ratio at Parachute Express Playschool is one teacher per eight children at all times throughout our day.

Parachute Express Playschool operates in accordance with all Provincial Licensing Regulations as set out by the Vancouver Island Health Authority. Parachute Express works co-operatively, as well, with Queen Alexandra Centre for Children, Aboriginal Supported Child Development, Speech and Language Pathologists from VIHA, Ministry of Social Services and the Ministry of Child and Family Development.

This Family Handbook is designed to familiarize parents with the policies, routines and procedures of Parachute Express Playschool. The intention of this handbook is to provide clarity as you prepare to register your child; as well, it will provide a useful reference for the future. However, if further questions or concerns arise, please do not hesitate to speak to one of the educators at Parachute Express.

**\*Please sign and date the final page of this handbook prior to your child's enrollment at Parachute Express, and return it to a teacher.**

**Welcome to our happy, busy and inspired little classroom!!**

**Natalie Shoemaker**

Bachelor of Education, Psychology Minor

Early Childhood Education Certificate

BC ECE License to Practise

Yoga Teacher Training 200 hours

Kidding Around Children's Yoga Teacher

## Our Early Childhood Education Curriculum

The preschool curriculum at Parachute Express stimulates the growth and development of the whole child, allowing for innumerable moments of wonder and exploration. We provide a carefully implemented combination of pre-planned curriculum which is mindfully blended with honoring the importance of offering an emergent curriculum approach in our classroom. An emergent curriculum allows for the twist and turns of children's interests as the natural world changes around them, and it treasures the input of children as they encounter wonders in their world. Our curriculum supports children's ever evolving interests and creates opportunities to support their play and their curiosity - our desire is to spark our children's emerging interests in all areas of development. Specific developmental areas are carefully considered during the implementation of our teacher -led, theme-based lessons and child-directed lessons. These areas include guiding and assisting the child in Physical, Intellectual, Language and Social/Emotional areas.

Physical skills are important for future tasks in reading, writing, scientific explorations and math. For example, when children string beads, line up shells, or complete a puzzle, they are refining their eye-hand coordination, fine motor skills, sense of directionality and strengthening their pincer grasp. Physical development also affects social/emotional development. As children learn what their bodies can do, they gain self-confidence. The more they can do, the more willingly they try new and increasingly challenging tasks. This positive attitude means that children are more willing to try out new physical skills without fear of failure. This increased self-confidence positively influences their attitude toward learning in other areas of development.

Intellectual or cognitive development is the process of learning to think and reason. Preschool age children are developing cognitive skills that prepare them for content work in all of the disciplines. They are becoming skilled observers and questioners and learning how to organize and represent new information. In the early childhood years, children are not only gaining knowledge, skills and concepts, but also acquiring the "learning to learn" skills that are so important for the future.

A solid foundation in language development gives children the skills they need to become successful learners. Children who have rich language and literacy experiences in early childhood are more likely to develop strong language and literacy skills. These skills — the ability to listen, speak, read and write—develop interdependently in children. At Parachute Express Playschool, we foster this development by presenting many different types of language experiences throughout our day, from puppetry, to flannel board stories, to library books, songs, finger plays and creative movement. Most importantly, we foster a strong sense of mutually respectful, kind, warm and accepting communication throughout our day between the educator and our children and between peers.

The preschool years are a prime time for developing social and emotional skills that are essential to children's well-being and success, in school and in life. Three major social/emotional objectives include "Sense of Self" (how children feel accepted and valued by others), "Responsibility for Self and Others" (developing habits and character traits such as independence, self-regulation, self-direction and following rules and routines), and "Pro-Social Behavior" (traits that will help children get along in the world, such as empathy, sharing, taking turns). At Parachute Express, one of our most important tasks is to promote and reinforce positive relationships between preschoolers. We fulfill this role by empowering each child to make positive choices, supporting positive behavior and helping the child to begin to understand the natural and logical consequences that each behavior holds.

We uphold the educational philosophy of teaching from the inside out!



## Our Curriculum Offerings

### Writing

We introduce our children to essential pre-writing and fine motor exercises that support the hand muscles to write, scissor, and draw while developing eye-hand coordination. Children are introduced to lines, curves, shapes, letters, printed numerals and words. Writing is introduced every day with a combination of fine motor skills, games and activities, sensory and art experiences, drawing, and one-to-one writing. Children begin their day by practising their fine motor skills as they print their name for our community chart, engaging in the printing process themselves and practising the left to right progression important for later writing and reading development.

Our school proudly offers the "Get Set for School" program by Handwriting Without Tears, which is a wonderful complement to the existing curriculum at Parachute Express. The "Get Set for School" program helps young learners gain the skills and experiences they need for lifelong learning success in readiness skills and writing. Our hands-on curriculum engages our preschoolers in singing, dancing, coloring, building, and exploring on a joyous journey to kindergarten. This program incorporates child-friendly teaching strategies, such as using music and movement to bring lessons to life, and multisensory manipulatives to build fine and gross motor skills. Our readiness and writing lessons teach body awareness, cooperation, taking turns, listening, crayon grip, drawing, building, letter and number recognition, capital letter and number formation. And most importantly, this program is filled to the brim with so much fun!

### Math

We introduce Mathematics in the early years to promote language and literacy skills. We place great emphasis on helping the child gain and apply reasoning skills, and apply mathematical concepts introduced in a practical way. Basic concepts of sorting, classifying, and graphing using real-world examples allows your child to develop a foundation for mathematical reasoning and application, which aid in future scientific, geometric, and statistical comprehension. Your child

engages in activities related to number value association and identification of numbers 1 - 20, as well as one-to-one correspondence and concepts of more or less and equal.

## Outdoor Nature Play

The Physical Education Program in our school is designed to develop muscles, balance, physical confidence and gross motor skills of each child. As well, our outdoor program engages children's senses and stimulates their imagination through games and a myriad of outdoor play experiences. Our playground is large and well equipped with a variety of different toys and areas of interest, from huge nature inspired sandboxes, a stage, a roadway for cars and trucks, water play tables, sensorial dry play tables, loose parts for building and creating, art easels, small world landscapes, and so much more!

## Education of the Heart

"My hope and wish is that one day, formal education will pay attention to what I call education of the heart. Just as we take for granted the need to acquire proficiency in the basic academic subjects, I am hopeful that a time will come when we can take it for granted that children will learn, as part of the curriculum, the indispensability of inner values: love, compassion, justice, and forgiveness"

- Dalai Lama

Our Education of the Heart curriculum at Parachute Express Playschool, is comprised of several different programs to foster emotional intelligence from our "Random Act of Kindness Wreath", to the "Fill the Bucket" program, the "Mind-Up Curriculum" and our "Peace Curriculum". In our classroom, we strive to model kindness, compassion, empathy, honesty, generosity, The "Mind-Up Curriculum" is a research-based training program for educators and children. This program is composed of 15 lessons based in neuroscience. Students learn to self-regulate behavior and mindfully engage in focused activities, while nurturing optimism and happiness in the classroom, and increasing empathy and compassion.

We incorporate numerous activities in our classroom to support our Peace Curriculum, from the "Peaceful Feet" activity, to our Peace Dove, to celebrating International Day of Peace each year to our Making Silence Game. Each day, we sing about peace too; some of our favorite songs to promote a peaceful existence include "Peace Like a River", "I've Got Peace in My Fingers", "Peace Soup", "Peace is it's Name-o", and more. We plant and nurture the seed of peaceful play and peaceful actions each and every day at Parachute Express Playschool. It is our heart's desire that this tiny seed takes root and blossoms in every little heart as they move forward in life.

**As educators at Parachute Express Playschool, our hope is that we can give our children the life skill to relax, to be conscious of their relationship to the world, to breathe through difficult emotions, to be present, to be emotionally intelligent, and to be mindful - an incredibly powerful gift.**

## Preschool Yoga

The Preschool Yoga Program at Parachute Express teaches our students breathing techniques (pranayama) and yoga poses (asanas) that enhance concentration, increases flexibility and balance, boosts confidence and relaxes their minds - PLUS IT IS SO MUCH FUN! Preschool Yoga is an effective way to help children to develop increased self-regulation, self-confidence, self-respect, positive communication and listening skills. Children learn to appreciate themselves and their peers and tend to show increased empathy and compassion for others in our wee little yogi community.

BUT.....this yoga class is unlike any you may have seen - it is noisy, bouncy, giggly fun and filled to the brim with specially designed songs, games and yoga puppets. Our class opens with a visit from Kookoo Bird or Crazy Monkey, two exciting puppets who have made their home in our preschool yoga program, as we help them to calm their minds through our "Peace Begins with Me" mantra. We share in a mini salutation to the sun, engage in our favorite poses through songs and games, and then become restful in our secret garden (savasana) at the end of our class. Our class closes with a special wish each day.....

"May the whole world be filled with peace and joy, love and light,  
and lots of peaceful children."

## Science

The students at Parachute Express Playschool are exposed to natural science throughout our Early Childhood Education classroom where they observe life through seed cycles, organic gardening, observation of insects, animals, and the human body. Our science program introduces the children to various subjects such as insects, oviparous species, dinosaurs, germs, freezing/melting properties, nutrition, egg science, botany, the solar system, environmental education, the seasons and much much more.

Our students cultivate an organic vegetable garden with the wonderful help of the Growing Young Farmer's Society, and they are able to witness plant life cycles first hand as their plants transform from season to season, nurturing a love of science (and vegetables!) at an early age. Several times per year, Nature Educators from Sea Aquaria, Swan Lake/Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary and the Compost Education Centre are welcomed into our classroom to kick start the curious engines of our little's ones scientific minds!

Our Science program has expanded to include a beautiful light table, baskets and baskets of ever changing nature items and many wonderful provocations to play and explore. Our Science curriculum is an emergent one that is guided by the children and their varied interests throughout the school year, nurturing their creative thinking skills, leadership skills and reasoning abilities.



## Languages

Languages are known to stimulate the child's cognitive capability, encourage social and cultural awareness, and improve their ability to process information, including memory, speech and sensory perception. The Language Program at Parachute Express introduces our students to basic vocabulary (like colors, numbers, greetings, short phrases, names of body parts, foods etc) through songs, stories, music and specialized games in Spanish.

## Literacy

Young children need writing to help them learn about reading, they need reading to help them learn about writing; and they need oral language to help them learn about both.

A literacy-enriched environment is one of the most effective ways to make literacy activities meaningful and enjoyable for children. At Parachute Express Playschool, we link literacy and play by engaging children in rich conversations in large group, small group, and one-to-one settings. Our teachers listen, respond and value what children have to say.

We read aloud to our children many times a day, exposing children to numerous enjoyable stories, poems, and information books in a well-designed library center, stocked with a wide selection of good books. We provide supportive conversations and activities before, during and after reading, as well as repeated reading of favorite books building familiarity. We provide opportunities for children to investigate topics that are of interest to them.

At Parachute Express Playschool, we create an environment rich with phonological awareness activities that increase children's awareness of the sounds of language, by playing games and listening to stories, poems, and songs that involve rhyme. Alphabet activities that engage children with materials that promote identification of the letters of the alphabet, including ABC books, magnetic letters, alphabet blocks and puzzles and alphabet charts. Direct instruction to teach letter names that have personal meaning to children is also part of our curriculum.

Our preschool classroom encourages and supports children to use emergent forms of writing by providing a well-stocked and easily accessible writing center. Our educators share writing demonstrations in which the teacher writes down text dictated by children.

## Social Studies

### **Global Responsibility**

Our preschoolers and their educators are active participants in creating a Globally Responsible classroom, as part of our Social Studies curriculum. Throughout the school year, we celebrate and embrace new cultures through specially planned multicultural activities in our classroom, as we celebrate Diwali, Hina Matsuri, Cinco de Mayo, Dia del Nino, Chinese New Year, La Chocolatada, St. Nicholas Day and more! Music, stories, dance, song and food round out our exotic adventures abroad.

Our Global Responsibility program has extended beyond the confines of our little classroom and our community, as our families and children have kindly participated year after year in donating toys and clothing to impoverished children in Mexico. Exploring cultural differences and similarities allows children to appreciate their own culture and that of others, as they celebrate diversity in a spirit of understanding, caring and love.

## **Geography**

As we learn about the many amazing places in our world, we sing about the 7 continents with our well-loved "Do You Know the Continents" song; then we eventually transfer that learning to identify these land masses on our huge world wall map, floor puzzles, northern and southern hemisphere activities and a myriad of other activities to enrich our learning from exploring flags of the world to animals indigenous to the different continents. Exploring the 5 oceans through song is another favorite activity in this component of our early learning. So much to learn and so little time!

## **Creative Arts Program**

Our Creative Arts Program at Parachute Express enables our students to explore colors, textures, materials, and other interesting items through sensorial integration. The children are exposed to art history, learning about various famous artists, as well as artistic styles. Our focus in the area of Art is on exploring and nurturing the child's creativity, and providing a new language of expression. Art experiences are offered twice daily in the classroom. Children have access throughout the entire day to art materials to express their own personal creativity, as well as exposure to teacher led, specific skill building activities. Many of the art experiences begin with a book, using the stories as a jumping off point to self-expression and creativity.

## **Daily Schedule at Parachute Express Playschool**

8:00 a.m.	Choice Time (All developmental areas are open)
8:30 a.m.	4 Hour Preschool Program begins.
10:15 a.m.	Clean-Up Time as a team
10:20 a.m.	Puzzle Time, followed by washing hands for snack
10:40 a.m.	Snack Time
10:50 a.m.	Circle Time
11:10 a.m.	Outdoor Play
12:00 p.m.	Lunch Time
12:30 p.m.	4 Hour Preschool Program ends / Rest Time for full day friends.
1:30 p.m.	Choice Time (All developmental areas are open)
2:30 p.m.	Clean Up Time
2:35 p.m.	Circle Time
2:55 p.m.	Outdoor Play
4:00 p.m.	Transition to Inside
4:10 p.m.	Snack Time
4:20 p.m.	Choice Time (limited developmental areas open)
5:00 p.m.	Parachute Express closes....Please be on time!

## PARACHUTE EXPRESS PLAYSCHOOL

Supports an OPEN DOOR COMMUNICATION POLICY, which means:

Parachute Express Playschool strives to create a positive partnership with parents. Families are respected and appreciated as children's first teachers and one of the most important influences in our children's lives.

- ❖ Parents are welcome to drop in and observe our program or join circle time activities with their child. If consultation with a teacher is desired, please let us know ahead of time so we can give you our undivided attention.
- ❖ We welcome families to share their talents and hobbies with the children. (For example: storytelling, singing, musical instruments, gardening, sewing, woodworking, pottery, painting, dance, etc) We also encourage parents to share their professional expertise with the children. (ie: police officer, firefighter, nurse, doctor, dentist, chef, librarian, etc.) This is especially exciting during our "Community Heroes" curriculum offering.
- ❖ We are excited to celebrate each child's cultural background, and invite families to share special days, foods, activities, clothing, etc. Please advise our Educators if you are able to come and share with us!
- ❖ Telephone/email communication and parent/teacher meetings are encouraged. Please check with your child's teacher regarding mutually convenient times.
- ❖ Parents can expect ongoing communication with teachers concerning their child's progress, program activities and special events.
- ❖ Parents can expect information about parent education opportunities and community resource offerings to help them understand their child's development in the early learning journey.
- ❖ Parents are asked to make themselves familiar with the Family Handbook that states the policies and procedures for our school. As well, parents are requested to keep themselves up to date on the wonderful happenings in our classroom by reading the monthly emailed newsletters.
- ❖ We welcome feedback from parents on any aspect of our program. If parents concerned with any incident or aspect at Parachute Express Playschool please speak to their child's teacher.
- ❖ There are only two occasions throughout our entire school year in which parent participation is an absolute requirement (although we do welcome and encourage parental help at other times in our classroom as well!!). A minimum of one month notice will be given as to the time and date of these two events, so that parents can adequately plan and prepare to share this time with their child at our school.
- ❖ **Please Note:** At both our Christmas Party in December and at our Easter Event, one parent must be present for the entire party time with their child. More information will follow as these family-oriented events approach.

## Our Philosophy

The philosophy of Parachute Express Playschool is designed to provide numerous and varied opportunities to facilitate and guide children in physical development, intellectual development, language development, emotional development and social development, in accordance with each child's unique needs. The philosophy of our school is based on the following three tenets:

- The importance of play as a learning tool
- Allowing children the freedom to make their own choices
- Ensuring that each child possesses the rights to which they are entitled

Play, both indoors and out, acts as a vehicle to children which cultivates their minds and their bodies by helping them to understand their world and become active, whole hearted participants within it. Through play, children develop their fine and gross motor skills, and learn appropriate ways to socialize and utilize personal relationships. They learn about their culture and society. They learn how to cooperate and share with others. Play encourages positive attitudes and motivates children to take risks and become more adventurous. Play inspires innovation and allows children to work through personal problems and to sort out feelings.

### **In essence, play is the child's tool for learning all about life.**

Throughout the play experience, the teachers at Parachute Express Playschool will encourage children to choose their own activities, allowing them time to play spontaneously and to make decisions and choices for themselves. A child given this type of freedom in play will develop independence and self-reliance, which, in turn, will promote a positive self-concept, self-confidence and self-esteem.

Within our school, we will strive to meet the emotional, social, intellectual and physical rights of which all children are entitled. A child in our setting shall be entitled to the **emotional right** to:

- feel supported, whether feelings are positive or negative;
- to feel accepted, secure and loved;
- a sense of order, routine and consistency;
- realistic expectations, clear limits and positive guidance, with encouragement toward self-responsibility for actions;
- respect for individual ethnic and cultural differences;
- courtesy and support for his/her parents, as well as opportunities for parental input and access to parent resource materials.

A child in our setting shall be entitled to the **social right** to express his/her ideas, views and opinions and to have real input into the program. They will also have ample, varied and changing play materials, teachers who serve as good role models, opportunities for both group and individual learning experiences, and freedom from pressure to be busy and/or participating at all times.

A child in our classroom shall be entitled to the **intellectual right** to a quality education geared to his/her developmental level, based on learning through play, and focusing on the whole child. We offer a varied and challenging program including areas such as science/nature, math, social studies, language, literature, sensory play, manipulative/fine motor play, dramatic play, music, creative art and physical education. Our program, which incorporates spontaneous, self-chosen play exploration, as well as teacher planned and organized activity, is structured so that each child can progress at his/her own rate and reach his/her fullest potential.

A child at Parachute Express shall be entitled to the **physical right** to close supervision, at all times, to ensure safety. A child has the right to feel physically safe and supported, to good nutrition, clean conditions and a comfortable, inviting, stimulating, well-designed classroom to provide enriched sensory experiences and a large play area for big muscle activities.

Throughout the year, the teachers of Parachute Express Playschool will reflect on our program and our philosophy to ensure that optimal learning opportunities and moments of joy are being consistently presented to encourage the play experience, the freedom of choice in play and to ensure that our children's rights are being fully supported.

## **Guidance Policy**

The word "guidance" describes a teaching and learning process by which children develop socially acceptable and appropriate behavior as they grow to maturity. Guidance is something that adults do "with" children and "for" children, rather than "to" children. The goal of guidance is to assist the child in establishing inner control, making decisions, and taking responsibility for his/her own behavior. Guidance is understood to be motivated by care and the desire to support the child's behavior, not to punish a child for misbehaving.

## **Our wish is to nurture the gift of self-regulation.**

The teachers of Parachute Express Playschool recognize the importance of individualizing guidance strategies, as each child is unique and has had unique experiences. Two important aspects are taken into consideration when guiding children's behavior:

- **Prevention** of misbehavior.
- Appropriate **intervention** when misbehavior does occur.

The prevention of misbehavior is a crucial goal in Early Childhood Education, as it helps to create a positive climate in which children feel love, respect, security and acceptance in order to promote self-confidence and self-esteem. In this manner, opportunities are maximized for desirable behavior by incorporating the following strategies throughout a child's day:

- Establish clear, consistent and simple limits in the classroom.
- Offer straightforward verbal explanations for limits.
- State limits in a positive way (focus on what to do, rather than what not to do) e.g. use "Use walking feet!" instead of "Don't run!"
- Focus on the behavior, not the child.

- State what is expected, rather than pose questions.
- Allow time for children to respond to expectations.
- Observe children in play, to anticipate potential problems.
- Positively reinforce appropriate behavior with both words and gestures.
- Encourage children to use the teacher to guide and help them when problems arise.
- Encourage the children to use their words to solve problems.
- Reinforce concepts such as "Hands are for Helping" and "Sharing is Caring"
- Utilizing choices to empower children

Intervention strategies ensure that guidance is supportive, rather than punitive when unacceptable behavior does occur, and includes, the following:

- Pranayama / "Breath Work" and Meditation
- Remind children of acceptable behavior, to clarify and reinforce limits
- Be supportive to the child by acknowledging child's feeling before setting limits.
- Redirect child to another appropriate activity, which meets his/her needs.
- Offer the child appropriate choices to clarify expectations or reinforce limits.
- Use natural and logical consequences.
- Remove a piece of equipment from a child's play limits, if necessary (especially for safety's sake).
- "Time to Refresh" - will be used when a child persistently refuses to abide by the rules of safety/cooperation/friendliness in the classroom. This repeated behavior results in the child not being able to manage in a group situation at the present time, and so the expectation is that the child spends a few minutes on their own to "Refresh". When a child is given a "Time to Refresh" they have been given the opportunity to look within themselves by taking a moment to reflect on their behavior, how it affected their classmate and the importance of listening to the teacher's words. When the "Time to Refresh" is completed, and when the child feels ready, the child and the teacher discuss what the child could do differently next time, and/or how that problem could have been solved in a friendlier way. Remembering always to focus on the child's behavior, rather than on the child.

By utilizing both prevention strategies and intervention strategies in the guidance process, children learn appropriate behaviors, self-regulation, and responsibility for self, in a warm, gentle and supportive atmosphere, which is conducive to a healthy, happy and secure experience in early childhood.

## **Confidentiality Policy**

Information about your child, verbal or written, will only be released under the following circumstances:

1. In case of emergency or injury to your child, information may be released to the police authorities or medical staff attending the child.
2. At the request of a legal guardian of the child.
3. To the teachers of Parachute Express Playschool, in order to provide the best possible care for your child, and to deal with your child with greater understanding.
4. In case of suspected abuse, to the appropriate Ministry of Children and Family Services Department, as we are instructed by law to do so.

## **Hours & Days of Operation - Full Day Preschool Program**

Parachute Express Playschool offers the **FULL DAY** preschool program between the hours of **8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.** The **FULL DAY** preschool program is closed on the following dates:

- ❖ Labour Day, Thanksgiving Day, Remembrance Day, Christmas Break (inclusive of December 24<sup>th</sup> to January 2nd), Family Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Victoria Day, Canada Day and B.C. Day

We trust that by giving parents plenty of advance notice, we can alleviate any undue problems that may arise from these closures as stated above. Notice of these closures will also be posted at the school in advance and via newsletters. Regular monthly fees are in effect for all stat and school closures.

## **Hours and Days of Operation - Four Hour Preschool Program**

Parachute Express Playschool offers the **FOUR HOUR** preschool program between the hours of **8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.** The **4 HOUR** preschool program is closed on the following dates:

- ❖ Labour Day, Thanksgiving Day, Remembrance Day, Christmas Break (inclusive of December 24<sup>th</sup> to January 2nd), Family Day, one week closure at Spring Break, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Victoria Day, one week closure the last week of June, Canada Day and B.C. Day

We trust that by giving parents plenty of advance notice, we can alleviate any undue problems that may arise from these closures as stated above. Notice of these closures will also be posted at the school in advance and via newsletters. Regular monthly fees are in effect for all stat and school closures.

# Monthly Fee Schedule - Parachute Express Playschool

Effective September 1st, 2018 to August 31, 2019

Regular Fees			
Under 3 years and Toilet Learning		Under 3 years and Toilet Learning	
4 Hour	2 classes per week	3 classes per week	3 classes per week
Preschool	*child is over 36 months old	*child is over 36 months old	*child is 30-36 months old
8:30 to 12:30	*independent toilet learning skills	*independent in toilet learning skills	*child is in toilet learning stage
	\$240 per month	\$340 per month	\$280 per month
			\$380 per month

## Regular Fees

Full Day	2 classes per week	3 classes per week	4 classes per week	5 classes per week
Preschool	*child is over 36 months old	*child is over 36 months old	*child is over 36 months old	*child is over 36 months old
*over 36 months old	*independent toilet learning skills	*independent toilet learning skills	*independent toilet learning skills	*independent toilet learning skills
	\$390 per month	\$575 per month	\$760 per month	\$925 per month

## Under 3 years and Toilet Learning

Full Day	2 classes per week	3 classes per week	4 classes per week	5 classes per week
Preschool	*child is 30-36 month old	*child is 30-36 month old	*child is 30-36 month old	*child is 30-36 month old
*30-36 month old	*child is in toilet learning stage	*child is in toilet learning stage	*child is in toilet learning stage	*child is in toilet learning stage
	\$430 per month	\$635 per month	\$840 per month	\$995 per month

\*Please note that the toilet learning fee decreases to regular fees the month following the child's 3rd birthday.

\*Please note that any child, regardless of age, who is not independent in the toilet learning stage, will require this extra fee.



## Monthly Fees

**\*\*ACCOUNTS OVERDUE WILL BE SUBJECT TO A FINANCE CHARGE OF 2% PER MONTH\*\***

Our monthly fees are calculated according to 4 weeks in a month. However, when multiplying 4 weeks per month by 12 months of the year, you will note that we only actually charge for 48 weeks of the year. A year being 52 weeks long, discrepancy will be compensated by charging the regular monthly fee for the month of December, although Parachute Express Playschool will be closed for about a 10-12 day period between Christmas and New Year's.

## Tax Receipts

Tax receipts will be issued by email at the beginning of each month. Please keep these receipts safe, as there will be a \$25 charge for the issue of duplicate receipts.

## Year-Round Enrolment Policy - \*\*\* IMPORTANT INFO:

Parachute Express Playschool offers full day and half day preschool classes year-round. In order to "hold/save" your child's classes through the months of July and August for his/her return to Parachute Express in September, your child will be requested to attend a minimum of one half of his/her existing schedule. For example, if your child currently attends 5 full days per week, and wishes to re-enroll for September, he/she will be required to attend 2  $\frac{1}{2}$  days per week throughout July and August. If your child currently attends two full days per week, and wishes to re-enroll for September, he/she will be required to attend a minimum of two half days per week through July and August. In September, your child's regular schedule of attendance will resume.

A Registration Fee of \$35.00 is charged upon the enrollment of your child, in order to save that particular program space exclusively for your family. This fee is non-refundable if you decide not to enroll your child, and is a separate fee which does not affect the monthly fees

**\*\*UPON ENROLLMENT, POST-DATED CHEQUES DATED THE FIRST OF THE STARTING MONTH TO THE 1<sup>ST</sup> OF JUNE, ARE REQUIRED.\*\***

### Additional Costs:

Costs over and above the monthly fees which will occur throughout the school year, include the following, if you wish to participate in these activities: Christmas party fee (which includes the cost of supplying Santa, a magician and a gift for each child - usually \$10 - \$12 per child). Class/Individual Pictures (professionally done in April), Year End Party fee (tba).

\*\*Please contact a teacher on an individual basis if these additional costs are not financially viable for your family.

## Child Care Subsidy

The Province of British Columbia is committed to helping families obtain affordable, accessible, safe, quality child care. Child Care Subsidy is a monthly payment to assist eligible B.C. families with the cost of child care. Monthly subsidy payments, if eligible, vary depending on each family's circumstances. Please contact Child Subsidy Service Centre at 1888-338-6622 or find their online application at

<http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/application.htm> Families who receive subsidy are still responsible for paying the non-refundable registration fee. Please make sure that you meet the required deadline for filing with Child Care Subsidy Service Center, as Parachute Express requires confirmation on all amounts you are eligible to receive, PRIOR to the first of each month that fees are due - the application process can take over a month to be approved. If we do not have this confirmation, you will be required to pay the fees **in full** and receive reimbursement for them when we receive confirmation. Families are also responsible for ensuring that their subsidy forms are kept up to date. Families are responsible for monthly fees even if the subsidy is not approved.

## **Financial Arrangements**

Fees are due at the beginning of each month and are to be submitted in the form of post-dated cheques, dated September 1<sup>st</sup> - June 1<sup>st</sup> and are due upon enrollment. Please make cheques payable to Parachute Express Playschool. Additional cheques will be collected for July and August for your child's enrollment in the summer program.

## **Returned Payment Charge**

If fees are returned NSF, (non-sufficient funds) there is a \$35.00 administration fee to cover bank service charges, as well as a \$5.00 late payment charge for each day the payment is delayed from the time the parent has been notified of the NSF cheque.

## **Late Pick-Up Charge For Full Day Classes**

Please be prompt. Parachute Express Playschool closes at **5:00 p.m.** A late fee of \$25.00 per 15 minutes (or part thereof) will be charged. This fee is directly payable to the teacher on duty, to compensate for that teacher's overtime.

## **Late Pickup Charge for 4 hour Classes**

Please be punctual in picking your child up at the end of his/her class. Late pick-ups will be charged \$10.00 per 15 minutes or part thereof. It is imperative to our teacher/child ratio that your child is picked up promptly at 12:30 pm.

## **Absence Policy**

Monthly fees must be paid regardless of whether your child is present or not, if you wish to reserve your child's place in our program. Parachute Express Playschool will NOT decrease or refund monthly fees when a child is away from school due to a holiday, illness or other absence, as we must still reserve your child's particular days, until he/she returns. Failure to pay monthly fees during your child's absence will automatically forfeit your child's space, which will be filled, in turn, by another child.

Parachute Express feels that monthly fees are similar to "renting" a special place for your child in our Early Learning Program. And despite whether your child used that "rented" space or not, it is still reserved exclusively for your child, and full monthly payments must be made. (Similarly, if you are renting an apartment, rent must be paid in full each month, regardless if you've been out of town for a week.)

Unfortunately, Parachute Express Playschool is not able to "bank" days which your child does NOT attend (that is, if your child misses two classes, we will not give you an additional two classes at a later date free of charge, to make up for the missed classes).

## Switching Days

On occasion, if you wish to switch one of your child's regularly scheduled days for a different day, the switch must take place within the same week, and only if our Licensing Regulations permit. Please inform your child's teacher in advance as per your request.

## Notice of Withdrawal

Notice of withdrawal of your child must be given on the **first day** of a month, as our fee schedule runs from the beginning of one month to the next. **Notice of withdrawal must be submitted in writing.** Fees for the month of notice must be paid regardless of whether your child will be attending Parachute Express Playschool during that time. Payments for subsequent months will be returned following this time period.

Notice of withdrawal must be given on the **first day** of the month, Refunds will NOT be given for part of a month. For example, if a parent gives notice on October 24<sup>th</sup>, the one month's notice actually begins on the first day of the following month - November 1<sup>st</sup>, and full fees must be paid for all of October and November.

## Notice of Termination

It is our desire to never dismiss a child from our early learning center. All efforts will be taken to avoid this measure: we strive to build a committed partnership between educators and families, and, when appropriate, extra community support. In the unfortunate event where it becomes apparent that Parachute Express is unable to meet the specific needs of a child and their family, Parachute Express Playschool reserves the right to forfeit the one month period of notice in the event of a child putting other children in jeopardy, or in the event that a child is prohibiting proper supervision of our group. In such a case, immediate termination may be deemed necessary and any unused portion of paid fees will then be prorated and refunded.

## Immediate Pickup of Child

Parachute Express Playschool reserves the right to call a parent for immediate pick up of their child when the child's behavior poses a risk to the child, to his/her peers or to the teachers. These behaviors may include, but are not limited to the following examples:

- punching, biting, kicking peers or teachers
- repeated and purposeful destruction of preschool property
- continuous screaming, crying, yelling, swearing preventing the early learning program from being implemented
- other behaviors that may require one on one supervision for an extended period of time

As Educators in a group setting with a 1:8 ratio, we must ensure that our attention and supervisory skills are readily available for ALL 25 children in our early learning classroom. Our goal at Parachute Express Playschool is to be available and supportive to ALL of our children's needs, however, if one child is requiring an inordinate amount of teacher supervision on a repeated basis, the child may be asked to be picked up, in order to restore the appropriate balance of teacher to child ratio.

Both verbal and written documentation as to the events leading up to the request for pick up will be provided. As well, a parent/teacher conference may be requested to explore resources that may be

required necessary for the child's optimal growth and learning experience in a preschool setting. If the behavior continues on a consistent basis and to the degree that one child's behaviors are jeopardizing the other children's rights to effective supervision, the child may be asked to withdraw from our early learning environment, as it becomes a safety concern for our entire group. Please see the Notice of Termination policy above.

## **Parking Lot Safety**

Please park in the designated parking lot area in front of the portable buildings. Motorized vehicles are prohibited from parking in the gravel area in front of and beside our school so that we can maintain a safe pedestrian walkway for our families.

Should you ever arrive at Parachute Express and find the chain across the entrance to the parking lot, it means that our parking lot is closed due to icy conditions. In this circumstance, follow these directions to find your way to us:

\*Park alongside the school on Canora Road (the road that runs in front of our school)

\*Park as close to the end of our playground as possible (where the large roofed area houses our sandboxes) to reduce walking

\*Access the community gate which is located just behind our sandboxes (you will see a small grassy area between the end of our fencing and the building next door - the gate is there)

\*Follow your way to the school entrance normally used for drop off

## **Emergency Drill Procedure**

Emergency drills are performed on a monthly basis with the children. These drills will be documented and recorded. Children will be educated as to safety during an emergency and the expectations during an emergency drill. Here is the procedure that we follow:

When the emergency whistle sounds, children immediately STOP what they are doing, and WALK to a teacher. One teacher retrieves the Daily Attendance form, leads the children in a line to the designated safe spot, and will perform a head count. Meanwhile, the head teacher checks the bathrooms and other areas in the classroom (where frightened children may hide), retrieves the First Aid Kit and the Emergency Records (and calls 911 in the event of a real emergency). The head teacher then meets the children in the designated safe spot, performs a head count, and individually calls out each child's name. Children respond to their name with a loud, "HERE!"

In the event that Parachute Express Playschool is not safe to house children in an emergency situation, all children will be evacuated to our alternate emergency location within the neighbourhood. The specific address of this alternate location is posted at both school exits for your information. It is important that you keep this address in an accessible place in your home. The emergency address may change from year to year, so please revise accordingly.

PLEASE REMEMBER...in the event of an emergency, it is crucial that your child is signed in upon your arrival. Also, it is essential that your child has a pair of indoor shoes or slippers on his/her feet everyday!! Emergencies and emergency drills are spontaneous and regardless of weather!!!

## **Emergency Preparedness at Playschool**

As we are all aware, the incidence of an earthquake on the Saanich Peninsula is a REAL possibility. No matter where we are, we need to be adequately prepared, especially so if your child happens to be attending Parachute Express Playschool at the time. Our emergency preparedness plan involves parent participation, and we sincerely thank you in advance for your help.

We are kindly asking your co-operation and participation in creating a **COMFORT KIT** for your individual child. The comfort kit is designed to provide additional food as well as items that will help to make your child's stay at preschool more comfortable, in the event that an emergency should occur. The comfort kit will be used to augment the supplies that we have always have on hand - 3 days supply of packaged water and dehydrated food portions for all educators and children. In addition, each kit should have a personalised message to the child from the parent, to give the child some reassurance in what could potentially be a distressing situation.

Your child's comfort kit should be contained in a large size (27 cm X 28 cm) ziploc bag, clearly labelled with your child's name, and with the following items, please:

- ❖ 6 non-perishable food items, such as granola bars, sesame snaps, snack pack cereal boxes, crackers, cookies, power bars, etc.
- ❖ A personal reassuring note from you, along with a family or favourite picture.
- ❖ A small toy or game, such as a deck of cards, crayons and notebook, minigame, or a small plush animal.
- ❖ A small package of Kleenex
- ❖ A small package of Wet Wipes/towelettes
- ❖ 6 band aids for minor scrapes or cuts, primarily for comfort purposes.
- ❖ 2 large orange garbage bags (emergency rain jacket and ground sheet).
- ❖ 1 plastic grocery bag for emergency rain hat.
- ❖ One drinking box (250 ml size).
- ❖ Any medication your child needs on a daily basis. Please send a 3 days' supply if practical, along with clear instruction for use and any special storage requirements.

***\*\*PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL ITEMS MUST FIT IN THE ONE ZIPLOC BAG.***

The comfort kit which you have prepared will be returned to you when your child leaves Parachute Express Playschool, and can be passed on to their next school.

For those children returning for an additional year at Parachute Express, comfort kits will be sent home each September to have the food/drink items refreshed. Please return the kit as soon as you have done so.

**If you have any questions, concerns or comments please share them with your child's teacher(s), and again, thank you for your participation.**

## Registration Information

Your child's Registration Package for enrollment at Parachute Express Playschool must be completed in full within 7 days of registering, and this includes the following items:

- ❖ Registration Form completed with 3 photos of your child
- ❖ Signed consent that the Family Handbook has been read in full
- ❖ Getting to Know Your Child Inquiry Form completed
- ❖ Field Trip and Photograph Permission Form signed and dated
- ❖ Immunization Schedule to be completed with the dates of immunizations
- ❖ 3 Emergency Consent Cards completed - Please note that each child registered requires all three cards to be filled - front and back please.
- ❖ Emergency Preparedness Note and Comfort Kit completed
- ❖ \$35.00 Non-refundable registration fee paid in full
- ❖ Payment Information as outlined in our policies

Please ensure that all registration information is updated and revised when changes occur. Parachute Express Playschool will not be held responsible for false or deleted information.

Your child's registration information must be completed in full (as above) and submitted to Parachute Express within seven (7) days of registering your child. If the Registration Information is not complete or not received on time as noted above, the starting date for your child may be postponed.

## What Does My Child Need to Start School?

Upon securing your child's classes at Parachute Express Playschool with a \$35.00 Non-Refundable Registration Fee and completing the Registration Package in full, your child will also require the following items to begin their preschool experience:

- ❖ Shoes or slippers (for inside wear only, and labelled)
- ❖ A complete set of extra clothes (to stay at school)
- ❖ Splash pants and rubber boots to be worn on mucky days
- ❖ A blanket, fitted crib sheet and a stuffed toy, all labelled and contained inside
- ❖ A fabric bag to store rest time items (for the full day preschool program)
- ❖ Lunch and a drink each day that your child attends
- ❖ Pull-ups and wipes if needed
- ❖ Sharing Snack for each class

## Screen Time Policy

Children enrolled at Parachute Express Playschool will not be offered any screen time (TV, computer, electronic games) during their attendance in our program. As Educators, we feel that nothing can replace the value and importance of social play, peer relationships, and growing and developing in our carefully planned, non-electronic loving and learning environment.

## Active Play Policy

At Parachute Express Playschool, we promote our children's health and wellness by ensuring that children enrolled in our Early Education Care and Learning environment receive **more** than the recommended standard of 60 minutes of active play each day, as mandated by the Child Care Licensing Regulations. Our program is thoughtfully planned to engage our children in facilitated (directed by teachers) and un-facilitated (child chosen, self directed, self led) activities each and every day, indoors and out, to promote physical literacy.

Physical literacy is the equivalent of learning to read or write for your body. Learning basic movements at an early age sets the foundation for competency and confidence throughout a person's life by increasing the knowledge and understanding of the value and responsibility for engagement in physical activities. Physically literate persons are able to make healthy active choices that are both beneficial to and respectful of their whole self, others and their environment. Our focus with our preschool friends is to expose them to fundamental movements through a wide variety of movements, activities, intensity levels and various games. Fundamental movement skills are gross motor or big muscle skills that involve different body parts, such as feet, legs, trunk, head, arms and hands. In our classroom, we promote balance skills (movements where the body remains in place, but moves around its horizontal and vertical axes); coordination skills, which involves gross motor manipulation of objects, like catching, throwing, kicking; and Loco motor skills like running, jumping, hopping, galloping, skipping and leaping.

At Parachute Express Playschool, our daily schedule includes a minimum of 90 minutes of outdoor play each and everyday. In addition to outdoor play, we offer yoga classes two to three times per week, and music and movement activities twice per day during circle times. Throughout the day, our children are moving, running, jumping, playing with balls, chasing bubbles, dancing and more, and as they do so they are encouraging the optimal development of their large muscles. Our Parachute Pals are active, strong and fit!

## Sun Protection Policy

As the weather warms, please be aware of the Sun Protection Policy at Parachute Express. We require that parents put sunscreen on their child **prior** to arriving at school in the morning, and that a hat is worn for further protection. The Educators at Parachute Express will re-apply your child's individual sunscreen 20-30 minutes prior to using the playground in the afternoon (for the children who attend the full day program). Please provide a labeled, current sunscreen for your child of 30 spf or greater. Sunscreen will not be shared amongst the children to prevent any chances of skin irritation.

## Your Child's Arrival and Departure

Upon arrival at Parachute Express Playschool, please have your child take off his/her coat and outdoor shoes - there is a hook in your child's cubby and shoe racks on which to house his/her footwear. Please encourage your child to put on his/her slippers or inside shoes independently.

**\*\* Please allow your child to do as much as possible by him/herself to promote self-confidence, independence and self-esteem. Self help skills are such important and empowering tools at this stage in your child's development.\*\***

**\*Please ensure that your child has been signed in on the Daily Attendance Form, and is likewise signed out upon your child's departure at the end of the day.**

**If your child will not be attending on a particular day, please call us to let us know. We appreciate this courtesy very much.**

Please inform a teacher, as well, if your child is to arrive or depart at different time than regularly scheduled. If you are having difficulties meeting your scheduled pickup and drop off times, we will try to help you make other arrangements. When leaving school, please encourage your child to tidy up their play area. Thank you!

## Authorization to Pick Up your Child

Under no circumstances will a child be released to a person not authorized by a parent to pick up the child. All persons authorized to pick up your child must be included on the space marked accordingly on the Registration Form. However, if on a particular occasion, a person with whom we are not familiar will be picking up your child, please give us written authorization for this type of change. You will be required to fill out a permission form and we are authorized to only accept written consent by a parent to release their child to a person not listed on the "Authorized Pick Up" section of the child's registration form.

**Phone calls, emails or verbal consent will not be accepted and the child will remain in the care of our licensed child care facility, until written permission is received.**

As well, on an occasion such as this, the teachers of Parachute Express Playschool require a physical description of the person allowed to pick up your child, and the individual will be required to show proof through photo identification.

If you are aware of a potential problem with a person not authorized to pick up your child, but will try to do so (as in a custody dispute), **please pass on this pertinent information** to a teacher and ensure to complete that section accordingly on your registration form. Please note, that we will require copies of court records to limit access by a parent.



## Release of a child from Parachute Express Playschool

Upon the event that a child is left at Parachute Express after 5:00 p.m., the teacher in charge will proceed as follows:

- ❖ At 5:05 p.m., the teacher will call the parent/guardian. If at this time the parent/guardian is unavailable, the teacher will proceed to call the list of "Authorized Pick Up" persons, according to the child's registration form, to arrange immediate pick-up of the child.
- ❖ If an authorized person is unavailable, and the parent/guardian has **not** been in phone contact with the Playschool, the teacher will contact the Ministry for Child and Family Development, after one hour of time has elapsed (at 6:00 p.m.).
- ❖ If the parent/guardian **has** contacted the Playschool before 6:00 p.m. and has arranged to pick up the child him/herself, or has arranged for an alternate person on the "Authorized Pick Up" sheet to pick up the child, the teacher will wait at the Playschool for their arrival.
- ❖ Please see the "Late Pick-up Charge" policy in the Parent Handbook for additional fees, which is applicable and payable by the parent/guardian.

## Alleged Impaired Authorized Pick Up

It is the teacher's legal responsibility to the extent that this is possible, **not** to release a child to an authorized person who is unable to adequately care for a child. If a teacher believes that a child will be at risk, the teacher in charge will:

- ❖ Call a relative or friend of the authorized person to pick up the person and child.
- ❖ And/or contact the Ministry for Child and Family Development.
- ❖ If the person in question is driving a vehicle, and the teacher suspects drugs or alcohol has been consumed, the teacher will explain that driving under the influence is against the law, and that the teachers of Parachute Express Playschool Ltd. are obligated to ensure the safety and well-being of the child. If the presumed impaired person chooses to drive, the teacher will immediately notify the police. The teacher will also call the Ministry for Children and Families for the protection of the child.

## How We Help with Separation Anxiety at Parachute Express

At Parachute Express Playschool, we understand how difficult transition times can be in a child's life. Entering into a new environment, like preschool, with unfamiliar adults and children, with unfamiliar routines and expectations, and perhaps being away from Mom and Dad for the first time, is certainly a tricky transition for some preschool aged children, and with valid reason.

At Parachute Express, when separation anxiety occurs, it can be in the form of tears, withdrawal or anger at being away from the "comfort zone and unconditional love" of a parent or guardian. Sometimes children will kick and flail, try to run to the door to get outside, scream, shout and hit out.....all of these are reactions that we have seen before, and will see again throughout our years of being in Early Childhood Education. These behaviors are not foreign to us in the least, and we do not frown upon their expression, but rather seek ways to enable the child to gain confidence and cope in a more appropriate manner. Parents often feel embarrassed at how their child is coping with separation, but please know that your child's behaviors are not unique.....we have seen all sorts of different expressions of separation anxiety!!!! Surprisingly, separation anxiety does not always occur on the first day. Sometimes it is a delayed reaction, and can occur several weeks later.....and sometimes children will re-visit separation anxiety during other stressful times in their lives, even when they are familiar and settled into an environment.

Over the years we have found several strategies to support parents and children through this difficult time of development.

**As a parent, you can help us help your child by considering the following guidelines when dealing with separation anxiety:**

- A child needs to feel that school is a positive place to be. Have a calm and positive attitude when talking about preschool. Encourage your child by talking about the happy things that will happen that day at preschool. Reinforce that you will always come back to pick him/her up.
- Establish a good-bye ritual. We use a waving window at our school which allows the child to blow those extra kisses or make a silly face to start the day off on the right foot. Your good-bye ritual should be about 5 minutes long.....long good-byes just prolong the inevitable (that Mom or Dad is leaving) and can, in fact, create a heightened sense of worry and anxiety in the child.
- Ensure that you do say "good-bye" so that your child will not feel anxious that Mommy or Daddy might just sneak off without warning.
- Qualify your child's feelings.....do not negate how they are feeling by saying "You're too big to cry" or "Don't be so silly!". Make sure that he/she knows the importance of expressing those feelings. Respond instead by "I know you are feeling sad, but you are going to have such a fun day! I will miss you too!"
- Understand that sometimes the stress of a new situation, like adjusting to preschool, might create a bit of anxiety in your child's sleep pattern.....they may begin to feel anxious on the weekend or in the evening, prior to returning to school. This is very natural as children are sensitive little souls, and this too shall pass!
- Avoid repeated goodbyes.....once you say "I'm leaving now" and go through the established goodbye ritual, then go. Stalling confuses the child and can create even more fear and anxiety.

Not following through on the goodbye begins to create an even bigger concern.....the child learns that you don't really mean it, and if he/she fusses enough, that their negative behavior will create the desired result.....and voila, Mommy or Daddy does stay longer!

- If you are feeling very anxious yourself after dropping your child off at preschool, please feel free to phone us to get an update on how your child is feeling.

## **2. As teachers, we offer help and support in the following ways:**

- We will always respectfully get the parents' permission before we scoop your child up.....but know that sometimes it is a necessary part of separating if a child is clinging to a parent.
- We will cuddle, read stories, sing songs, give a back rub and speak in a quiet, positive fashion to soothe your child.
- We will hold your child in a gentle manner if he/she is having a tantrum and we are concerned about your child's safety or the safety of those around him.
- We will re-direct your child to all sorts of enticing play features in our classroom and encourage social play with others.
- We will call you in an appropriate length of time if your child is still very upset.....we will request additional ideas from you to help us help him/her.
- We will respect that oftentimes when upset, a child may need space and time to be on their own.....not all children like to be cuddled. We purposefully create cosy, warm and inviting spaces within our classroom for a child to feel comfy and secure.
- We understand that overcoming separation is an ongoing process.....and is sometimes a slow process.....little by little, bit by bit we will see your child successfully overcome their anxiety. Reinforce those positive moments!!!
- Keep your child coming to school even when separation anxiety is at it's worst.....perhaps shorten the length of your child's day, but keep the school routine consistent.....having extra days off between regular classes will only make the return to school even harder.
- Sometimes we understand that no amount of cuddling, talking, re-directing, reading, playing, soothing, etc. etc. is helping, and at that point we respect that a child may need to work their feelings out on their own, and just have time to themselves to feel better. This is not a bad thing!!!! Children develop all sorts of wonderful coping skills and strategies by relying on themselves to work through an issue, and we certainly foster self-reliance at school. After all, the external world can only do so much for a person, it is the intrinsic strengths and skills that carry us through from the preschool years to adulthood!
- And sometimes we see that the attention that we are giving a child is working against us!!!.....the child decides to engage in the sad or mad behavior even longer because we are reinforcing it with our attention. In this situation, we take a step back, and merely observe and supervise, without giving undue attention to behaviors that may be escalating. When this is the case, the removal of

our attention quickly illustrates to the child that carrying on with a negative behavior is not giving him/her the desired effect, and consequently, he/she notes that less attention is being given. We often say to the child in a situation such as this "When you are ready to put your tears away, I would love to play a game with you and some of your friends. Let me know when you're done."

And just know, that you are not alone in this, separation anxiety happens to most parents, and although at the time it seems (and truly feels!) like the end of the world, this part of childhood will **not** last forever, and next week you can look forward to a neat new part of growing up that will take its' place!

## **Nutrition Policy**

The Sharing Basket is our method of providing snack for the children and it is conveniently located by the water cooler for morning arrivals. Parents are requested to participate each day that their child attends by depositing into the basket one of the child-sized portions from the following recommended list of acceptable snack ideas:

- ❖ A fresh fruit (apple, orange, banana etc.), crackers, cookies (low sugar please! e.g. Arrowroot, Digestive), raisins, veggies, a litre of juice, cheese, rice cakes, seaweed, low sugar cereal etc.

If your child attends for a full day, he/she will be participating in the shared morning and will curb his/her appetite at the afternoon snack time with foods leftover from his/her lunch. At snack time, lunch time and throughout the day, we offer cold filtered water to each child as a beverage.

Prior to snack time, the contents of the "Sharing Basket" will be prepared and distributed onto individual plates for every child. Special attention will be paid to exclude foods which are known allergens to individual children. Please note that your child may not necessarily consume the entire snack that you put into the "Sharing Basket" as snack time is a shared community experience. All of the food items will be shared amongst the children, and so please ensure that the snack you bring is able to be easily divided amongst many children (for example, pudding or yogurt is too tricky to share amongst a group of 25!

We thank you in advance for your participation in our snack routine which helps us to maintain a healthful Early Childhood Education environment.

Children are well supervised by the teachers during snack times and lunch times, and will be encouraged, but never forced to consume food.

For your information, a list of snack foods offered to the our children each day will be readily available posted by the water cooler.

## **Allergy Information**

It is the policy of Parachute Express Playschool to strive to be a "nut-free" environment for our preschool children. Parents will notice prominently displayed signs within the school reinforcing this policy. Snack and lunch foods which have a nut item in the main ingredient list will be kindly asked to be eaten at home, rather than at school, and a nut-free substitute food will be offered to the child.

Allergy lists are posted in the food prep area to alert educators to each child's particular needs.

## Your Child's Health and Wellness

The health and wellness of the children and Educators at Parachute Express Playschool is of the utmost importance to our cosy little preschool community. To ensure that your child is able to enjoy and participate all of our classroom experiences please be familiar with the following health and wellness policies.

Please notify Parachute Express by phone or email if your child is ill and will not be attending school. It is a requirement that a parent/guardian inform our school within 24 hours of the diagnosis of a serious illness and/or communicable disease. As well, if the child has been exposed to a serious illness or communicable disease in any other member of the home, please kindly share that information with us. In this way, other families can be informed about the potential spread of an illness or disease. Please note that all personal family information will be kept confidential and the only information shared is the name of the disease and/or illness, and not from where or whom it came from.

Parachute Express will notify parents by phone if their child becomes ill or injured while at school. If a parent or emergency contact can not be reached and immediate medical attention is required, the school will call an ambulance and/or take the child to the nearest emergency service, the Saanich Peninsula Hospital. The child will be accompanied by an Educator and the child's Emergency Consent Card.

The following resources will be used in determining when an ill child will be excluded from preschool and accordingly when he/she can be re-admitted to our early learning setting:

1. VIHA Preventing Illness in Child Care Settings

<https://www.health.gov.bc.ca/library/publications/year/2003/com018.pdf>

2. Quick Guide to Common Childhood Diseases

<http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/library/publications/year/2001/PHN144.pdf>

3. Sneezes and Diseases

<http://www.vch.ca/Documents/sneezes-and-diseases.pdf>

**Alternate care must be arranged by parents when their child exhibits symptoms such as:**

- Fever over 38.3° C (101°F).
- Infected eyes or skin.
- Unexplained diarrhea or loose stool which may or may not be combined with nausea, vomiting or abdominal cramps.
- An acute cold with fever, runny nose and eyes, a "croupy" cough or congested to the point that he/she has difficulty breathing.
- Sore throat
- Undiagnosed rashes
- Unexplained pain
- Headache, stiff neck
- Severe itching

**\*\* All of the above symptoms require a minimum of 24 hr exclusion or until the child is clear of symptoms.\*\***

With any type of contagious or communicable disease such as flu, measles, mumps, hand/foot and mouth, or chicken pox, the child must stay at home until no longer infectious, as per VIHA guidelines. In the case of certain illnesses, Parachute Express Playschool may require a doctor's note of approval before the child can return to school.

Please note that Parachute Express will not administer non-prescription medication such as Tylenol, Advil, cold and cough medications, Gravol etc. If your child requires these types of non-prescription medication in order to participate in our preschool activities, your child is **not well enough** to be at school and alternative care needs to be arranged by the parent.

A child will be excluded from our program if the illness prevents the child from participating in our preschool activities, or if the illness results in greater need for care than the teachers can provide without compromising the needs of the other children. The final decision, as to whether an ill child can remain at school, ultimately belongs to the teachers, as we must take into consideration what is best for all of the children in our classroom. An ill child will be well supervised in a quiet and comfortable area while awaiting pickup.

**Please note how important it is to have an alternate or emergency person who can take care of your child in the event of an illness.**

## **Minor Incidents**

Parents will be notified by phone as soon as possible in the case of their child being involved in a minor incident at Playschool. Any incident that requires first aid will be reported to the parent verbally and documented in writing.

We genuinely appreciate your help and understanding in this matter as it is our responsibility to consider not only the health and wellness of the individual child, but the health of the other children in the classroom, as well as the health of our teachers.

## **When Your Child Requires Medication**

If you wish the teachers of Parachute Express Playschool to administer prescription medication to your child, the "Permission to Administer Medication Form" must be completed and signed by the parent, and an accurate measuring tool must be supplied.

Parachute Express will not administer a non-prescription drug (i.e. aspirin, cough medicine, decongestants etc.) unless it is accompanied by a note from your physician.

All medication must be in the original dispensing bottle. We will not administer prescription drugs if they are out of date. Medications will be kept in one of our locked boxes, either in the refrigerator or on a teacher accessible shelf. Medication should NEVER be left in a child's lunch kit, backpack or cubby, for obvious safety reasons. Parachute Express Playschool will maintain an accurate record of administration.

## **Emergency Medication**

Emergency medication, in the form of, but not limited to, ventilators, bronchodilators and epi-pens will be stored unlocked and within immediate and accessible reach of adults at Parachute Express Playschool.

These emergency medications will be stored away from the reach of a child at all times whether at school or on a field trip. Emergency medication of any kind must NEVER be left unattended by a parent in a child's lunch kit or backpack. A "Permission to Administer Medication" form must be signed and completed by the parent and kept on file for emergency purposes.

**PERMISSION TO ADMINISTER MEDICATIONS**

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby give my permission to \_\_\_\_\_

to administer \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of medication Prescription Number

to my child \_\_\_\_\_.

According to the Doctors orders and instructions as noted on the prescription bottle or vial (for prescription drugs only):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent

**Medication Record**

Name of child: \_\_\_\_\_ Physician: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Medication: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Commenced: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Stopped: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE	TIME	DOSAGE	COMMENTS	STAFF SIGNATURE

\*Note: use one form for each medication dispensed. Completed form to be filed in child's file.

## What to Wear to School

At Parachute Express, we strive to increase your child's sense of independence and self-confidence. In accordance, we would appreciate your child wearing child-friendly clothing and footwear that he/she can manipulate with minimal assistance. **Teachers love Velcro or slip on shoes/slippers, especially considering the 25 pairs of little feet that we have each class. We do request that your preschool child save their lace up shoes and flip flops for wear at home.**

All children are required to bring a pair of slippers or clean inside shoes to wear at the centre. A full change of clothing — including socks and underwear — is also required. Please label all clothing, slippers and rest time blankets with your child's first and last names. Thank you.

Playing and learning can sometimes be messy. Please dress your child in play-friendly clothing. As we plan to go outside every day, please ensure that your child's clothing and shoes are appropriate for the outside weather. Think layers! Send hats during sunny, hot weather; raincoats, muddy buddy pants, and boots during wet weather; and warm coats, mittens and toques during chilly weather.

In outfitting your child, keep in mind the changeable weather, your child's comfort, and the types of activities he/she will be involved in throughout the day (painting, gluing, outdoor play etc.) Belts and pants with tricky fasteners prove to be a huge hindrance to a preschooler during those immediate bathroom trips!

## Birthday Celebrations

At Parachute Express Playschool, your child is a unique little soul, and accordingly, we want to make your child's birthday a very special event. We would like your child to celebrate his/her birthday with his/her friends, and a party atmosphere will be created for this event. Party hats and a birthday card will be provided by Parachute Express Playschool. We ask that parents provide a birthday cake or cupcakes for their child's birthday to share with the rest of the children (approximately 25). Thanks in advance for your co-operation!

## Toys From Home

The teachers of Parachute Express encourage all toys to be kept at home with your child to prevent undue problems arising. Toys may get lost, broken or cause disputes between friends. We have an abundance of toys at school to share with all the children.

If a child does bring a toy from home, he/she will be asked to put that toy in their cubby until pick up time.

Items such as books or music cd's that can be shared with all children are most welcome.

## Helpful Hints

1. Please label all of your children's belongings.
2. Please keep an extra full set of clothes at school.
3. Please keep a pair of slippers or "inside only" shoes at school.
4. Please sign your child in and out on the Daily Attendance Sheet upon your arrival and departure.
5. Please check your email for upcoming events and information in our monthly newsletters.
6. Please encourage your child's self-help skills by allowing him/her to dress and undress themselves.
7. Please encourage your child to tidy up their play area upon leaving the school.
8. Please discourage your child from bringing toys, candy or gum from home.
9. Please remember to bring a birthday cake or cupcakes for your child's birthday, to share with his/her friends.
10. Please empty your child's art cubby regularly.



# Family Handbook Consent Form

This is an agreement between Parachute Express Playschool Ltd and the undersigned parents/guardians for the duration of your child's enrollment with our Early Learning Center. By signing below, you have read and agree to comply with the Parachute Express Playschool Ltd. Family Handbook. Please sign and return this sheet with the completed Registration Package within 7 days of your child's enrollment acceptance at Parachute Express Playschool.

- 1) I have read Parachute Express Playschool's Family Handbook and agree to follow its policies and procedures.
- 2) I will not send my child to school if there is any question of illness. If my child contracts a communicable disease, I will notify the teacher immediately. I will also advise the teacher of any allergies or dietary concerns.
- 3) I am aware that if my child is unable to attend pre-school due to illness or holidays, that I am still responsible for full payment of fees.
- 4) I agree to give one month's notice in writing prior to / or on the first day of the month, for the next full month, in case of withdrawal of my child from Parachute Express, as outlined in the Family Handbook.
- 5) I agree to pay my child's fees on the first of every month with post-dated cheques.
- 6) I will notify the teacher of any unusual circumstances at home which may affect my child's behavior at preschool.
- 7) I agree to provide a nutritious snack for my child in the Sharing Basket at preschool each day.
- 8) I understand that my child will not be dismissed to ANYONE other than persons who are recorded on my child's registration form.
- 9) I agree to keep the preschool informed of current changes in address, phone number, or any other emergency information.
- 10) I understand that my child may have to be withdrawn from Parachute Express if the safety of my child and the other children is in jeopardy. No notice is required from the centre for withdrawal and the remainder of the tuition fees will be refunded.

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

---

Signature of Parent or Guardian

---

Printed Name of Parent or Guardian

