

Ranchlands
Children Come First Association

Out Of School Care Parent Handbook
Oct. 2014

Ranchlands Children Come First Association

7713 Ranchview Drive NW

Calgary, AB T3G 2B3

(403) 241-3052

Juli McManus, Director

Laura-Lee Kowal, Director

Dear Parents:

Welcome to Ranchlands Children Come First Association. Our Staff is here as a support group for you and your family. We are here to assist you at all times. Thank you for taking the time to read this handbook. We hope that you find it a useful reference.

Sincerely,

Juli McManus, Director

Laura-Lee Kowal, Director

Hours of Operation:

Regular School Days/ Monday to Friday

7:00am – 9:00am

11:30am – 1:00pm

3:30pm – 6:00pm

Summer/ Christmas/ Easter/ Professional Days/ Early Dismissals

Monday – Friday

7:00am - 6:00pm

* Please check the bulletin board for closure dates.

Ranchlands Children Come First Association offers a variety of programs such as a Preschool and Out of School Care Program at the Ranchlands location and Out of School Care Programs at:

Banff Trail School

Cambrian Heights School

Buchanan School

Highwood, Hawkwood School

Preschool Program Ages 3-5

Age 3 Tuesday & Thursday 9:00-11:30 am

Age 4 / 5 Monday & Wednesday 9:00-11:30am

Mixed Class Friday 9:00-11:30am

Kindergarten Care School Days 7:00am-12:45pm, 3:00pm-6:00pm

Non-School Days 7:00am – 6:00pm

What is Ranchlands Children Come First? (Kids Come First)

We are a non-profit program with a board of directors who oversee and make decisions in the program regarding philosophy, programs, staffing, administration, and guidance.

Mission Statement

Children Come First is driven by its mission to facilitate a program of excellence and promoting diversity, creativity and a positive social environment.

Philosophy

To provide a supplement to the home in terms of a loving, secure and stimulating environment where children can express themselves through creative activities.

To provide the children with an environment that allows for freedom of choice and to accept responsibility for those choices.

To provide an environment in which children can learn to engage in positive social interactions with each other and the staff.

To provide an environment in which parents and staff both feel comfortable and are able to work together in the children's best interest.

Child Guidance Policy

- Staff will not permit, practice or inflict any form of physical punishment, verbal abuse, emotional abuse, or deny the children any physical necessities.
- Staff will be fair, firm and caring towards each child.
- Staff will encourage the children to problem solve and deal with their own disputes.
- Staff will redirect and discuss conflict with the children and encourage them to think about the feelings and needs of others.
- Staff will talk to children privately about the behaviour.

Example 1)

Two children are fighting over a castle. Staff member walks over and asks, “What is the trouble?” They reply, “We want the castle.” Staff member says, “Well, this is a big castle, how could we share it?” Children decide one will use the front the other the back and they return to playing...

Example 2)

If a child has hit another child the staff will encourage the injured child to voice their feelings such as, “When you hit me it hurts, please do not do that again.”

Steps to Child Guidance

- Discussion of the incident at the child’s level in a quiet area of the room, not around other children
- Re-direct the child to another activity if they are having difficulties. Guide the child to another area, sit with them and be involved.
- Cool Down Time: A child will be asked to sit out from the activity if the problem persists. The child will sit on a chair away from the activity and other children so that the child will not provoke others or be provoked. The child will not face the corner or walls. Staff will speak to the child at their level.
- Cool down is defined as a method of regaining control. When control is regained positive reinforcement of the child’s acceptable behaviour will continue
- Loss of privileges: If the problem still exists, we may ask the child to leave that area and they will lose the privilege to play at that activity
- Parent Contact: We will inform parents if the problem still occurs and ask for input and suggestions. We will inform them verbally or by incident report.
- Staff will provide opportunities for the children to make amends rather than demand a superficial apology.
- Staff will offer genuine opportunities for a child to restore relationships after an incident of hurt or harm. While children may not be immediately ready to take these opportunities, they should be suggested nonetheless. Ultimately the goals of this strategy are to help the children learn that making amends requires time and good will, rather than revenge.

Any discipline used will be reasonable under the circumstance.

Use of physical restraint, confinement or isolation is not allowed.

Authority

This is a non profit program which is licensed by the Province of Alberta, operating out of the Ranchlands Community Centre and Calgary Board of Education schools.

Rights and Responsibilities

Parents Code of Conduct:

A code of conduct has been established to inform parents of guidelines/operations within the program

Parents are required to:

- Complete the necessary documents at registration time and inform us of all medical concerns or allergies.
- Sign their children IN and OUT daily.

Parents are encouraged to:

- Introduce themselves to all staff at Children Come First
- Give feedback to the program
- Volunteer in the program
- Be a significant part of their Childs school age program
- Share their culture

All families will be treated kindly and fairly by all Children Come First Staff. We expect that in return parents will treat the staff the same.

Children Come First has a NO TOLERANCE POLICY we will not allow any form of abuse or bullying etc.

Parents cannot address or discipline other children at the program. If you have a concern or complaint regarding someone else`s child, please feel free to approach a staff member to discuss the matter.

Staff

Staff is selected on the basis of qualifications and experience. All staff are required to maintain valid first aid and current police checks. Each staff member is required to complete an online course offered by the government of Alberta that provides basic child development information.

The warm, loving, relaxed atmosphere enables children to participate in the daily program, developing their ability to make decisions, be independent, responsible, and to develop respect for themselves as well as others.

Our program is designed to provide a variety of choices including individual play, music, and dramatic play, a variety of games, books, building materials and other activities are available. Our program varies and is flexible to meet the needs of the child. Children are discouraged from bringing toys from home as they could get lost / broken.

Curriculum

- Language Arts
- Home Work
- Teamwork
- Performing Arts
- Creative Arts
- Science and Tech

- **Language Arts**

We have many materials available to provide the children with age appropriate language arts curriculum. Non school days, and during breaks we offer a program called D.E.A.R. (Drop Everything And Read) we encourage the older children to help or read to the younger ones. This has been a wonderful component of our program for many years.

- **Homework**

Children are provided with materials and space to do their homework. Staff can offer assistance with their homework. At Bilingual locations we try and place staff that are bilingual in order to be able to support and assist the children with their school work.

- **Performing Arts**

We are able to incorporate performing arts as a component in our program through our kids clubs. The children decide what clubs interest them, and then we help them within the club, whether it is putting on a play or a dance for each other. Parents are always welcome to come and view children's efforts.

- **Teamwork**

We really encourage positive team work with parents, staff, children and the community. Children are always working as a team in regards to clubs, games and activities. We encourage children to help one another, share and cooperate.

- **Creative Arts**

Arts and Crafts are planned with the children's input. When planning we consider the time of year, upcoming holidays, celebrations and multicultural options. Children are

given a choice on participation in activities. After an activity, we ask for feedback from staff, children and parents and will comment on our planning guide on the success of the project.

- **Science and Tech**

Science and tech projects are planned with children's direct input. We implement science into our daily planning as well as through the kids clubs. Children have the choice within regards to participation. After an activity we evaluate and ask for feedback from kids, parents and staff.

Communication

Newsletters are provided to families. The information in the newsletter includes things such as; closure dates, PD dates, school breaks, community events, parent meetings etc... It is important that parents ensure they receive a copy and read it thoroughly.

Staff are asked to speak to parents about their child only and not other children and speak only of activities related to Children Come First, and school related activities. Staff are asked to speak respectively to parents and listen to their comments. Staff will try to communicate to the parents in regards to situations to help solve their problem. If you feel you cannot reach a resolution please feel free to contact a director and speak with them.

Parent Involvement:

It is important that parents are involved directly with their child's Out of School Care Program. Please introduce yourself to the staff. To allow parents to voice any concerns, suggestions or general comments pertaining to the program parent meetings and surveys will occur. Staff is always available to listen to parents comments.

Family Resource Binders

A resource binder has been organized for families requiring information on counselling, funding, grants, home alone/ babysitting courses and community activities. If you have a suggestion for something that can be added to the binder feel free to let a director know.

Registration Process

Parents must completely fill out a registration form prior to their child attending. It is imperative that parents inform us of all medical, behavioural and physical conditions. A deposit is required

to hold a position at Children Come First. Post dated cheques are required and dated for the first of each month

Withdrawal from the Program

One month's written notice on the first of the month is required to withdraw your child from the program. Parents who do not give one months notice will forfeit their deposit. We would like you to take the opportunity to complete an exit review when you leave the program.

Inclusion Services

We are able to provide care for children with disabilities. We welcome all disabilities, but ask that the parents do inform us during registration and assist us in helping their child to adjust to the program. Supported child care may be available to specific families.

We embrace and encourage diversity at all our locations by recognizing and respecting all cultures. All children have the right to be treated equally, regardless of their race, nationality or ethnic origin, religion, sex, mental or physical ability etc... We are committed to providing a welcoming environment for all children and their families.

We can accomplish this through:

- Having the parents and children share their cultures, and events with the program.
- The program will include special occasions and cultural events within their program planning.
- We have a great program for days off school called the Travelling Suit Case. The suit case is a prop we use to travel and explore other countries. For example if we travel to Asia, the case contains items such as dragon crafts, cookies, maps, flags, costumes, photos, newspapers, and much more. Children and families are asked to help us with the presentation of their culture to the program.
- The program offers a variety of cultural crafts, games, food and special day events such as African drumming, cooking, facts, dancing and the Travelling Suit Case.
- Children with special needs can be included in all programs. We will try and accommodate different needs and will work closely with the child/ family to ensure the child is a part of the program.
- We will ensure the staff are informed and sensitive to inclusion and diversity issues.
- We will educate the children about diversity and promote positive interactions between all children.
- The staff will ensure that all information about the children and families are confidential.
- Programming will be suitable to the needs of all the children in the program.

Fee information

Post dated cheques are required and dated for the first of each month

Fee Agreement

Parents agree to pay monthly fees at the first of each month

Late Payment

If fees are not paid on the first of each month parents must pay a late fee. Parents are responsible for NSF fees for any returned cheques.

Subsidy

Forms are available upon request from the Provincial Subsidy. It is the parents responsibility to set up subsidies and make sure subsidies are kept up to date. Applications can be accessed online at www.child.gov.ab.ca/childcaresubsidy.com

New parents must pay ½ month's fees up front until subsidy application is complete and confirmed.

Attendance

It is required that parents come into the building to sign children IN and OUT. At this time, you can check for messages or newsletters. If you allow your child to walk to and from the program a release form must be completed and the program office contacted. If you are unable to pick up your child you must contact the program as soon as possible informing us of who will be picking up your child. Your child will not be released to anyone not known by the program; identification will be required by anyone picking up your child who is on your release form.

Late Fee, when picking up your child:

A late fee of \$1.00 per minute will apply if you are late. This charge is to be paid directly to the staff on duty. Please phone as soon as possible if you will be late.

Arrival of Children

All children are expected to walk directly to and from school. We will send the children to school 15 minutes before school begins. Kindergarten children will be walked to and from school by a staff member.

If a child has not returned to the centre within 15 minutes of expected arrival time, the following procedures will be taken:

- Telephone contact with the school
- Contact parents if child is not at the school
- If the child cannot be located within 30 minutes, we will contact the police.

We will do our best to locate your child, but we cannot jeopardize the safety of the other children. We are not responsible for your child until they reach the center.

If we feel that a parent is not safely able to drive their child home a staff will call a taxi company. We cannot release children to a parent or guardian if we feel that they will not be able to get home safely. If there is a situation that occurs where the staff member is not comfortable releasing a child to a parent or guardian both police and social services will be contacted.

Policy & Procedures for Parents

Independent Departure/ Walking Home Alone / Sibling Policy

Children must be in grade 5 or 6 and responsible enough to walk home alone. Parents must complete a release form allowing your child to walk home alone or with a sibling. Children Come First reserves the right to decline a child walking home without a parent.

Distal Supervision Policy

We do not have distal supervision at any of our programs

Operating Policy

We operate Monday to Friday 7am to 6pm. Parents are asked not to drop off children before 7am and must pick them up on before 6pm. There is a late policy which is included in the service plan for your review. Closure dates are posted on the parent board for the whole year and are handed out in a newsletter as well. If a child is not attending for the day, it is the parent's responsibility to inform the program.

Reporting Incidents, Accidents, or Serious Illness Policy

All serious incidents will be dealt with immediately, and the parents will be contacted by a director or staff member after first aid has been given to the child. The staff that provided care for the child we will fill out the proper form in regards to the incident and the parents will then be asked to sign it as well. We will keep our form on file for 2 years and parents will be given a copy.

Provision of Meals and Snack Policy

It is the parent's responsibility to provide children an adequate meal and snacks for their for the day. In the morning we prefer that children eat healthy snacks only. Pop is not allowed at the program and junk food is discouraged.

Policy to Medication Administration

Parents must complete a medical form which has been provided by the Province of Alberta sample forms. The medication must not be expired and in its original container showing the child's name, doctor's name and administration instructions. We will only give prescribed medications from a doctor. All medications will be in a lock box. All staff members are trained in first aid, and they will be the only ones giving medications to the child. Self administration will only take place when it is a puffer for asthma, staff will measure out all meds given to a child. Staff will sign the medication form after administration.

Children requiring First Aid will be given the care they need from a staff with current First Aid. If medication is needed to be given a staff will administer the medication and record this on the medication form. If a child is sick a staff will provide a safe and comfortable space until the parent can pick up.

Staff will ensure good hygiene when working with the children in order to stop the spreading of infection and disease.

Policy on Access to Licensing Reports

Parents are welcome at any time to review licensing reports. Please ask the directors for the reports.

PD Day Sign Up Sheets

On non school days we will do our best to provide child care however programs may be combined at one location. Parents will be informed of the days and locations in advance. It is a parent's responsibility to sign up in advance and pay the extra fee for non school days. Please do not sign up unless you have paid the fee. Parents will be given up to a week prior to the day off to sign up and pay. After the deadline we may not be able to take your child as staffing is based on actual numbers of children signed up and paid by the deadline.

Health and Medical-Potential Health Risk/Illness Policy

If a Ranchlands Children Come First staff member knows or has reason to believe that a child is ill, the program must insure that the child is immediately removed from the program by the parent and the child cannot return to the program until the program is satisfied that the child is no longer poses a health risk. Children must be picked up in a timely manner or parent will risk their spot in program.

The definition of an ill child:

A sick child is defined as a child who is unable to participate in the child care program because he or she is:

- Vomiting has a fever, diarrhea or a new unexplained rash or cough.
- Requires greater attention than can be provided without compromising the care of the other children in the program
- Displays any other illness of symptoms that a staff member know or believes may indicate the child poses a health risk to persons on the program premises. Staff can check a child's temperature UNDER THE ARM ONLY with a digital thermometer.

If a child is sick a staff member will keep that child away from the other children until the parent arrives to pick the child up. Children can return to the program when they no longer pose a health risk i.e. symptom free for 24 hours, doctor's note.

The program will record about the child's illness on the Illness Incident Log sheet this forms are available at each location. These forms will be kept on file at the program.

Parents will be informed of our Potential Health Risk and Illness Policy through the Parent Handbook and must sign the back of the registration form that they are aware of the policy.

Accident or Illness

All staff members are trained in first aid and CPR. When a child is injured the necessary first aid will be administered. If further medical attention is required, 911 will be called then the parents. Accident forms will be filled out after we have provided care for the child and contacted the parents.

- The parents must sign the form and will be given a copy.
- The person who provided the first aid to the child will fill out the form.
- All forms will be sign as well by the directors Juli and Laura-Lee.
- These forms will be kept for 2 years.

. Emergency and Non Emergency Medical Attention and Assessments 2014

Staff are required to have valid first aid / Review your first aid manuals on a quarterly basis.

A child that is seriously injured at the program requiring medical attention-

Steps to Follow:

- 1) Assess the situation – Is the child conscious?
 - 2) Are there breathing/circulation problems?
 - 3) Was there a fall/accident which could result in serious injuries?
 - 4) Potential head injury/ back or neck injury?
 - 5) Obvious break or deformity of bone?
- Do Not move the child if you believe there may be a head, back, or neck injury which could lead to further injury, unless there is apparent danger to the child or staff.

Call 911 for all potentially life threatening injuries.

(You will need to present a copy of the child's emergency card)

Continue treating the child until medical attention arrives.

Contact parent after 911 has been called

Contact Juli or Laura Lee.

The Critical Incident Reporting Line will be contacted immediately and a form submitted within their 2 day timeline.

Non Emergency Injuries

Children who are injured during program -

- 1) Staff will administer appropriate first aid
- 2) If unsure, staff will contact Health Link for advice and act accordingly 403 943-5465
- 3) Contact parent/guardian to inform of injury, or contact emergency contact if no response from parent
- 4) Continue treating the child until the parent arrives

Parents will be asked to inform program if hospitalization was required or what medical attention was received.

Complete incident/accident reporting form and or contact Critical Incident Line if required.

All serious incidents will be reviewed by Juli/Laura-Lee after the child has been taken care of and after all necessary documents submitted to the appropriate authorities. All stakeholders involved will be notified of recommendations/ policy changes that occur because of the incident.

Notification of Policy/Procedure Updates Policy 2014

Throughout the year, policies and procedures will be reviewed and may be updated or created. Parents and staff will be notified of these changes including accident/illness policy updates immediately via:

- 1) Website – parent handbooks
- 2) Email Notifications
- 3) Hard Copy Distribution
- 4) Child registration forms (back side)

Parents are instructed to review our Parent handbooks annually. Parents are invited to offer suggestions to the program regarding our policies.

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Incident Reporting Policy:

Ranchlands Children Come First programs will report to our local child care licensing office every time a serious illness, injury to a child or any other incident occurs that may seriously affect the health or safety of a child.

The following are considered a reportable incident:

- An emergency evacuation
- Unexpected program closure
- An intruder on the program premises
- A serious illness or injury to a child that requires the program to request emergency health care and or requires the child to remain in the hospital overnight. As well if you call 911.
- An error in the administration of medication by a program staff or volunteer resulting in the child becoming seriously injured or ill and requiring first aid, or the program requesting emergency health care and/ or requires the child to remain in the hospital overnight.
- The death of a child
- An unexpected absence of a child from the program (ie: lost child)
- A child removed from the program by a non- custodial parent or guardian
- An allegation of physical, sexual, emotional abuse and / or neglect of a child by a program staff member or volunteer
- The commission by a child of an offence under an Act of Canada or Alberta, and/ or
- A child left on the premises outside of the program's operating hours.

Ranchlands Children Come First programs must report critical incidents immediately to Juli or Laura-Lee Operators/Directors and our local child care licensing office. Initial contact can be by phone, fax or email. The following information must be included in the initial report:

- The program's name and contact information
- The child's name
- The date and time of incident
- The action taken by the licence holder as a result.

Ranchlands Children Come First programs must report within two working days the incident occurrence, and completely fill out and submit the Incident Reporting Form to our local child care office. Forms will be available at each location. All Incident Reporting Forms must be reviewed by Laura-Lee and Juli Operators/Directors. All incidents will be reported annually using the prescribed forms and submitted annually to the regional child care office by Juli and Laura-Lee Operators/Directors.

Staff please be advised that if you have a situation that occurs that is a threat to the children or staff health or safety the following procedures must take place:

- Take the children inside or to a safe location
- Call the police or emergency health care.
- Call Juli or Laura-Lee Operators/Directors
- Fill out the Incident report form check the list of reportable incidents to the Government of Alberta child care licensing office.
- Fill out the proper incident form for the situation. There are 2 types of forms for incident reporting if the incident that occurs is under the reportable incident list you will use the Government of Alberta form, if not you will use the Ranchlands Children Come First form.
- Inform the parents and get any signature and or information you may need for the forms

We will document all incidents on our incident forms, critical incidents will be forwarded to Licensing within two days. Critical incidents include: Emergency evacuation, program closure due to any emergency, an intruder on the premises, child removed from the program by a person without parental consent, an injury needing medical attention, lost child, child left at the premises after hours etc.

Parents will be asked to sign the incident report and a director will also sign it. One copy will be given to the parent; another will be kept by the program for 2 years.

Communicable Disease

If a child is ill we ask that Parents do not bring them to the program. If a child becomes ill while at the program parents will be contacted immediately and asked to pick up their child. We will remove the child from the room to a comfortable space, in order to prevent an outbreak. Parents must notify the program immediately if a child has been in contact with a contagious illness such as pink eye, chicken pox, head lice, or flu. We ask parents to check with their Doctor regarding the length of time their child must stay at home.

Supervised Care for Sick Children

If a child is sick the staff will tend to their needs and remove them away from the other children to a comfortable location where a staff can provide them with a place to rest. We will contact the parent to pick the child up from the program. We ask that parents do not send sick children to the program in order to keep others healthy.

Chronic and Severe Health Conditions

Parents must inform the program if their child has any health condition. The best way to inform us of this is on the registration form. We may require a meeting with the parent in order to have a better understanding of the health condition. If parents have any literature or information on the medications or ways of helping the child adapt that we can share with the staff it would be helpful to us and your child.

Sunscreen Policy

To ensure that all children are covered up with sunscreen we have implemented a new sunscreen policy. Parents, be sure to apply sunscreen to your child in the morning during the hot months before coming to Children Come First.

Sunscreen is to be brought by every child and kept in their back pack. Children will be reminded to apply sunscreen before departing for outings and reminded to re apply throughout the day. Staff will assist those children with sunscreen when asked by the child. Please send an extra t-shirt with your child for outdoor water activities. A hat and a water bottle are required each day.

Helmet Policy

Children may be asked to bring a helmet from home for certain activities. This helmet must be in good shape and fit properly. If the program requires a helmet for an activity and the children do not bring one, or refuses to wear one they will not be allowed to participate in the activity.

Health Checks and Fire Inspections

As a licensed program we have yearly checks on both health regulations and fire inspections from the Calgary Health services and Calgary Fire Department. If there are changes or recommendations we will complete them properly to keep our environments as safe as possible

Fire Drills

Will occur monthly, In case of an emergency, we will leave the centre and go to the evacuation location posted on the bulletin board.

Nutrition

Morning / Afternoon

Children will not be allowed to consume an unhealthy snack before school. If your child requires a snack please send a healthy one. The Canada Food Guide recommends 2 different food groups.

Lunch (Ranchlands)

All children are expected to bring a nutritious lunch daily – beverage included. A fridge is available at Ranchlands to store lunches and snacks and a microwave for heating precooked food only.

Please provide your child with spoons and forks if needed. We cannot prepare uncooked food as we must supervise the children. The Canada Food Guide recommends 4 food groups for lunch. If there is an emergency we will provide your child with a lunch. However you may be asked to buy a replacement.

Supervision Policy

Children Come First has implemented a “Supervision Policy” which will help keep parents informed about the different types of supervision provided at this centre. This will allow parents to make informed choices about the types of care we are providing for all children.

Two types of Supervision that are provided:

Direct Supervision – Staff directly supervises the children both indoors and outdoors and are interacting and ensuring all children are safe. The staff will position themselves so that they can accurately supervise the children.

Kindergarten and grade 1 children will always be supervised and not permitted to be in any room unattended by a staff.

Intermittent Supervision – This type of independent activity is a privilege and is offered to children in the program who are capable of free play, without a direct supervisor. These children

tend to be capable of self control, and are typically responsible for their age group. Independent play has been encouraged by Licensing if staff and parents have been properly informed of all expectations.

Staff will ensure that this independent play is safe and that the activities are appropriate for school age children. Staff will ensure that these children are monitored frequently and interactions between staff and children occur. (Independent play will not always be offered throughout the day)

The privilege of Intermittent Supervision can be a positive step in your child's development; however incidents can occur when children are not directly supervised. Please take the time to consider what is offered, and please make the right decision for you and your family. We are here to provide a safe, fun place for your child to grow.

Staff are made aware of the indoor and outdoor physical environment while doing their daily safety checklist. When new staff are hired they are given a tour and orientation of the program so that they are made aware of the space.

New Child Policy

When a new child starts our program they must meet their care givers beforehand.

There is a check list on the registration forms that parents must check off once they have met the staff.

This policy has been put in place to ensure the safety of the new child and make them comfortable with the staff.

Ranchlands Children Come First now has all new children at all locations wear wrist bands for the first week at the program. The wrist bands have the name of the program and phone numbers and emergency cell numbers. This is a good reminder for all new children that they attend our program and where they must go for lunch or afterschool.

The program operators will ensure that all staff is aware of children's developmental needs. (ie. Children's maturity levels, special needs) Staff are informed about new children and their need via the message book, staff meetings, reading new forms and talking to the directors.

Children that are in Kindergarten and Grade one automatically are taken to and from school each day. However when there are new children starting the program we will walk them back and forth until they are comfortable. If there are any other children that wish to be walked to and from school they will be. If the Director feels that a child needs some extra assistance we will walk them back and forth as well.

Children in grades 2-6 can walk to and from the program on their own if their parents wish to allow them. If not they are welcome to walk back and forth with the staff and meet us at the meeting place. We currently have children that are in grade 2-6 that walk back and forth with a staff. Children in the grade 2-6 age group will be allowed to walk alone with the discretion of the directors and parents. The developmental needs of the child are taken into consideration when making this decision.

To ensure that all children are accounted for at the school before coming back to the program, staff have an attendance form that is used for pickup. Should a child not arrive, the school or program will be contacted immediately before departing the school. This ensures that all children will be located quickly. Currently we walk children to and from school at our Ranchlands location as the other programs are located right in the school.

Attendance Policy:

Sept 2011

Staff are instructed that throughout the day the attendance forms are checked for accuracy. Staff will ensure that sign in/out times are accurate and that all children are signed out with times at the end of each day. The building will be thoroughly checked before staff departs the building. This will ensure that children cannot be left in the building after hours. As well when children are taken outside there is a list that is made of which children are outside. Children also use magnet boards to indicate what rooms they are in with name tags that they place on the room's door that they are currently in

A tracking system for children arriving or leaving the building without an adult has been developed to ensure that the child arrives safely at the program/at home. Parents whose children walk to the program will be required to contact the program prior to the child's departure from home, and then contact the program when the child is expected to arrive. Parents whose children walk home from the program must sign a release form and must also ensure that when the child arrives home that the program is contacted immediately by the parent. Parents whose children depart the program closer to the closing time of 6 pm need to realize that the program will close and that a staff will not remain behind after hours.

Outdoor Activity Policy

Children Come First will provide a variety of outdoor activities for all children throughout the entire year. Program planning will include structured and free play activities, such as: Small and large group games, sporting activities, and independent play. Staff will ensure that the outdoor play area is safe and free from defect. The playground will be inspected frequently for wear and tear. Children may be permitted to bring out play equipment such as balls, hoops, outdoor games and, in some cases (when approved by staff,) crafts or indoor play equipment. Staff will ensure

that the children are appropriately dressed for outdoor play, whether that includes sunscreen, mosquito repellent, hats or winter clothing.

Ranchlands Only: Children may be given permission to play in the designated treed area adjacent to the community centre. Parents are required to sign a permission form before their child will be allowed to play in the treed area.

School Rules

We run some of our programs out of CBE locations. When we are in the school we must adhere to certain rules set by the schools.

- Arriving prior to 7am or staying after 6pm is not permitted as we have a lease with the school board, and do not have access to their space outside of the permitted hours of 7am-6pm
- We are only to park in our designated spot. This varies from location, whether it be street or visitor parking.
- Children will not be allowed to go back to their class and collect items 15 minutes after the bell has gone, or before the bell in the morning
- Children are asked to walk in the hallways, use inside voice and treat the school and school equipment with respect.
- Parents are asked not to walk through the school and into classrooms to collect children's items from the class, or other areas of the school. We are renting the space of the stage and gym and do not have free reign of the school.
- Please ensure that any wet or dirty footwear is removed when you enter the school so that you do not track mud in the hallways.

Rules of the Out of School Care Program

We ask that you sit down with your child and explain the following rules before your child begins our program.

- Your child is expected to respect the staff, other children and the building/equipment.
- No swearing, hitting, or throwing things; equipment must be used appropriately; gum chewing is not permitted
- Children must clean up after themselves, before commencing another activity/going home
- Children are not to leave the program without the staff's permission

- Any form of vandalism will be the parent's responsibility and the onus is on the parents to fix or replace the damaged item(s). When a problem persists we will request the parent's assistance in reaching a solution. Together we can work as a team.
- Rules are made to ensure safety. All children will be involved in making of rules. We have established a rule/reason/consequence method of making rules.

Unexpected Program Closures

School locations:

Situations such as CBE employee strike, plumbing, heating, boiler problems, snow delays, or extreme weather may arise whereby the Calgary Board of Education closes a school. We will not be allowed to operate until the school reopens.

School Breaks

When the children are off for school breaks we will inform parents via sign up forms the days we are available for child care. Parents need to fill out these forms and return the form and fee to their program. There will be a deadline for signing up in order for us to staff appropriately, as well as, plan field trips and other activities. On days off we will program plan with the children's input. They will be able to assist in planning; field trips, games, cooking activities, special lunches, theme days, and other creative activities.

Volunteers

Students in the Early Childhood field may visit from time to time for observation purposes. These students will never be included in our child-staff ratios.

Field Trips

Parents will be given notice regarding field trips. We will use a chartered bus; if possible, or we may walk. All children will be expected to attend as the centre will be closed during field trips.

Social Events

Annual social events include the Family BBQ in the summer and a Christmas Party. We may have other events and parents will be notified.

Record Keeping Policy

All forms pertaining to the program will be kept for 2 years including registration forms, attendance forms, accident and medical forms.

Complaint Policy

Verbal and written complaints will be directed to Juli and Laura-Lee (directors). All complaints will be dealt with seriously. A verbal or written response will follow all complaints. All complaints will be kept on file for five years.

Transportation Policy

Children will not be transported to and from school by the program. Occasionally the children will be transported in our bus or a chartered bus for field trips. Parents must sign a field trip release form.

Media Policy:

Employees of Children Come First are not to discuss any events or issues dealing with the programs, its clients and other employees.

All issues with the media will be dealt with by the directors, Juli or Laura-Lee

Abuse Policy:

Ranchlands Children Come First is committed to providing a safe and respectful environment for all the children, staff and parents. Abuse of any kind will not be tolerated and may result in termination from the program.

Child Abuse and Neglect

If a child confides in a staff an issue of abuse or neglect the staff must communicate this to the directors and we will inform the proper authorities. An incident report will be completed by the employee.

Toy Policy

Children can bring toys from home if they ask their parents and staff first. Toys must be labelled and children and parents must understand that the program is not responsible for any lost or

broken toys. The program has a large variety of toys so there is no need to bring too many things from home.

Personal gaming systems (i.e. PSP or Nintendo DS) are only welcome at the program on non school days. Games that are brought must be rated “E” for everyone, and there are time limits that deter children from over playing. *(It is very important all games and systems are labelled)*

Thank you,

If you have any questions, please contact the directors.

Please Sign and Date after you have read and understood the contents of the Handbook

Signature

Date