



FIRST CHOICE
MONTESSORI ACADEMY

FIRST CHOICE MONTESSORI ACADEMY POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Our Philosophy

First Choice Montessori fosters a meticulously designed program. We educate our students through the use of Montessori materials and provide them with a strong foundation to take to elementary school and further. We focus on a structured learning environment, using an academic focus while incorporating fun and playful activities to keep our students both engaged and excited about learning. We create a nurturing environment and allow each child to learn at their own pace. We never want to stunt a child's capacity to learn; if a child is exceeding their peers in learning, we will allow that child to flourish and provide any and all support needed to do so.

First Choice Montessori provides a unique and broad range of learning through activities, such as:

- ❖ Practical Life
- ❖ Mathematics
- ❖ Science
- ❖ Arts
- ❖ Cultural Activities
- ❖ Language Arts & Social Studies
- ❖ Leadership

What to bring for First Choice Montessori Infant/Toddler

- Full change of clothing
- Please supply formula/milk/snacks/lunch in a bag with your child's name on it
- Morning and afternoon snacks plus lunch in a bag or kit, as well as an ice-pack
- One sippy cup and/or water bottle with name labeled
- Parents of bottle-fed babies will need to provide 2-3 labeled bottles, nipples, and lids. Contents remaining in any bottle must be discarded within two hours
- Diapers or training pants and wipes
- All prescription creams and medications require a consent form
- A blanket from home as well as a sleeping sheet and a small snuggle toy for nap time
- Seasonal outside clothing; muddy buddy and boots, hat and gloves

Registration and Withdrawal

All enrollment forms, deposits and first-month payment must be submitted before acceptance. The required forms and items are as follows: Medical history form, immunization record, photo of your child, registration forms; child info form and parent contact form. Any other information about the health and safety of your child.

It is the responsibility of the family to inform First Choice Montessori of any changes to address, telephone number, alternate pick-up individuals or any change in the medical and health status of the child.

In November each year, registration for the following September opens. Children who are currently

attending as well as their siblings are given priority. We will then open our registration to children on the waitlist and then the public.

Upon receiving communication from someone from the First Choice Montessori team, you will have a specified amount of time to submit your deposit and non-refundable registration fee; this will reserve a space for your child at one of our facilities. Your placement is not confirmed until all payment information and your registration documents have been submitted. If you do not submit payment details by the deadline, then you forfeit your placement and it will be given to the next person on the waitlist. The government of British Columbia has made some improvements to funds available for child care. We suggest all parents look at the subsidies available to them through the online calculator. Child Care subsidies and benefits are available through the Ministry of Children and Family Development:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/caring-for-youngchildren>

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/caring-for-youngchildren/childcare/financial-assistance-for-child-care#funding_amount

Withdrawal and Repayment Fee

A child can be withdrawn provided the parent has given thirty days written notice by the first of the month. If thirty days' notice has not been provided, the original deposit paid at the beginning of enrolment will be applied. If notice has been given, the deposit will be returned in full or used as fee payment for the last month, whichever is preferred by the parent.

If we have received a prepayment and a child is withdrawn from care with thirty days' notice, payment in full will be returned.

Separation Anxiety

Separation anxiety can be a difficult process for both children and parents. When babies are between the ages of 8-10 months, they are often distressed when they are separated from their parents. This anxiety can last up until the age of two. Typical reactions associated with separation anxiety are crying, clinging, and trying to follow.

When a toddler becomes more verbal, separation anxiety may include words of protest:

“Mommy/Daddy stay,” or “I go.” New people and new routines can be scary for little ones.

Every child is unique and they all respond to separations differently. Children take cues from their parents; when a parent feels good and responds positively to dropping their child off, the child will sense this. The following is a list of things to do that can help the separation process go smoother for both you and your child. These helpful hints can be applied from the youngest of babies to the oldest of preschoolers.

- Talk to your child ahead of time as to what is going to happen, such as *“Today is a school day!”*
- Talk with your child’s teacher daily and establish a friendly relationship. This helps when you may have to give your child to them at drop off and the more comfortable you are, the better your child will respond. You can help your child begin to settle by offering a toy or a book. Say your goodbyes to the child and then leave immediately after; make the departure definite. Depending on your child, they can get mixed signals from a parent who hangs around for too long. On the other hand, it is never best to sneak away from your child without saying goodbye. Always tell your child goodbye and you will see them later. Sometimes it is helpful for a parent to get into a routine as to saying the same thing every drop off, like, *“I’m going to work now. Have a great day at school. I love you very much and I’ll see you later. Goodbye.”* Children become comfortable with routine and life becomes somewhat predictable for them. When a child sees their parent

departing positively, and then discovers that every day they do come back, separations become easier and a trust is built between the parent and child and makes them feel comfortable and good about being in school.

- This last one may be a difficult one to do for a parent. If your child begins to cry while you are leaving, please do not turn around and come back. It is a natural reaction for many parents to immediately want to go back to comfort their child when they are distressed. Of course, the teachers are sensitive to that; however, coming back to ease a crying child will not make the separation any easier when a parent really has to leave. In fact, it may be harder for your child the second time around. It is typical for children to regain their composure and get into their daily routine shortly after mom or dad leaves.

Sometimes children who have had easy drop-offs for the first week or two may suddenly start to become upset at their parents' departure. This is a typical reaction in a group care setting. Subsequently children usually become accustomed to the idea of coming to school every day or every week.

Arrival and Departure Policy

Arrival: Our doors are unlocked at 7:00AM. Please inform the center manager of your regular arrival and pick-up time. This way we can ensure the proper staffing ratio is always present.

Upon arrival, please sign your child in and check in with your child's teacher.

Please share any information regarding feeding/toileting/teething/sleeping or otherwise that will have an impact on your child's day or daily routine. This is very important as it creates a bridge from home to our care.

Please keep your goodbyes short and sweet. It is best to say goodbye at the door with a big smile and a "see you later little alligator." Teachers are here to assist you and your child during this transition. If your child is adjusting slower to the transitions, please remember short goodbyes are easier for them. We adore your little one and we promise that any tears at goodbye are short lived. We understand that this process is just as difficult for parents as it is for the child, and we want to ensure you that your child is in good hands and will love coming to daycare!

If your child is going to be absent or late, please contact the manager of your center with the child's name and length of absence.

Departures: Upon pick-up teachers will update you on relevant information to your child's day. Please pick-up your child before 5:30pm. Please remember to sign out your child.

Late pick-up: All families and authorized pick-up persons must pick-up their child(ren) by 5:30pm. There will be a late fee of \$5 per every minute past our closing time. We ask that parents respect the time of our staff and center. If an emergency arises, the pick-up person is expected to notify the center as soon as possible and make alternate arrangements for pick-up no later than 5:30pm.

If a child is not picked up by 5:45pm and the authorized pick-up person or family has not communicated with the manager, the center will try to contact the family, then someone from the alternate list for that child. If all efforts are unsuccessful, the staff in charge will call the Ministry of Children and Family Development. The staff member in charge will also try to leave a message for the family and/or with an authorized person.

The \$5.00 per min. fee is charged for late pick-up. If late pick-up is a repeated problem, the manager and the parent/guardian will meet to try to address the problem. All efforts will be made to successfully fix the problem. If un-resolvable, then one month's notice will be given to terminate childcare services provided.

Attendance Policy

Please sign your child in and out upon arrival and departure. Attendance is taken daily at 8:30am. We ask that all students be in their classrooms no later than 8:30am. This allows the children to settle in and have some time with their friends before we start the circle time. We will commence circle time promptly at 9:00am and students coming in during that time will disrupt the other children. Please contact the manager and inform them of any absences or late arrivals.

Parent Teacher Communication

Having an open-door atmosphere for communication between families and teachers is extremely important. We want to ensure that teachers are always available to speak to you, should you have any questions or concerns. We are always happy to communicate with families. We look forward to having a great relationship as we share in the joys of your child's growth. We kindly ask that conversations which take place during arrival and dismissal are friendly and brief, as the teachers will be focusing all of their attention on the children. However, we welcome lengthier discussions and these should be arranged outside of class time. If a parent should ever have any concerns, we hope they would feel free to discuss any concerns about their child's behaviour or development. We ask that parents check in with any of the Managers to arrange an in-person appointment. Privacy is of the utmost importance. Sensitive issues should be discussed privately amongst parents and teachers only. We will primarily communicate through the app "Brightwheel"; this will allow parents to communicate with the teachers at any time and additionally keep updated throughout the day with how their child is doing through pictures. As teachers of young children, we find it advantageous to communicate with parents in several different ways. Formal parent/teacher conferences are scheduled in January to discuss your child's progress. The teachers schedule the conferences; however, if a parent feels a need for a conference at any time during the year, we would be more than happy to accommodate it. During conference days, the school will be closed to allow teachers to give parents their undivided attention and provide a thorough meeting. Parents will receive a monthly calendar and newsletter informing them of upcoming themes, field trips, special activities, and events. Also, important notices and information are communicated through newsletters. We ask that parents take the time to read through these each month. Teachers and the administrative staff of the school will be communicating these each month to parents either through the Brightwheel app, email, or in-person.

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Child/Staff Ratio

The ratio governed by the Provincial Licensing Act is as follows:

Infant/Toddler (0-3 years): 1 to 4 (one early childhood educator with Infant Toddler qualifications plus one more educator)

Preschool and Child Care (30 months – 5 years): 1 to 8 (one early childhood educator plus one more qualified educator)

Teacher and Volunteer Qualifications

All teachers and volunteers must have a valid criminal record check completed prior to working with the children enrolled at our centers.

At least one present staff must have a valid Early Childhood Educator (E.C.E.) with the Infant Toddler Certificate. Additional staff must have their Early Childhood Education (E.C.E.) Certificate or be otherwise qualified. All supervisors and teachers have a valid First Aid Certificate.

Nutrition Policy

We believe good health in the early years helps to safeguard children's health and well-being throughout life. We follow and recommend to families to follow the guide:

<https://www.health.gov.bc.ca/library/publications/year/2017/ToddlersFirstSteps-Sept2017.pdf> and <https://foods-guide.canada.ca/en/>

We treat bottle/snack and mealtimes as an opportunity to promote children's social development; if the child needs a special diet, it is the responsibility of the guardian(s) to inform the teachers of their needs. The specific feeding needs will be posted and charted daily in the communication logs.

We do have a microwave in the classroom, and we are happy to warm up foods as required. All foods will be stored in the fridge or must have an ice pack. Drinking water is available throughout the day.

Due to health and safety regulations, there will not be any food prepared at the school. We want to ensure the safety of our students; with all of the dietary restrictions and to avoid cross contamination, we ask that all parents provide snacks and lunches for their child. We encourage more fruits and vegetables to aid in keeping the children healthy and strong. We do not recommend overly sugary snacks and candies being sent as snacks. Any snacks provided will include certain prepackaged food such as apple sauce cups, fruit, apples, strawberries and bananas, fruit cups, muffins, yogurt cups or crackers and cheese. **Please no nuts during this time.**

Infants Nutrition

Young infants will be fed according to their own schedule. As they grow and start eating solid foods, their eating needs will change and the eating times will be adjusted toward the group schedule. During lunch, infants not yet eating table food will be served cereals and jarred foods (as provided by their family).

Parents are asked to provide formula and any baby food until their child is on table or solid foods. Formula or water will be placed in a bottle. Juice can only be served in a sippy cup. Bottles are not heated in the microwave, as this will produce "hot spots" in the formula or breast milk and are warmed under warm running water in the sink or by an electrical bottle warmer.

Pacifiers

If your child uses a pacifier, parents are asked to provide a labelled one. Infants who use pacifiers will have them on an as-needed basis throughout the day.

Toddlers may have their pacifiers for nap times. They will not be allowed to walk around the classroom with a pacifier during the day for the following reasons:

- It is not healthy for a child to pick up a pacifier off the floor once dropped and put back into their mouth
- Another child may put someone else's' pacifier in their mouth.
- It is difficult to understand a child who is trying to talk with one in their mouth
- Tongues need to learn how to speak when talking without a pacifier in it

Diapering (0 – 36 months)

We ask for families to supply diapers and wipes for their child. Your child will be changed at regular intervals and recorded on our log sheets throughout the day and as needed. If you would like us to apply diaper cream, we must have signed permission. Any prescription creams must come in their original container with a signed medication consent form.

Toileting/Potty Training Policy (3 – 5 years)

For children who are using the potty, elastic waisted pants are encouraged for quick dressing and easy

toileting. With help from a teacher after toileting and before eating, children will wash their hands individually or in groups. We promote independence and self-help skills for all children with their personal hygiene care. Children who are in the process of potty training can come in a pull-up. We will coordinate with your family on potty training efforts as required.

Sleeping/Resting

According to developmental ability/size children will sleep in cots, then transition to sleep mats. We ask that each parent supply one sheet for the mats and we will have extra in case of emergency and/or potential accidents. First Choice Montessori will however supply the sleep cots/sleep mats/cribs.

Safe Sleeping Practices for Infants

Infants will be placed on their backs to sleep in a crib. There will be no pillows, large quilts and bumpers in the cribs. Parents are to bring a sheet for the crib as well a blanket for their child to use at nap times. A small stuffy or snuggle toy is allowed. First Choice Montessori will have extra sheets on hand in case of emergency and/or potential accident.

Biting

Children biting other children are unavoidable occurrences of group child care, especially with toddlers. When it happens it can be scary, frustrating, and stressful for children/parents. Biting is purely a sign of the developmental age of the child.

If biting seems to have become a pattern for a particular child, we will meet with their parents for additional input. A consistent approach between home and care is always the most effective way to solve any behaviour issues. In such cases, a behaviour intervention plan will be discussed with the family. This plan will include ways to keep the behaviour from starting in the first place, providing positive reinforcement and promote good behaviour and avoid reinforcing the inappropriate behaviour.

Clothing/Seasonal Items

Active and sometimes messy play is going to be a part of your child's day. It is recommended children wear comfortable washable play clothes that are easy to move around in. Please ensure there is a change of clothes in your child's cubby, including shirt, pants, etc. to be left at school. Please label everything with your child's name. during warmer months children should also bring a hat, sunglasses, and sunscreen. In the colder winter months, children must be dressed to go outside as every child will be going outside. Infants must have warm and protective clothing and toddlers/preschoolers need to have clothing appropriate for playing (boots, snow pants, hat, waterproof mittens).

Birthdays

We celebrate birthdays with the Happy Birthday song and a special mention in circle time. You are welcome to send in a birthday treat to be shared with friends. Please keep the treats nut free. Birthday celebrations are optional. If your family does not celebrate birthdays, please let us know.

Outside Time

We have a beautifully designed gross motor playground at our facility. It will also include wagons, strollers, balls, and toys everyone can enjoy. We go outside rain or shine a few times a day, so please ensure that your child has the clothing appropriate for the weather.

Active Play

Active Play is defined as any activity that gets the body moving and increases breathing and heart rate. The children receive active play twice a day which occurs both inside the classroom as well as outside. Indoor active play occurs daily and is provided in a variety of different ways through games, mat play, circle time fun, silly dances and other age-appropriate activities. Children are also provided with daily outdoor playtime (rain or shine). We have a wonderful outdoor area for students to enjoy. We make active play fun!

Program of Activities

Our Program has been carefully designed to ensure it is a safe, comfortable environment that will accommodate the abilities and needs of each child. Our goal is to promote good health, safety and nutrition.

Screen Time

We do not offer any screen time.

Fire and Earthquake Drills

Fire drills must be conducted once per month. Earthquake drills once every two months. Evacuation drills once per year. If you are arriving during the time of a drill, please participate. All parents, employees, and children must be committed to the safety of all concerned as well as the facility. Fire safety routines, locations of fire safety equipment and detectors are posted at each exit of the facility.

For fire drills and evacuation of the building, our meeting place is as follows:

Surrey Association Parking Lot

17687 56A Avenue

Surrey, B.C.

In the case of an emergency evacuation, this is where you would find us.

Storms & Power Outage

If there is a power outage before our centre is open in the morning, we will remain closed until power is restored. Staff will contact BC Hydro to see how long before power can be restored. If power is not going to be restored within one hour, the centre will not open for that day. All families will be notified about a cancellation due to a power outage by phone. If there is a power outage during our child care hours the staff will contact BC Hydro to see how long before power can be restored. If power is not restored within one hour, the centre will ask families to pick up their children for that day. Every attempt will be made to provide a cozy and comfortable and safe environment for the children until they are picked up.

EXTREME SNOWFALL

If there is extreme snow, the local schools are closed for the day and the roads are not safe to travel on, for the safety of our staff and our children, we will close. All families will be notified about this closure by phone. If the day has already begun and children are already attending and there is extreme snow, we will remain open until all children are picked up for the day.

Comfort Kits

Natural hazards, disasters, and emergencies can happen at any time. First Choice Montessori has an emergency plan in place and supplies stocked in the case of an emergency occurring during the school day. As we plan for possible scenarios, we'd like your help with creating Emergency Comfort Kits for your child. Comfort Kits would be the first line of resources to be used in any scenario when students are sheltered at the school longer than the school day. The items in the Comfort Kits will provide them with foods that are familiar and palatable to them and items that would help them stay calm.

Comfort Kit items should be sent in a **one-gallon, Ziploc bag** and clearly marked with your **child's name**. We are asking for a **two-day supply** with approximately 2,400 calories in each bag. Please remember we are **NUT FREE** so we ask there be no nut products in the Comfort Kits.

Suggested non-perishable food items:

- Granola bars
- Jerky
- Hard candies
- Cookies
- Canned fruit with flip top
- Fruit-roll ups
- Tuna fish packets
- Dried fruit, raisins
- Cheese crackers
- Small canned juice

Please include:

- Small note pad and pencil
- Book or deck of cards
- Family photograph
- Comfort letter (a letter from you to your child)
- Your contact number and your out-of-town contact

These are suggested items. Please tailor your child's comfort kit to their likes, dislikes and any specific needs.

Family Involvement Policy

We believe parents and family are the most important and influential people in their children's lives. We encourage families to be involved.

We have an open-door policy, fostering a sense of openness and inclusion. Parents join us on field trips and other family members are welcome to attend and to participate in special activities at the center. Special events for families will be planned. We strive to create an atmosphere where the families and children feel at home.

Families are encouraged to provide us with feedback and suggestions and communicate with us about any concerns.

Some ideas for family participation are:

- Share a special interest, talent, or cultural celebrations with the children and/or staff
- Share cultural learning materials
- Share a favorite healthy snack or recipe
- Share your cultural experiences and celebrations with staff and children in the center
- Donate materials for the program, such as recycled materials for art (paper, yarn, foil tart tins, buttons, fabric, etc.)
- Donate toys and equipment (dress-up items, old phones, hair rollers or an old curling iron for a beauty prop box, etc.)
- Share your ideas for the children's program with the staff
- Share knowledge of resources with us
- Participate in an annual program review by completing parent surveys and providing specific feedback

Accidents

Minor accidents such as scrapes and bruises will be attended to by staff and brought to the attention of the parent when the child is picked up. Please note only soap and water will be used to treat minor cuts and scrapes.

Major accidents will be handled in the following manner: A staff member will administer First Aid. All staff members hold current First Aid Certificates. An attempt will be made to notify the parent or emergency contact. The supervisor will call an ambulance and child's doctor, if necessary. If a child needs to go to the hospital, a staff member will accompany them. The supervisor must complete and accident report.

Health and Wellness Policy

Children who are ill with respiratory illness symptoms (fever, cough, fatigue, and/or muscle aches) are to stay home from school/child care.

Please inform us if your child has been diagnosed with the following:

- Lice
- Pink eye
- Chicken pox
- Whooping cough
- Mumps
- Herpes or any other vaccine-preventable disease
- Hand, foot and mouth disease
- Meningitis
- COVID19

Or any other communicable disease that could pose a danger to the other children in care.

Our wellness policy now includes, required 24-hour stay-at-home “symptom free” time period, following any symptoms outlined in the illness policy – even if they are feeling well and have plenty of energy – to remain at home. Child care is a busy communal place. Therefore, it is in the best interest of everyone, that children not well enough to participate in the regular program, or who have an infectious illness, must not be brought to the school for a 24-hour period. Please help us in keeping our environment healthy and safe for all. **Parents MUST keep their children at home or will be called to pickup their child from care for the following conditions:**

- An acute cold with fever, runny nose and eyes, coughing, and sore throat
- Difficulty breathing – wheezing or a persistent cough
- Fever (37.6 degrees Celsius or more)
- Sore throat or trouble swallowing
- Has vomited within a 24-hour period
- Infected skin, eyes, or an undiagnosed rash
- Unexplained diarrhea
- Headache and a stiff neck
- Not well enough to participate as usual

Medication

A **Medication Administration Consent Form** will need to be completed by the child’s legal guardian before any medication can be administered by staff at First Choice Montessori.

Medication must be prescribed by a physician or with consent of the child’s guardian. Medications must be in their original containers and labeled with the prescription information and dosage on it. For emergency medicine such as allergic reaction medication (example – Epi Pen) or an asthma puffer, a **Care Plan** will be created by the manager and the child’s guardian.

Confidentiality Policy: We maintain a strict adherence to confidentiality. All files are available for staff and health authority officials only.

Policy on Abuse

We are required by law to report suspected and/or disclosed abuse. The safety of our students is of the utmost importance to us. Failure to report abuse can result in prosecution under the Family and Child Services Act. If you have reason to believe that a child or youth needs protection, you must promptly report the matter to a child welfare worker 1 (800) 663-9122 at any time of the day.

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/public-safety-and-emergency-services/publicsafety/protecting-children/childabusepreventionhandbook_serviceprovider.pdf

Cleaning Policy

Routine precautions are designed to prevent transmission of germs.

This includes frequent handwashing of children and staff including before eating or food preparation and after toileting.

In addition, all surfaces are sanitized before and after use, including the change stations and tables surfaces. Toys will be sanitized regularly and removed for cleaning if a child puts it in their mouth.

Safe Release of the Child

in accordance with the child care regulations, a child in our care will routinely only be released to the enrolled parent/legal guardian or alternate authorized persons listed on the child's registration form and card.

Parents are responsible for keeping this information updated. Parents must have contact with a staff member on arrival and departure. Staff will additionally record the time of arrival and departure on a daily attendance sheet.

If a parent has authorized a person who is unknown to the staff to pick up their child, photo identification will be checked before the staff will release a child. We ensure to take all precautionary measures to ensure the overall safety of our students.

Emergency Situations

In a rare emergency situation, verbal permission will be allowed from the enrolled family as long as the parent/guardian confirms information about this person (name, address, telephone number, relationship to the child) and the pickup person presents photo identification to verify the information. Staff will also document the time of the call and all information shared. All reasonable efforts will be made to ensure the safety of the child.

Unauthorized person

If an unauthorized person arrives to pick up a child, the child will remain under the supervision of the child care staff. The staff member in charge will speak with the individual and explain the policy that no child shall be released without written authorization from the enrolled parent/guardian. If the unauthorized person states that they have been sent by the parent, the staff member will try to contact the parent by telephone to confirm the pick-up. The parent would be required to confirm information about this person (name, address, telephone number, relationship to the child). Staff would ask for verification from the unauthorized person (Photo ID) and staff would additionally document all information shared by the parent and unauthorized person. If a parent/guardian cannot be contact, the child will NOT be released to that person.

Impaired or Unfit for pick-up

Staff are obligated to ensure the safety and well-being of the children in our care. If an adult arrives for pick-up and is presumed impaired, staff at First Choice Montessori will not allow the child to go with that person. Their emergency contact listed on their registration forms will be called to collect the child. If the person presumed impaired chooses to get into the car, with or without the child, staff will immediately notify the police. The Ministry of Children and Family Development will be called if it is felt that the child needs protection.

Custody Orders

Parents are responsible for supplying documentation regarding custody orders. A copy will be kept on file for the child's protection.

Behavioural Guidance Policy

Next to love, a sense of discipline is a parent's second most important gift to a child. Staff will work to apply gentle, polite, respectful, consistent and non-punitive ways to teach children limits, guide them into making good choices, and gain lifelong self-regulation skills. Each child is unique, and our goal is to provide nurture, to guide and promote self-confidence and to instill respect for others and self.

Our job is to guide and care. Our staff will NEVER employ the following strategies:

- Shoving, hitting or shaking, confinement or physical restraint
- Confinement or physical restraint by an employee, except to keep the child safe and out of physical harm; for example, if a child darts across the street a teacher may need to hold them for safety reasons only
- Harsh, demeaning or degrading treatment by an employee or another child, whether verbal, emotional or physical, that could humiliate the child or undermine the child's self-respect
- Spanking or any other form of corporal punishment
- Separation, without supervision by a responsible adult, from other children as a form of punishment, deprivation of meals, snacks, rest or necessary use of a toilet
- We must ensure that a child is not, while under the care or supervision of First Choice Montessori Staff, subjected to emotional abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse or neglect as those terms are defined in Schedule H of the Child Care Licensing Regulations of BC.

Teachers will apply age-appropriate strategies:

- Observe the children and continually work to provide a schedule and routine that suits the needs of the children best. Observations will also be important to intervening or helping prevent a potential difficulty among children.
- Acknowledge feelings before setting limits: *"You look really mad. It is ok to be mad, but we still must keep our hands on our own body."* Or *"Yes, it is hard to wait in line. The rule is we must take turns. I know you can do it."*
- Redirect or divert when appropriate: *"I can see you really want to be outside, let's get our coats."* Or *"You are so good at being kind to your friends. Let's show them how much we care by using gentle hands."*
- Respectfully gain the child's attention. In situations where a child is losing control, a teacher can calm them by getting on the child's level, connecting through eye contact and speaking in a calm voice.
- Provide suitable alternatives for unwanted behaviour: *"You can throw the ball into the net or here at the target. If we throw the ball over the fence, we will lose it,"* rather than, *"Don't do that!"*
- Explain and model appropriate behaviour and reasons why some behaviours are inappropriate, focusing on the behaviour, not the child: *"When you throw sand at Kyle, it hurts his eyes. Please keep the sand in the box."*
- Use positive reinforcement, recognizing/rewarding appropriate behaviour with praise such as *"I really liked how you took turns with Sally, great job!"*
- Positive directions, positive statements of expected behaviour such as: *"walk, please"* instead of saying *"don't run inside"*.
- Real choices: Children are provided with a choice of acceptable alternatives such as: *"Do you want to help clean up the Lego or the play dough?"* instead of *"do you want to help clean up?"* Or *"Which toy would you like? The big one or the small one?"* rather than, *"Choose a toy"*.
- Teachers will model appropriate behaviour and respect for all, such as saying, please and thank you, and always acting respectfully and pleasantly.
- Teachers will support inclusion and cultural differences. *"Yes, we all have differences, that's what makes the world so interesting."* Or *"It is nice to be who you are. We are all different."*
- Age-appropriate limits, staff will positively set limits and periodically remind children. Preloading for transitions and expected behaviour *"When we go outside let's remember to walk slowly and hold the railings down the stairs"*.

- Limit the use of equipment if needed. When other methods of redirection or other verbal requests are not working, limiting the use of equipment can be used: *“The climbing equipment is off limits because climbers are using it in an unsafe way.”*
- Provide opportunities to make amends: *“Sharon’s feeling very sad; let’s get her a Kleenex and make her feel better.”*
- Provide comfortable, appropriate and balanced workspaces and rest spaces.
- Provide a quiet area of play if needed. Some children can become overstimulated by louder and busier environments. To prevent behaviour from escalating, children can be asked to have a break in a quiet area of the class. They will be given a cuddle toy, quiet activity or a book to help them self-regulate. When they are ready, they can join back into the group setting.

Reportable Incidents and Procedures

Certain incidents are considered “reportable” by BC Child Care Licensing. These incidents include:

- o Aggressive or unusual behaviour
- o Choking (that requires first aid practices to be administered)
- o Disease/illness outbreak or occurrence (including any reportable disease, or any illness/symptoms affecting three or more students within a three-day period)
- o Emergency restraint
- o Allegations of abuse
- o Significant injury or illness (defined as any that requires emergency care by a physician, or transfer to a hospital)
- o Medication error - an error in giving medication to a person in care and requires emergency intervention or transfer to hospital
- o Missing or wandering person - a person in care who is missing
- o Poisoning - ingestion of a poison or toxic substance by a person in care
- o Service delivery problem - any condition or event which could reasonably be expected to impair the ability of the licensee or the employees of the licensee, to provide care or which affects the health, safety, or well-being of persons in care, excluding closures outlined in the licensee’s policies (ex. weather closures). A full list of reportable incidents can be found online at: http://www.bclaws.ca/Recon/document/ID/freeside/332_2007#ScheduleH

IN THE CASE OF A REPORTABLE INCIDENT, FIRST CHOICE MONTESSORI STAFF WILL:

1. Address the immediate safety of children in care.
2. Follow up with a phone call to any parent(s) of the child(ren) that was/were involved in the incident. Such phone calls will be completed by the Managers of First Choice Montessori.
3. Report the incident to the local Licensing Office by telephone, email or fax within 24 hours of the incident. If the incident is a high-risk incident, the Licensing Office must be contacted immediately.
4. Complete the required Incident Report Document:
 - All details of the incident will be recorded, including the date, time, and people involved, and a thorough explanation of the incident. If applicable, records will be made of witness accounts (supervisors, assistants, and third-party accounts)
 - Staff will also include an explanation of any changes in the procedure(s) that will be adopted to prevent the incident from reoccurring.
5. Report the incident to the Licensing Officer within 24 hours of the incident
6. Mail a copy of the Incident Report to the Licensing Officer
7. Keep a copy of the report on file at First Choice Montessori
8. Discuss any required changes with the Licensing Officer

Unacceptable Behaviours

The following behaviours by children, staff, parents/guardians and others involved in our center are unacceptable at all times:

- All forms of bullying (physical, verbal, emotional, social or cyber bullying), including comments, actions or visual displays that are intentional, hurtful and repetitive
- Harassment, including behaviour that degrades, demeans, humiliates or embarrasses someone that a reasonable person would know is unwelcome
- All forms of abuse (sexual, physical or psychological), including verbally, in writing or otherwise
- Discrimination against any person or group because of their race, colour, ancestry, nationality or place of origin, ethnic background, religion, age, sex, gender-determined characteristics, sexual orientation, marital and family status, source of income, political belief and physical or mental disability
- Actions that put another person at risk of harm, including violent acts (with or without a weapon) and threatening someone

Consequences for Inappropriate Behaviour

We will consistently respond to inappropriate behaviour by children, parents/guardians, staff and others involved in our center by:

- Reminding people of expectations and limits (based on the development level of the child)
- Using a respectful approach to explain why a behaviour is inappropriate and what behaviour is expected
- Talking only about the behaviour, not labeling the person
- Responding sympathetically and acknowledging feelings
- Establishing natural, logical consequences

Depending on the severity and frequency of the behaviour, we will consider further steps such as:

- Using behavioural analysis to learn what may be contributing to a child's inappropriate behaviour and how to help reduce or eliminate the behaviour
- Having a formal or informal meeting to discuss concerns and to develop an action plan to encourage appropriate behaviour in the future
- Giving a written warning that outlines specific concerns and consequences if the behaviour continues
- Accessing outside resources for help, such as: a behaviour specialist or other professionals to help staff understand and reduce a child's inappropriate behaviour
- Child and family services to access parenting supports
- Mediation services to resolve conflicts between adults
- Suspending or dismissing a staff member
- Suspending or withdrawing child care services because of a child's or family member's inappropriate behaviour