



PARENT HANDBOOK

INFANT & TODDLER

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HOURS OF OPERATION

Sprouts House will operate Monday to Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm between January and December, we will be closed on all statutory holidays, if a statutory holiday falls on a weekend, Sprouts House will be closed on the following Monday in observance of the holiday.

In addition, the centre will be closed for **two Professional Development (PRO-D) days** each year. These PRO-D days will align with the **School District 61 (Greater Victoria)** designated professional development days.

This alignment provides our educators with valuable opportunities to engage in current training and professional learning, ensuring they meet the **40 hours of Professional Development** required to renew their certificates to practice, as mandated by the **ECE Registry**.

Sprouts House will close for Summer and Christmas break, which is 2 weeks long. They are paid breaks. Families will be given the exact dates for Christmas and Summer breaks each year.

Monthly fees include all statutory holidays - these are paid days. Fees are based on booked days, not attendance.

Fees also include music lessons.

Refunds will not be given for days that your child does not attend the daycare. Unpaid fees are subject to immediate suspension or termination of care unless reasonable arrangements are made and accepted by both parties.

Policy regarding a child who is absent: The Monthly fee remains the same.

Holidays: Monthly fees include all statutory holidays - these are paid days.

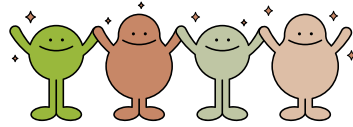
New Year's Day, Family Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, BC Day, Labour Day, National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, Thanksgiving Day, Remembrance Day, and Christmas Day

Vacation policy :

2 weeks Summer break, 2 weeks during Christmas/ New years

On the Friday preceding the Christmas break, the centre will close at 12:00 p.m. for cleanup and organizational activities in preparation for the new year.

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Welcome to Sprouts House!

Program Philosophy

At Sprouts House Early Learning Center, we believe that each child is a competent, curious, and capable learner. Our approach is based on the emergent curriculum, which builds upon children's interests, strengths, and natural desire to explore the world around them.

We recognize that early childhood is a critical stage for social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development. Our educators create nurturing, inclusive, and developmentally appropriate environments where children feel safe, respected, and supported.

Strong, trusting relationships are central to our philosophy. We value open communication with families and work in partnership to support each child's unique growth and well-being.

At Sprouts House, we aim to foster creativity, independence, and a lifelong love of learning in every child. We are committed to providing high-quality care that promotes a sense of belonging, emotional security, and joyful discovery
inclusion & equity policy

Sprouts House welcomes all families and celebrates the diversity of our community. We respect and value children and families of all cultural backgrounds, languages, races, genders, family structures, abilities, and beliefs. Our program reflects inclusive values in the toys we provide, the books we read, the songs we sing, and the way we support each child's sense of identity and belonging.

Staff

At Sprouts House Early Learning Center, we are proud to have a team of qualified and dedicated educators who bring experience, passion, and professionalism to our program.

All educators are certified as Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) and, in many cases, hold additional certifications as Infant & Toddler Specialists and Special Needs Educators. All staff maintain valid First Aid certification, and whenever possible, Food Safe certification as well.

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Many of our team members have several years of experience in the early childhood education field. As part of our commitment to quality care, our staff regularly engage in professional development through workshops, conferences, independent study, and ongoing training in areas of interest.

Our educators are committed to fostering warm, respectful relationships with children and families, supporting child-led learning, and maintaining a safe, inclusive, and engaging environment.

Substitute Staff

Qualified and approved substitute educators are called in when regular staff are away, in order to ensure consistency and maintain required staff-to-child ratios (1:4 for Infant and Toddlers), as outlined by provincial licensing regulations.

Substitute educators are expected to follow the routines and philosophy of Sprouts House and work in partnership with the team to support children's care and well-being. All substitutes have completed criminal record checks and meet the qualifications required for their role.

Students and Practicum Placements

From time to time, Sprouts House welcomes Early Childhood Education students who are completing practicums or seeking supervised work experience. These placements allow future educators to gain valuable insight into high-quality child care while supporting our team.

All students are introduced to families upon arrival and are supervised by certified educators at all times. They will have completed criminal record checks before beginning their placement.

We value the opportunity to contribute to the growth of new educators and appreciate your support in helping us provide a positive, respectful learning environment for them.

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Infant Program

At Sprouts House, our infant program is rooted in responsive caregiving. We understand that each baby has a unique rhythm for sleeping, feeding and playing, so our approach is flexible, warm and attentive.

While there is no rigid group schedule, the day follows a gentle flow of nurturing routines, one-on-one care, sensory-rich experience.

Educators remain attuned to each child's cues, and all routines are adjusted to support individual development.

Our Infant Program accommodates 12 children, aged from 9 to 18 months. A typical day in the infant room includes:

TIME	ACTIVITY
8:00 AM - 9:00 AM	Arrival/Free play/Individual feeding
9:00 AM - 10:30 AM	Circle and Tummy time.
10:30 AM - 12:00 PM	Music and Movement/ Stroller rides/Nap time
12:00 PM - 2:00 PM	Individual feeding/Books, One-on-One interaction
2:00 PM - 3:30 PM	Art time/Sensory play
3:30 PM - 5:00 PM	Feeding/Outdoor exploration/Pick up time

Note: Nap times and feedings are never restricted by the routine above. Every infant is supported based on their personal schedule.

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Toddler Program

At Sprouts House, our Toddler program balances structure with flexibility. We provide a predictable routine that helps children feel safe, while allowing space for creativity, exploration, and individual needs. Our emergent curriculum supports toddlers as they grow socially, emotionally, and physically through play based, hands-on experiences.

Our Toddler Program accommodates 12 children, aged from 18 to 36 months. A typical day in the Toddler room includes:

TIME	ACTIVITY
8:00 AM - 8:45 AM	Arrival/Table activities/Clean up
8:45 AM - 9:30 AM	Wash hands/Morning snack
9:30 AM - 10:30 AM	Circle time/Music class/Arts and Crafts
10:30 AM - 11:30 AM	Outdoor time/Nature walks/Gross motor exploration
11:30 AM - 12:15 PM	Lunch time
12:15 PM - 2:30 PM	Story time/Nap time
2:30 PM - 3:00 PM	Snack time
3:00 PM - 4:00 PM	Outdoor time
4:00 PM - 5:00 PM	Sensory/Table activities Pick up time

Note: Our educators remain flexible throughout the day to meet the needs of children. All transitions are handled gently, and children are given time to adjust between activities

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Extracurricular Lessons & Their Benefits at Sprouts House

At Sprouts House, we believe in nurturing the whole child through a rich variety of experiences. That's why we offer extracurricular lessons, thoughtfully designed for each age group. These activities support developmental growth, build new skills, and make each day fun and engaging for our little ones.

1. Music Lessons (Infants & Toddlers)

Incorporating music into early childhood education promotes language development, social interaction, and emotional expression. Musical experiences also help introduce abstract concepts in a fun and age-appropriate way — giving children a great foundation for future learning.

At Sprouts House, our infants and toddlers enjoy personalized music sessions with our amazing instructors, Laura and Olimpo. They bring different instruments, songs, and engaging activities each week — and the children absolutely love it!

2. Dance Lessons (Toddlers Only)

Dance is a fantastic way for toddlers to explore rhythm, movement, and expression. While still a bit advanced for infants, toddlers thrive in dance lessons as they:

- Learn new sounds, words, and movement patterns
- Build motor skills and coordination
- Strengthen communication and social interaction
- Develop creativity and imagination

Our dance lessons are filled with music, energy, and joy — giving toddlers a space to move, express, and shine!

3. Spanish Lessons (Infants & Toddlers)

Exposure to a second language early in life is a powerful way to boost cognitive development and cultural awareness. At Sprouts House, we introduce Spanish through engaging and playful activities, led by our wonderful Spanish-speaking teachers.

Children participate in circle time, songs, stories, and simple vocabulary games that make learning Spanish a natural and joyful part of their day. Even our youngest learners benefit from hearing and repeating new sounds — building listening skills and laying the foundation for bilingual language development.

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Fees & Payment Policy

At Sprouts House, we offer high-quality, nurturing care exclusively for infants and toddlers. Our small group sizes, experienced staff, and daily enrichment activities — including music, dance, yoga, and Spanish — support your child’s development in a safe and engaging environment.

Our pricing reflects the high level of attention, specialized care, and premium programming we provide every day.

Registration & Deposit Fees

- Registration Fee: \$150 (non-refundable)

Sibling Discount: \$75 off the registration fee for each additional child.

Monthly Tuition

Age Group	Full Monthly Fee	Parent Portion* After CCFRI
Infants (Under 18 months)	\$1775	\$875
Toddlers (18 - 36 months)	\$1775	\$875

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Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative (CCFRI)

Sprouts House is proud to participate in the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative (CCFRI), a provincial program that reduces monthly childcare fees for eligible families.

Temporary Full Payment Requirement (Until CCFRI is Active)

Please note that CCFRI funding may take a few weeks to process after enrollment. During this time, families are required to pay the full monthly fee upfront. Once Sprouts House receives CCFRI funding from the government, a refund or credit will be issued to reflect the reduced rate.

This temporary measure ensures we can pay staff, cover rent, and continue offering the enriching daily programs your children receive. Thank you for your understanding and support during this transition period.

Sprouts House is committed to transparency and will notify families in advance of any changes to fees resulting from CCFRI adjustments. If CCFRI funding is delayed or temporarily suspended, families remain responsible for paying full fees until funding is reinstated.

Affordable Child Care Benefit (ACCB)

The Affordable Child Care Benefit (ACCB) is a provincial program that assists families with the cost of childcare.

At Sprouts House:

- Parents are responsible for paying full fees until subsidy approval is confirmed.
- Once ACCB is received, the approved amount will be applied as a credit or refunded.
- Parents are responsible for submitting their ACCB renewal on time. If subsidy lapses, families are responsible for paying the full fee until reapproved.
- Please note: Absences longer than 10 consecutive days may result in a temporary suspension of ACCB coverage during that period.

Observation Period

We offer a 2-week observation period upon enrollment. During this time, either the parent or Sprouts House may choose to end the care agreement.

- If Sprouts House ends care within the observation period, your deposit will be refunded.
- If the parent chooses to withdraw, the deposit is non-refundable.

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Registration Policy

Once your child's space is confirmed, Sprouts House Early Learning Center will send you an email with next steps to complete the enrollment process.

To enroll your child at Sprouts House, please complete the following steps:

1. Download and Complete the Registration Form and Emergency Contact Card
(You can find the downloadable forms in our website)
2. E-Transfer the \$150 Non-Refundable Registration Fee
3. Provide an Up-to-Date Immunization Record
4. Review the Sprouts House Parent Handbook and return the signed agreement form to confirm your understanding of our policies and procedures.
5. Provide a Copy of Custody Restrictions (If Applicable)
6. Provide two recent Photos of Your Child
7. Sign the payment agreement form to confirm your preferred method of monthly fee payment (e-transfer or pre-authorized debit).

Completing these steps ensures that all necessary information and documentation are in place for your child's enrollment at Sprouts House - Early Learning Center.

If you have any questions or need assistance during the registration process, please contact our Center Manager at sproutshousekids@gmail.com

We kindly ask families to keep us informed of any changes to contact details, including address, phone number, email, emergency contacts, or individuals authorized to pick up your child. This information is required by Licensing and helps us ensure your child's safety and well-being at all times.

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Payment Policy

- First month's tuition is due one month before your child's start date to confirm enrollment.
- Monthly tuition is due on the 1st of each month.
- Late Fee: \$10 per day for overdue payments (up to 30 days)
- NSF Cheque Fee: \$25

Payment Options

- Preferred: E-transfer to sproutshousekids@gmail.com
- Pre-authorized debit

Parent Signature/ date

Parent Signature/ date

Provider Signature / date

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Attendance Policy

Routine is an important part of your child's day and helps them feel safe and settled. Regular attendance supports your child's emotional well-being and development.

- If your child will be absent or arriving after 9:00 a.m., please notify us by phone or email no later than 9:00 a.m.
- Parents are welcome to visit, but frequent mid-day visits may disrupt your child's routine and the group's activities.
- Please aim to keep your child on a consistent schedule whenever possible.

Arrival & Departure Procedures

Upon Arrival, please :

- Use hand sanitizer or wash your hands
- Sign your child in
- Place labeled personal items in your child's cubby or bin (e.g., diaper bags, bottles, clothing)
- Place lunch bags in the designated kitchen area
- Label all bottles and soothers
- Speak with a staff member about how your child's night/morning went
- Say a quick, reassuring goodbye to help your child transition into their day

Upon Departure, please :

- Sign your child out and note the time
- Make personal contact with a staff member before leaving

Late Arrival / Pickup Policy

Sprouts House closes at 5:00 p.m. Please plan your day accordingly. If you anticipate being late:

- Notify us as early as possible
- If your child remains in care past 5:00 p.m. without prior arrangement, a **late fee of \$3 per minute** will apply
- After 30 minutes, if no parent or emergency contact can be reached, we are required to contact the **Ministry of Children and Family Development**

Important: Children will only be released to authorized individuals listed on the registration form. If someone else is picking up your child, written and verbal permission must be provided in advance.

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Withdrawal Policy

If you choose to withdraw your child from Sprouts House, a written notice of 4 weeks is required. This allows us to offer the space to another family and plan accordingly.

- There is no refund or fee reduction for early withdrawal
- Deposits are only refunded if Sprouts House initiates the termination of care during the observation period

Termination of Services

We reserve the right to terminate a child's enrollment at any time for the following reasons (but not limited to):

- Failure to pay fees on time
- Repeated late pickups
- Incomplete or missing required forms
- Disrespectful or uncooperative behavior from parents
- A child's ongoing difficulty adjusting to group care
- Behavior that endangers others or staff
- Our inability to meet the child's developmental needs
- Repeated violation of Sprouts House policies
- Serious or prolonged illness

Whenever possible, we will work with families to find solutions before terminating care.

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Gradual Transition Plan

We understand that starting child care can be an emotional and overwhelming experience for young children. To ease the adjustment, we follow a gentle transition plan:

Transition Plan

Day 1: 1–2 hours, parent stays with child in the classroom.

Day 2: 1–2 hours, parent gradually steps out for short periods while child remains with educators.

Day 3: Half-day (morning), including snack and outdoor play.

Day 4: Half-day with lunch, nap optional if child is comfortable.

Day 5: Full day, parent available on call if needed.

Supporting Your Child's Transition

We know it can be emotional for both children and parents during drop-off, especially in the early days of care. At Sprouts House, we aim to make this transition as smooth and comforting as possible.

- We recommend a brief and loving goodbye at the door. Lingered can make separation more difficult for your child.
- It's completely normal for some children to cry or become upset at drop-off. In most cases, children settle quickly after the parent leaves and become engaged in the day's activities.
- Children who have never attended care before may take 1–2 weeks or longer to fully adjust. Every child is different, and we honor their pace.
- We allow for a 4-week adjustment period, during which we'll work closely with you to monitor progress and provide support.
- Our team will offer daily feedback about how your child is doing emotionally, socially, and physically.
- If we feel that your child is having continued difficulty adjusting, we will collaborate with you to find the best solution—including discussing whether a smaller group setting may better meet their needs.

You are always welcome to call us during the day if you're feeling unsure or just want to check in on how your child is doing. We're here to support both of you.

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Health Safety and Hygiene policy

At Sprouts House, we prioritize the health, safety, and comfort of every child in our care. Please review the following policies related to immunizations, head lice, potty training, and personal belongings.

Immunization Policy

To comply with Child Care Licensing Regulations, Sprouts House must maintain up-to-date immunization records for all enrolled children in the event of a public health concern.

- At enrollment, parents must provide a current immunization record for their child.
- If you choose not to immunize, you must provide a signed and dated letter stating:
 - Your decision not to immunize
 - Your understanding of the benefits of immunization, possible side effects, and the risks of non-immunization
- If there is an outbreak of a preventable illness, non-immunized children may be required to stay home until the risk of exposure has passed.

Head Lice Policy

Sprouts House is committed to maintaining a healthy environment for all children and staff. While head lice are not considered a serious medical condition, they are contagious and require immediate attention to prevent spreading.

If lice are detected at Sprouts House:

- The child's parent/guardian will be notified promptly.
- The child may remain at the center for the rest of the day but must be treated before returning the following day.
- Written confirmation (by email, message, or note) that treatment has begun must be provided to staff upon return.

If lice are detected at home:

- Parents are asked to notify Sprouts House immediately so we can take preventive measures.
- Children must receive treatment before returning to the center.

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Potty Training & Diapering Policy

At Sprouts House, we support families through every stage of toilet learning — from infant diapering to toddler potty training — with patience, encouragement, and consistency.

For Infants

Infants are diapered on a regular schedule and as needed throughout the day.

- Diapering is done in accordance with health and licensing regulations, following strict hygiene protocols.
- Parents are asked to provide enough diapers and wipes each day, along with any creams or ointments, clearly labeled with the child's name.
- Daily diapering information is recorded and shared with parents.

For Toddlers

When your child shows signs of readiness, we will work closely with you to support a consistent potty training routine:

- Please let us know when you begin training at home so we can follow a similar schedule and approach during the day.
- If your child becomes frustrated or disinterested, we may pause and try again later — always in collaboration with you.
- We recommend easy-to-remove clothing and extra underwear and clothes during this stage.

Potty training takes time and patience. We approach it with flexibility, encouragement, and positive reinforcement. Open communication between families and staff ensures the best experience for your child.

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Home Toys Policy

To reduce the risk of lost or broken items and minimize distractions, toys from home should stay at home. Exceptions:

- Children are welcome to participate in Show & Share, which will be scheduled weekly.
- Comfort items such as a blanket or soft toy for nap time are permitted — please label these clearly.

Napping policy

At Sprouts House, we recognize that each infant and toddler has their own unique sleep routine. We aim to follow each child's individual sleeping patterns while helping them gradually adapt to the center's daily rhythm.

Procedure:

- Nap and rest periods are provided every day, following lunch and/or as needed throughout the day, based on each child's developmental needs and home routine.
- During nap time, children are invited to rest on their individual cot or nap mat with their personal bedding.
- Families are encouraged to send comfort items such as blankets, soft toys, or soothers to help their child feel secure.
- While napping is not forced, we provide a quiet, calm rest period for all children after lunch (minimum 30 minutes), where the environment is dimmed, soft music may play, and quiet activities are provided for those who are awake.

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Guidance and Support Policy

At Sprouts House, our approach to guidance reflects our core philosophy: to nurture children's social-emotional development through gentle, respectful, and developmentally appropriate practices.

Our goal is to help children develop:

- Self-regulation and emotional awareness
- Confidence and independence
- Empathy and positive social skills

Because we care for infants and toddlers, we understand that behaviors such as crying, biting, pushing, or grabbing are normal parts of early development. These moments are treated as learning opportunities, not misbehavior. Our role is to model, guide, and scaffold rather than punish.

Positive Guidance Techniques

We use positive guidance strategies that are grounded in empathy, observation, and child-led learning. Our educators will:

- Set clear, consistent, and simple limits based on the child's age and understanding
- Speak respectfully and calmly, even in moments of challenge
- State expectations clearly, avoiding questions when limits are non-negotiable
- Focus on the behavior, not the child
- Offer real, age-appropriate choices
- Redirect toddlers toward appropriate activities
- Give time and space for children to process and respond
- Reinforce positive behaviors through encouragement and modeling
- Support children in using educators as a safe base when navigating conflict

When Intervention is Needed

When challenging behavior arises, educators will respond in supportive, relationship-based ways. Depending on the child's age and the situation, educators may:

- Acknowledge feelings before setting boundaries ("I see you're upset. It's okay to feel mad. It's not okay to hit.")
- Offer a soothing redirection or change in environment
- Model problem-solving or help toddlers express their needs through gestures or simple words.

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- Offer logical consequences that make sense and are connected to the behavior
- Support children in making amends when appropriate, such as helping a friend rebuild a block tower they knocked down

All responses are designed to guide, not punish — and always with the goal of helping the child learn and feel safe.

Collaboration with Families

We believe in open communication with families. If your child is experiencing repeated challenges, we will work with you to develop shared strategies that reflect your child's needs, home routines, and developmental stage.

Conflict resolution with families

We strive to build respectful and collaborative relationships with all families. If concerns or misunderstandings arise, we encourage open communication and a calm, solution-focused approach. Families are welcome to bring any questions or concerns to the staff or director. If needed, a meeting will be arranged to discuss the issue and find a path forward that supports the child and family. We are committed to creating a peaceful and respectful environment for all.

Practices Not Permitted

Sprouts House strictly prohibits any form of punishment or guidance that is harmful, disrespectful, or developmentally inappropriate, including:

- Corporal punishment (shaking, hitting, slapping, or rough handling)
- Yelling, belittling, shaming, or degrading language
- Isolation or physical restraint as discipline
- Withholding food, sleep, comfort, or access to the toilet

These practices violate both our values and licensing regulations, and are never acceptable under any circumstances.

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Daily Active Play

We support children's need for frequent movement opportunities throughout the day. Because infants and toddlers are naturally curious and energetic, we provide age-appropriate, open-ended experiences that allow for safe exploration and physical development.

Our approach includes:

- At least 60 minutes of daily outdoor time, weather permitting
- Flexible indoor play areas for movement, crawling, climbing, dancing, and yoga
- Gross motor activities woven into daily routines (e.g., music and movement, toddler yoga, obstacle courses)
- Safe, least-restrictive environments where infants and toddlers can move freely
- Adapted indoor active play time when weather limits outdoor play

Role of Sprouts House Educators

Educators are actively involved in children's play and will:

- Encourage infants to move by offering tummy time, soft climbing structures, and interactive floor play
- Support toddlers with guided movement experiences like dancing, stretching, and balancing games
- Offer 10–15 minutes of planned movement activities at least twice daily, appropriate for the child's developmental stage
- Model joyful, active participation in movement and play

Physical Active Play

At Sprouts House, we recognize that physical movement is essential for the healthy growth and development of infants and toddlers. Active play supports motor skills, body awareness, coordination, and helps establish lifelong healthy habits.

We aim to provide an environment where children can move freely and safely, both indoors and outdoors, and where screen time is minimized or eliminated to ensure optimal developmental outcomes.

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Screen Time Policy

Sprouts House is a screen-free environment for all children.

- Infants and toddlers under 36 months do not participate in any screen-based activities during their time at the center.
- We do not use tablets, TVs, or electronic toys as part of our programming.
- All enrichment and quiet time activities are screen-free, instead focusing on soothing music, books, cuddles, and sensory play.

We believe young children benefit most from hands-on, real-world experiences, and we are committed to maintaining a screen-free space that supports optimal brain and social-emotional development.

Social Media & Photo Policy

Sprouts House recognize the importance of celebrating children's experiences and sharing our program with families and the community. At the same time, we are committed to protecting each child's privacy and ensuring parents have control over how their child's image is being used

- Photos and videos may be taken during daily activities, special events, and celebrations.
- These images may be used for:
 - Internal purposes (classroom documentation, learning stories, displays).
 - Communication with families (through newsletters, email updates, or private platforms).
 - External purposes (public website, social media accounts, promotional materials) only with written parental consent.

Parent Consent

- At enrollment, parents/guardians will receive a Photo & Media Consent Form.
- Families may choose to:
 - Allow their child's image to be used for all purposes (internal, family communication, social media, promotional).
 - Allow use for internal/family communication only, but not on social media or promotional materials.
 - Decline all photography/videography.
- Parents may change or withdraw consent at any time in writing.

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Privacy & Safeguards

- Children's last names or identifying information will never be shared online.
- Group photos may be used if consent is provided for all children shown.
- Social media accounts will be managed only by designated staff/administration.

Staff & Families

- Staff and families are asked not to post photos or videos of children (other than their own) on personal social media accounts.
- This ensures the privacy and safety of all children in our care.

Appropriate Dress for Active Play

At Sprouts House, children explore, climb, run, crawl, splash, dig, dance — and get messy! We ask that families dress their child in comfortable, weather-appropriate play clothes and shoes every day.

Active play is a key part of our daily program, both indoors and outdoors, so please ensure that your child is dressed for movement, fun, and the season.

Daily Dress Guidelines:

- Clothing should be easy to move in and okay to get messy with paint, dirt, or food.
- Closed-toe shoes with rubber soles are required. No sandals, Crocs, or flip-flops for safety reasons.
- Please avoid tight jeans, overalls with difficult snaps, or clothing that restricts movement.
- Diaper-friendly outfits are best for easy changes.

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Seasonal Clothing Reminders:

We go outside every day, rain or shine, unless weather conditions are unsafe (e.g., extreme heat, wind, or cold). If your child is too sick to go outside, they are too sick to be at daycare.

Summer:

- Light clothing
- Sun hat
- Sunscreen (applied at home, and extra in bag)
- Water shoes / sandals with back straps (only for water play)
- Swimsuit and towel for outdoor water activities

Fall / Spring:

- Waterproof jacket or rain suit
- Rain boots
- Sweater or layered clothing

Winter:

- Warm jacket
- Waterproof boots
- Hat, mittens, and scarf
- Snow pants or warm layers

Additional Reminders:

- Label all belongings: Sprouts House is not responsible for lost or unlabelled items.
- Extra clothing (2–3 full changes) should always be kept in your child's cubby.
- Wet or soiled clothes will be bagged and sent home at the end of the day.

Staff Professional Development

All Sprouts House educators receive annual training on promoting safe movement, physical activity, and developmental play for infants and toddlers. This helps ensure we create a safe, enriching, and developmentally appropriate environment for your child's growth.

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Illness Policy - Communicable Disease

To maintain a safe and healthy environment for all children and staff at Sprouts House, we ask that parents keep children at home if they are showing signs of illness. Our goal is to minimize the spread of communicable illnesses, especially considering the vulnerable age group we serve (infants and toddlers).

Please notify us as soon as possible if your child will be absent due to illness.

Keep your child at home if they have:

- A fever of 100°F (37.8°C) or higher (taken under the arm)
- Vomiting (two or more times in 24 hours)
- Diarrhea (three or more watery stools in 24 hours)
- Thick mucus or pus draining from the eyes (possible eye infection)
- Constant green/yellow nasal discharge (especially if accompanied by other symptoms)
- Any communicable disease (such as chickenpox, hand-foot-mouth, strep throat, etc.)

Children may return to care when they have been symptom-free for at least 24 hours (without the aid of medication). In some cases, a doctor's note may be required before returning.

We go outdoors daily, so if your child is too unwell to participate in outside play, they are too unwell to attend care that day.

Preventive Practices

We maintain daily practices to minimize the spread of illness:

- Frequent handwashing (before and after eating, after toileting, after outdoor play, etc.).
- Cleaning and disinfecting toys, surfaces, and equipment regularly.
- Teaching children healthy habits (covering coughs/sneezes, using tissues, washing hands).
- Following safe food handling and diapering/toileting procedures.

If a Child Becomes Ill at the Center

- The child will be taken to a quiet, supervised rest area away from other children.
- Parents/guardians will be called immediately to pick up the child.

We appreciate your cooperation in helping us keep everyone at Sprouts House safe and healthy!

DAYCARE POLICY HANDBOOK

Medication Policy

For the safety of all children, we follow strict guidelines for administering medication in accordance with BC Child Care Licensing Regulations. Medications (both prescription and non-prescription) will only be given under the following conditions:

Prescription Medications

- Must be provided in the **original pharmacy-labeled container** with:
- Child's full name
- Name of medication
- Dosage and route (oral, nasal, rectal, eye, ear, injection)
- Instructions (e.g., refrigerate, shake well)
- Expiry date
- Name of prescribing physician
- Parents must complete a **Medication Consent Form**
- Staff will store medications in a **locked container**, out of children's reach

Non-Prescription Medications

- Non-prescription medications (including Tylenol, Advil, teething gels, etc.) **require written authorization from a doctor**
- A completed **Non-Prescription Medication Authorization Form** must be on file, signed by both the parent and physician

Additional Notes

- Bottles containing medication (e.g., pain relievers mixed in formula or milk) **will not be given**. These bottles will be stored securely and returned at pickup.
- Parents must inform staff of **any potential side effects or allergic reactions** to a medication.

Allergies

If your child has any food or environmental allergies, it is essential that we are informed in writing before your child begins care.

Once an allergy is reported:

- Parents will be given the required Allergy and Anaphylaxis Care Plan forms to complete.
- The allergy will be posted in the kitchen and classroom, clearly visible for all staff.
- A personalized care plan will be written, detailing steps to take in case of a reaction.

DAYCARE POLICY HANDBOOK

Bottles, snack and Lunch policy

At Sprouts House, parents and caregivers are responsible for providing daily bottles, snacks and lunch for their child. We ask that families provide nutritious, age-appropriate meals that align with Canada's Food Guide and support the healthy development of infants and toddlers.

Please avoid sending food with excessive sugar, candy, chocolate, or chips, as these are not permitted.

Bottles, Breastmilk & Formula (Infants)

- Bottles must be clearly labeled with your child's full name and the date prepared.
- Breastmilk and formula must be stored in sealed containers or bottles.
- Bottles will be kept refrigerated and warmed safely before feeding.
- Prepared formula must follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Any leftover milk or formula after feeding will be discarded.
- Please send enough bottles for the entire day, including extra in case of spills or additional feedings.

Food Storage & Preparation

- All food must be packed in a labeled lunch bag with ice packs to keep items cool throughout the day.
- Please let us know or label if any part of your child's lunch or snack needs to be heated, so we can prepare it before mealtime.
- We are not able to prepare or cook full meals at the center, but we will warm up food when required.

Peanut & Nut Awareness

Sprouts House is a peanut- and nut-aware facility. If a child with a life-threatening allergy is enrolled, all families will be notified immediately, and we may restrict certain foods from being brought into the center.

Acceptable alternatives to peanut butter include:

- Sunflower seed butter
- Soy nut butter
- Almond butter (if no tree nut allergies are present)

Please label all spreads clearly, so staff can verify contents if needed.

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Safe Release of Children Policy

At Sprouts House, your child's safety is our top priority. We have a strict policy in place to ensure that children are released only to authorized individuals in a safe and secure manner.

Authorized Pick-Up

- At the time of enrollment, parents must list all adults authorized to pick up their child on the registration and emergency contact forms.
- Children will only be released to a parent or an authorized adult listed in writing.
- Phone calls or verbal messages will not be accepted as authorization.
- Authorized individuals may be asked to present a valid government-issued photo ID before a child is released.
- If a last-minute change is necessary, written notice (email from the registered parent) must be provided and confirmed with a staff member in advance.
-

Impairment & Safety Concerns

- Sprouts House will not release a child to any individual who appears impaired due to drugs, alcohol, or any condition that may pose a risk to the child.
- In the event a parent or authorized pick-up person appears impaired:
 - Staff will call an alternate contact from the emergency list.
 - If the individual insists on taking the child or becomes confrontational, authorities and the Ministry of Children and Family Development will be notified immediately.
- Repeated or serious safety concerns may result in termination of care.

Custody Orders & Legal Access

- Sprouts House cannot become involved in personal custody disputes. Our responsibility is to follow court-documented custody agreements.
- If a custody order or court ruling limits or defines who may pick up the child, a copy must be provided and kept in the child's confidential file.
- Without a legal document on file, we cannot deny access to a biological parent who seeks to pick up the child.
- It is the parent or legal guardian's responsibility to keep us informed of any changes to custody or guardianship agreements.

DAYCARE POLICY HANDBOOK

Suspected Child Abuse & Neglect Policy

At Sprouts House, the safety, health, and emotional well-being of every child in our care is our highest priority. We believe all children have the right to grow up in an environment free from harm, and we are committed to protecting that right.

What Is Child Abuse and Neglect?

Child abuse and neglect refer to situations where a child is harmed or not properly cared for. The four main types are:

- Physical Abuse
 - Hitting, shaking, burning, or causing physical harm to a child.
- Emotional Abuse
 - Ongoing verbal attacks, threats, or ignoring a child's need for love and affection. This can be as damaging as physical abuse, even without visible signs.
- Sexual Abuse
 - Any sexual contact between an adult and a child or between older and younger children. This includes inappropriate touching or exposing a child to pornography.
- Neglect
 - Failing to provide basic needs like food, clothing, medical care, supervision, shelter, or education. Neglect is just as serious as abuse.

Abuse and neglect can have serious and lasting effects on a child's development, mental health, and physical safety. Infants and toddlers are especially vulnerable.

Our Responsibility to Protect Children

As licensed child care providers in British Columbia, we are legally required to report any concerns of abuse or neglect to the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) or Child Protection Services.

- We are not responsible for investigating or proving abuse.
- We will not inform the family prior to making a report if we believe it could place the child at further risk.
- Staff are trained to observe and document signs of concern, including physical marks, changes in behavior, or disclosures by the child.

Reporting suspected abuse is not an accusation—it is a protective action. Our role is to act in the best interest of the child and allow child protection professionals to assess the situation.

DAYCARE POLICY HANDBOOK

Our Approach to Supervision

Effective Supervision Policy

At Sprouts House, we are committed to maintaining constant, active supervision to ensure the safety, well-being, and healthy development of the infants and toddlers in our care. Supervision is more than just watching — it involves engaging with children, anticipating potential risks, and being present both physically and emotionally throughout the day.

We adhere to regulated staff-to-child ratios at all times:

- Infants (under 18 months): 1 staff per 4 children
- Toddlers (18 months to 36 months): 1 staff per 4 children

These ratios are maintained indoors, outdoors, and during all transitions.

We believe supervision should be intentional, responsive, and proactive. We use the following strategies to create a safe and nurturing learning environment:

1. Awareness of the Environment

- Daily safety checks are conducted indoors and outdoors using a standardized checklist.
- Furniture and equipment are arranged to ensure clear lines of sight to all children.
- Staff are trained to recognize and remove hazards before they become risks.

2. Active Monitoring

- Children are always within sight and sound of a staff member.
- Educators position themselves strategically to observe all play areas.
- Staff are constantly engaged with children — playing, guiding, and responding.

3. Accurate Tracking of Children

- Attendance is documented at arrival and departure.
- Head counts are conducted:
 - During transitions (e.g., inside to outside)
 - After activities (e.g., diapering, meals, nap)
 - Before and after outings
- A current attendance sheet is always with staff.

DAYCARE POLICY HANDBOOK

4. Emergency Awareness

- Staff know the location of:
Emergency contact info, First aid kits, Emergency medications
- All staff are trained in emergency procedures and evacuation protocols

5. Clear Expectations and Safety Rules

- We introduce toddlers to simple safety language (e.g., “walking feet,” “gentle hands”) and model positive behaviors.
- Infants are closely monitored during tummy time, bottle feeding, and while using equipment like bouncers or cribs.

Substitute and Support Staff

All substitutes and support staff are expected to meet the same standards of supervision. They receive orientation on:

- Supervision expectations
- Safety procedures
- Child engagement practices

Observe Children’s Play and Behavior

Staff must:

- Closely monitor and guide children during play that could involve risk — such as playing near doorways, at transition times, or in areas with water or climbing equipment.
- Anticipate potential safety concerns by carefully observing children’s play and stepping in to prevent unsafe situations before they occur.
- Listen attentively, even to children who may not be in immediate view — such as during naps, or when outdoors and physically distanced within the play area.
- Position themselves intentionally to ensure visibility of the entire group at all times.
- Monitor each child’s health for early signs of illness, fatigue, discomfort, or unusual behavior.
- Engage in and guide play, making sure that all interactions are safe, respectful, and developmentally appropriate.

💡 Important: Staff must not engage in activities that take their attention away from children. This includes texting, phone use, personal conversations, or administrative tasks while supervising children. These behaviors are considered a breach of our supervision policy

DAYCARE POLICY HANDBOOK

. Supervision Infractions

- If a staff member is observed engaging in distracting or non-supervisory activities during care hours, the issue will be addressed with a formal meeting and a written warning.
- Three documented supervision-related notices will result in termination of employment.

Bathroom & Diapering Protocols During Outdoor Play

- All children are taken to the bathroom (or have their diapers changed) before going outside.
- If a child needs to be changed or use the bathroom while outside, the entire group will return indoors together.
- No child will ever be left unattended under any circumstances.
- Staff must always bring the center phone and cell phone outdoors in case of an emergency.

To ensure safe and manageable supervision, each group uses the outdoor play area separately.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT OF PARENT HANDBOOK

I acknowledge I have received a copy of the Parent Handbook

Parent Signature/ date

Provider Signature / date

Provider Signature / date