

THE PACE FAMILY PROGRAM

Preschool Component – General Information



The preschool component of the PACE Family Program is a licensed program with Vancouver Coastal Health, Community Care Facilities Licensing (CCFL), Child Care Licensing. As such, there are requirements the preschool must meet, including reporting incidents and facility management.

You are welcome to talk to PACE staff with any questions or concerns regarding how preschool operates. *The Team Leader of the Family Program is Deborah Mollica. You can speak to her directly in the preschool or call her at (604) 266-3141.* You are also welcome to talk to CCFL Child Care Licensing. PACE Licensing Officer is Catharina Christiannse, phone: 604-675-3852.

General Information about the preschool

- 1. Preschool Hours** – The preschool program operates Monday through Thursday, 9:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. The school year runs from September to the fourth week of July (including summer programming).

The PACE Program facility is open:

- Monday through Thursday - 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- Fridays - 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
- Staff may also be involved in the Outreach Support Services, home visits and meetings, it is advisable to call ahead to ensure someone is present in the afternoon.
- The staff are not always available to answer your call. Please leave a message on our voicemail and someone will return your call as soon as possible.



2. **Bus Service** – This service is offered to children attending the preschool program, within certain geographical areas in Vancouver. The program tries to give consideration to the length of time a child may spend on the bus, both to and from the program. The bus service staff incorporate and complement many educational concepts from the preschool along with the development of social skills. Information from the home can be passed on to the bus team in the mornings to help the staff be aware and support the child in their day.



- Please refer to **"PACE Bus - Service Summary"** * for more details.
- Please be outside / ready at both pick up / drop off times. PACE staff will contact you if bus will be more than 5 minutes late.
- If the child is sick and the bus service is not needed, please call PACE at (604) 266-3141 by 7:15 a.m. We will assume your child is still sick unless we hear from you. And when your child is ready to come back to PACE, please call by 7:15 a.m. for the bus to return.
- **NOTE: Children will only be released to authorized individuals.**
- If snowfall is in the weather forecast, staff will provide you with a copy of the **"PACE Bus - Snow Policy"** which will define alternate pick up locations.

3. Child Pick-up & Drop off

- Only those adults named by the parent(s) / guardian(s) can pick up the child from PACE staff. Any changes must be made prior to another adult picking up a child. This also applies when the child is dropped off from the bus service – *only people authorized by parents or guardians will be allowed to receive the child.* Identification will be required.
- If the individual designated to receive child is not available and other arrangements have not been made, emergency contacts will be called. If they are not available, the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) will be called to ensure the child is in a safe location. Every effort to reach parents / guardians and emergency contacts will be made.
- If the individual to pick up / receive child is, in the judgement of staff, impaired in any way and is unable to adequately care for the child, the staff will not release the child to that person. Staff will offer to contact others designated to receive child. If these attempts are unsuccessful, MCFD will be called.



4. **Holidays** – The program is closed on statutory holidays. In addition, we are closed for a 2 week winter break (same holiday break as public schools), 1 week spring break and for the month of August. The last week of July, the staff are engaged in clean-up, review and planning and as such, the children do not attend. A summary of the year's events and holidays will be shared with you when you begin.



5. **Attendance** – *Regular attendance is crucial for your child to gain maximum benefit from being in this unique environment.* Consistent participation helps the child feel comfortable and trusting, and helps with their skill development and learning. It also ensures the child does not feel like they have "missed out" on events and experiences with peers. Your attendance and participation is also essential. It is through our partnership that we can work to help support you and your child to reach the desired changes you identify.

6. **Daily Schedule** – Generally each morning contains the same elements however these may vary given the specific themes or interests of the children. Staff create a predictable yet flexible routine that offers children the security of a stable framework for their day.
7. **Active Play** - The PACE Family Program recognizes the importance of physical activity for young children. Implementation of a variety of appropriate physical activity practices supports the physical and mental well-being of all children.

What this looks like in the PACE Family Program:



- The children in the program spend the first hour of our day outside in our yard, in our neighbourhood, at our community walk way or in our neighbourhood park. These opportunities allow us to provide the children a variety of active play opportunities.
- Activities such as running, jumping, dancing or riding tricycles promote good health as well as build confidence and mastery, which is essential in the development of positive physical and mental health.
- The PACE Family Program team embrace physical movement and the playful nature from the beginning of our day and continue as we move inside the building. Through a playful mind/body approach, free of screen time, we recognize that it is through engaging in this way of being, that the children will begin to embrace the benefits that active play supports throughout their lives.
- We will endeavor to support children in their skill development in a way that is playful, age appropriate and individualized.

8. **Illness, Communicable Diseases, Health Checks & Emergencies**

- Children cannot come to PACE when they are ill, and should return only when they can fully participate in the program (e.g. including being able to go outside). Children with suspected or known infectious diseases, (e.g. measles, rubella, chicken pox or mumps) will be excluded until non-infectious. If children are suspected of having any of these, they will be excluded pending diagnosis. PACE follows the protocol set out by Vancouver Coastal Health.
- Children will be asked to stay or go home if they have any of the following:

▪ Fever over 38.3 Celsius	▪ Exhaustion
▪ Vomiting & diarrhea before coming to PACE	▪ Undiagnosed pain
▪ Any exposed open sores or wounds	▪ Earaches
▪ Infections (as above & including, amongst others, impetigo & pink-eye)	



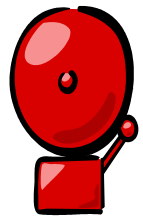
PLEASE NOTE: Children need to have 24 hours of wellness before returning.

- Staff will monitor children’s health and wellness and alert parents of any concerns or changes when at the preschool (i.e. become ill while at school) and will determine if your child is able to be at preschool. Given the age of the children, and despite best attempts at prevention and education, the children can be exposed to a variety of ailments such as colds, flus, pin worms, head lice and chicken pox.
- **Please ensure your contact numbers are up to date as well as those of emergency contacts so we can contact a caregiver if necessary.**
- ***In the event of an emergency***, your child will be taken to the nearest emergency service and parents/guardians will be notified. Every attempt will be made to contact the child’s physician.
- The program links with community health care professionals, where needed, to support children. Community Health Nurses visit the preschool periodically and check the children’s Immunization Information Forms to see if all are up to date.

9. Medical Concerns / medications - Please alert staff to any health concerns or allergies that you or your child may have so we can ensure the health of your family. Please refer to the PACE Parent Handbook regarding medications.

10. Fire Drills & Earthquake Preparedness

- The staff conduct fire drills and emergency drills on a regular basis to ensure children are familiar with emergency procedures. Food, water and other emergency supplies are stored in the centre (as well as on the bus) in case of earthquake or other major emergency.
- In the event of an emergency, (or serious maintenance problem at the centre making it either not possible or undesirable for the program to operate), the children will be relocated to the off-site designated meeting place:



Marpole Community Centre
990 West 59th Ave (Oak and 59th Ave)
(604) 257- 8180 email: marpoleco@vancouver.ca

Staff will then be in contact with parents to update them and discuss plans to transfer children to their parent/guardian.

- A summary of the emergency exits and plans are posted on each floor of the building. Please familiarize yourself with the locations. Staff will review this with you soon after you start your participation.

11. Snacks & Food

- The preschool program will provide snacks to all children each morning that will be available upon their arrival. The snack is available throughout the first 45 minutes during the outside play period. Children are encouraged to check in with their bodies and make decisions whether they are hungry. The snack table is supervised by a teacher, making this a valuable time of social connection and learning regarding safe and socially acceptable ways of eating together.
- There is always a fruit, often a vegetable, protein and grain offering. Snack time is the time in the day where children are offered milk, frequently in the form of hot chocolate or smoothie. It is always our

intention to provide snacks that the children will enjoy and encourage them to come to the snack table. The team strives to create a nurturing social experience throughout this period.

- We will always provide alternatives for children that may have food sensitivities and will exclude foods where there are severe allergies. If there are food sensitivities, we will work alongside parents in addressing these issues. We strive to provide an atmosphere, which is warm and inclusive particularly when food is involved.
- Some examples of foods we enjoy at PACE are:
 - ⇒ Apples, oranges, pears, peaches, berries of all types, all types of melons and grapes
 - ⇒ Carrots, cucumber, peppers, broccoli, cauliflower, snap peas, lettuce, celery (whenever possible we strive to have fruits and vegetables that are local and in season.)
 - ⇒ Cheese, eggs, tuna or salmon
 - ⇒ Pancakes, muffins, bread, toast
- The teachers record the foods offered each day and if there are any concerns, which may be, food related we are able to share what foods were offered when. Twice a month we will be doing a cooking activity. Ingredients used in these activities will be recorded. Please feel free to call if there are any food related issues.
- *We ask that in the lunches you send, to please keep juices, cookies and sweets at home.* Please talk with the staff if you would like some lunch ideas.
- We provide the children with milk at snack, and water throughout the morning.



12. Clothing & shoes

- Please send your child in clothes that are appropriate for the weather. Clothes from home are always the child's first choice.
- We have extra clothing and shoes on hand when needed as well as rain pants (also known as 'muddy buddies'), for rainy days.
- As our program involves play in sand, clay, paint, water and other messy activities, we ask that you send your child in play clothes that can get dirty. We always appreciate a back-up set of clothing.

13. Toys from home

- Children are welcome to bring toys from home however there are some guidelines for them. They must be either willing to share these with friends while on route to and from the preschool, or have them placed in the front area of the bus for safety. When they arrive at PACE, they can bring their toys from home to show their friends and then play/share them (for an amount of time determined by the teachers) before they are stored in their cubby or on the bus.
- When starting any new program, children sometimes find comfort in a transitional object from home. The staff will consider when children first start the program whether a **"transitional object"** may be helpful for your child and will talk with you about this as an option. They will also keep this in mind when setting limits around these kinds of items from home.



- 14. Birthdays** - Each child's birthday is acknowledged at PACE. We try to celebrate each child as close to their birthday as possible and try to have parents / significant people join in the festivities. We enjoy a cupcake or muffin together in celebration with all the children. We also give the child a book for their birthday from the teachers. **As always, please alert staff to any allergies or food restrictions.**
- 15. Volunteers & Students** - Students and volunteers play an important and significant role at PACE. We carefully considered each placement prior to them being involved in the program and have requirements in terms of their skill level and commitment to the children/program. They are required to undergo a Criminal Record Search before they start. We have been fortunate to have some consistent volunteers and have had many wonderful students. PACE is a training centre for students from the Community Counselling Program at the Native Education Centre, as well as for other masters' level students.

**PLEASE KNOW THAT WE ARE ALWAYS INTERESTED
IN HEARING YOUR INPUT AND ANSWERING ANY QUESTIONS
OR CONCERNS YOU MAY HAVE.**

PLEASE CALL PACE AT (604) 266-3141 OR SPEAK TO ANY OF THE STAFF.