



NANAIMO Innovation Academy

2024/2025 Daycare Policies Package

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WELCOME TO NANAIMO INNOVATION ACADEMY

OUR COMMITMENT TO RECONCILIATION

Nanaimo Innovation Academy acknowledges and thanks the Snuneymuxw First Nation, on whose unceded, traditional territories we live, play, and learn. We teach children to uphold principles of reconciliation and respect Indigenous peoples as the founding peoples of Canada. We call for an end to the systemic inequities faced by Indigenous communities.

In accordance to the Early Childhood Educators of British Columbia (ECEBC) Code of Ethics we 'acknowledge we have a responsibility to initiate decolonizing transformations in non-indigenous communities, including valuing and promoting First Nations, Metis, and Inuit cultures, languages, knowledge, and ways of being'.

We do this throughout our programs in these key ways:

- 1) Educational opportunities – staff, children, and families are provided opportunities to support further learning on a variety of topics that provide a deeper understanding.
- 2) Resources – we commit to purchasing and/or borrowing resources for the daycare that helps to deepen our understanding. All resources will be developmentally appropriate, age appropriate, and culturally appropriate.
- 3) Experiences – we strengthen existing partnerships and welcome new community members to the daycare to provide authentic experiences and learning opportunities for our children and staff.

We also commit to meeting and surpassing Call to Action 92 which calls upon the corporate sector, including charities, "to adopt the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) as a reconciliation framework and to apply its principles, norms, and standards to corporate policy and core operational activities involving Indigenous peoples and their lands and resources."

We do this by:

- 1) Committing to meaningful consultation and building respectful relationships.
- 2) Ensuring that Indigenous peoples have equitable access to jobs, training, and education opportunities at our daycare.
- 3) Providing education for management and staff on the history of Indigenous peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal-Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.

We at NIA are in the early stages of this process of learning, and we invite all other voices into this learning together—ongoing.

OUR HISTORY

We first opened as a daycare on February 15, 2018, with the premise of establishing a care program that utilized the best practices from various educational philosophies-- Waldorf, Montessori, Reggio, Whole Child Education, Play-based Learning-- without being limited by the rigidity of ascribing to just one philosophy. By being flexible and in constant evaluation of what is best for child development, we can innovate and create a program designed for our student's current needs, interests, and growth.

In March 2019, we added an Infant and Toddler Program in the lower floor of the building.

In January 2021, we expanded our building to include a Forest Pre-K Program for children age four and five, which aligns with our pedagogical values and love for outdoor exploration.

In January 2024, we opened a new building next door to the original one. This building offers another Infant and Toddler Program, Forest Pre-K Program, and an afterschool Forest Explorers Program.

We value the natural environment and encourage sensitivity, understanding, and appreciation for all forms of life. We encourage our kids to explore their natural environment and foster their curiosity.

We teach the value of community. There will be communal potlucks, guest speakers for the whole family, and outdoor excursions at various times throughout the year. Relationship-building with our teachers is a key aspect to supporting your child's development. Teachers use constructive guidance and positive reinforcement to guide the children in feeling successful and included while interacting with their peers and others around them.

We put children before profits. Nanaimo Innovation Academy is a non-profit daycare. Any revenue generated will go back into the daycare to ensure that our facilities and play equipment are top-notch, and our staff are adequately compensated and provided with professional development opportunities. Looking after your child during their crucial developmental years is one of the most important jobs. Teachers are grossly underpaid and staffing shortages are a serious problem. Nanaimo Innovation Academy is a certified Living Wage Employer and staff are paid livable wages. This helps mitigate high staff turnover, so that teachers and children can develop long-lasting, meaningful relationships.

BASIC INFORMATION

Daycare Name:	Nanaimo Innovation Academy
Society Name:	Nanaimo Innovation Academy Foundation
Executive Director:	Keely Freeman- admin@nanaimoinnovation.org
Licensee:	Nanaimo Innovation Academy Foundation (Rep: Keely Freeman)
IT Program Manager:	it@nanaimoinnovation.org
Pre-K Program Manager:	prek@nanaimoinnovation.org
Forest Program Manager:	forest@nanaimoinnovation.org
Kitchen Manager:	nutrition@nanaimoinnovation.org
Location 1 Address:	905 Hecate St. Nanaimo, BC V9R 4K7
Location 2 Address:	929 Hecate St. Nanaimo, BC V9R 4K7
Mailing Address:	1078 Haliburton St. Nanaimo, BC V9R 6N6
Phone Number:	250-591-7700
Bookkeeper Email:	office@nanaimoinnovation.org
General Email:	info@nanaimoinnovation.org
Board Email:	nanaimoinnovationboard@gmail.com

We offer 3 programs at 905 Hecate Street:

- Oak IT Program- for ages 16 months to 3 years old
- Oak Pre-K Program- for ages 3 to school age
- Oak Forest Pre-K Program- for ages 4 to school age

We offer 3 programs at 929 Hecate Street:

- Cedar IT Program- for ages 16 months to 3 years old
- Cedar Forest Pre-K Program- for ages 3 to school age
- Forest Explorers Program- for children in kindergarten to grade 3

HOLIDAY POLICY

Nanaimo Innovation Academy will provide parents with an annual events and closure calendar. This will provide all annual events and closure dates.

Each program has closures for spring, summer, and winter maintenance. There are also scheduled Professional Development days, whereby the daycare will close early at 12:30pm so the teachers may take part in professional development opportunities.

All programs are closed for all Canadian statutory holidays. If a holiday should fall on a weekend, we will close the following Monday in lieu of the holiday. We are also closed on Easter Monday in addition to Good Friday.

If your child will not be attending a day or for period of time, please let us know by phone or email the Program Manager. Families are responsible for full fee payments even though their child may not attend all days.

If you miss more than two weeks of care and you receive the Affordable Child Care Benefit (ACCB), you may receive a reduced amount of the ACCB. If the daycare closures make it so that there are less than 20 days of available care in the month, your ACCB will only cover the days of care offered. This will reduce the amount of ACCB you receive.

ARRIVAL POLICY

All families are expected to arrive to the daycare programs and check in no later than 9:00am. This is important so that your child has a chance to settle in and play. When families arrive late, this disrupts the flow of the day.

Upon arrival, please deliver your child directly to one of the staff members at Nanaimo Innovation Academy and ensure that you have signed them in. It is important you converse, as needed, with the staff when both dropping off and picking up your child. This may include conversations outlining your child's needs for the day and/or how their day has gone. Opportunities to discuss important subjects about your child will be done so at scheduled meetings.

The front door and/or front gate will be locked between 9:00am-3:00pm. Families may need to call the office (250-591-7700) to arrange an educator to open the door or gate outside of these hours.

Emergencies happen. We get it. If there is an emergency and you are not able to arrive by 9:00am, please call the daycare 250-591-7700 before 9:00am that day. Please do not email, text, or Facebook message. We will only check the daycare phone. Late drop off is no later than 9:30am.

If you are going to be later than 9:30am, we require you to come at the following times as this is a better transition period and minimizes the disruption to our program. If there is a pattern of lateness, we will connect with you to come up with a plan.

IT Program – between 11:30-12:00pm. Your child should have already eaten if they are an early napper.

Pre-K Program – between 11:30-12:00pm if you want your child to eat lunch or 12:30 if your child has already eaten.

Forest Program – between 12:30-1:00 on short days and 1:30-1:45 on long days, as they will be returning from the forest at that time. We do not allow for drop offs at any other location than the daycare.

Depending on the program you are enrolled in, if you and your child arrive after 9:00am and you have not notified us in advance that there is an emergency, we cannot guarantee we will be able to accommodate your child's attendance. Some programs may have already left on an excursion for the day or we have shifted staffing to accommodate all the programs. There will be no reimbursement of fees if you arrive late and there is not a space for your child.

NOT ATTENDING:

If your child will not be attending a day or a series of days, please call or email to let us know. This alleviates any worries we may have about the wellbeing of your child or your family. Please also let us know if your child is absent due to illness (and what that illness may be).

PICK UP POLICY

We put a lot of emphasis on safe pick-ups. Please do not take your child from Nanaimo Innovation Academy without speaking to a staff member and signing them out. If someone is picking up your child for you, they must be approved by you first on your child's file and they must bring photo identification with them (*see Safe Release of Children Policy*)

Typically, please plan to pick up your child at or after 3pm.

If you need to pick up early, here are the time. Please note, once you have picked up your child, you can not bring them back again until the next day.

IT Program – we can accommodate pick-ups before 12:00pm and after 3pm.

Pre-K Program – we can accommodate pick-ups at any time. If your child naps, please plan to pick up before 1pm or after 3pm.

Forest Pre-K Program – we typically do not allow for pick-ups in the forest or off-site (unless it is an urgent situation). We can accommodate pick-ups when we are back at the daycare, after 12:30 on short days and after 1:30pm on long days.

Forest Explorers – we can arrange for pick ups at any time. Please call the Forest Phone to arrange with the teacher.

LATE PICK-UPS:

If a child is not picked up before 5:00pm (in all daycare programs except Forest Explorers at 5:30pm), the family will be charged \$1 per minute for the first 5 minutes they are late and then \$5 per minute, up to one hour maximum. This will be added to your next month's invoice.

At 1 minute past, we will call parents/ caregivers on file. At 10 minutes past, we will start to call all emergency contacts to see if anyone is available to pick up the child.

If you or an authorized alternate cannot be contacted by 30 minutes past, Nanaimo Innovation Academy will consider the children abandoned and will call the Ministry for Children and Family Development.

On the third time that a child is picked up later than 10 minutes, the family will be notified that care will be suspended until a meeting is held to discuss the reoccurring problem and find a solution. Families will still be expected to pay for their child's spot during this suspension of service.

SAFE RELEASE OF CHILDREN POLICY

Only people who have been previously authorized will be allowed to pick up your child from Nanaimo Innovation Academy. If, in an emergency situation, you need to send someone else to pick up your child, please call us in advance with the name, phone number, and description of the person who will be coming. We will add them to your child's authorized pick-up list.

A parent or guardian must authorize at least two individuals (from the local area) to pick up their child from the daycare. If any contact information changes for any authorized individuals, we request that you notify us as soon as possible so that we can update our records. Annually, we require families to fill out a reconfirmation of enrolment form, which requires families to update the authorized pick-up list.

We require valid photo identification from all unknown persons upon arrival before release a child from our care. Only people listed on the child's authorized pick-up list will be allowed to leave with the child. If you need to add a new name to the list, we will require your signature of approval.

Children will not be released to an unauthorized person, a person without valid photo identification, or anyone whom is deemed incapable of providing safe care. If someone whom is deemed incapable of providing safe care arrives to pick up your child, they will be refused and you or an authorized alternate will be called.

If it appears that a parent or guardian is incapable of providing safe care, we will call an authorized alternate to pick up the children. If you insist on taking the children, we will release them to your care and call the RCMP.

All parents, guardians, and authorized persons must make sure that a staff member has been informed that the child has been dropped off or is being picked up from the daycare. This is done through a sign in and sign out sheet or verbally with the teacher.

If children are not picked up by the end of day, the parents will be contacted immediately. See *Pick-Up Policy*. If you or an alternate cannot be reached within a reasonable length of time (30 minutes after closing), Ministry for Children and Family Development will be called.

WAITLIST POLICY

On April 1, we contact all current families and families still on our waitlist to see what their child care needs are for the following year. Once we have a clear picture of their needs, we evaluate how many spaces to open on our waitlist. We open the link to our waitlist on our Facebook Page. There is no charge to join our waitlist.

On May 1, we open the waitlist to a limited number of families (no more than 20 in each program). Families are required to do a tour and meet with staff prior to enrolling. This is to ensure that we are the right fit for families before they decide to join our program.

Available spaces in each program are offered in the following order:

1. Nanaimo Innovation Academy staff
2. Current children attending Nanaimo Innovation Academy
 - a. First within the program (adding days or changing days)
 - b. Then moving from one program to another
3. Siblings of current children attending Nanaimo Innovation Academy, in the order they requested to be put on the waitlist.
4. Our waitlisted families, in the order of when the waitlist fee was paid.
5. Please note, Nanaimo Innovation Academy will do their best to go in order as listed here but reserves the right to call upon anyone regardless of order, based on program dynamics and requirements.

At any time, you can request to see where you are in the order. We send email updates a couple of times a year and connect with families about their current child care needs in April. To stay on our waitlist, families must fill out the form emailed to them each April.

If a space is offered to a family and they do not take the space, they are removed from the waitlist.

APPLICATION FEE AND DEPOSIT POLICY

Once a family has decided that Nanaimo Innovation Academy is the right learning environment for their child (and a space has been offered to them) they are required to fill out an online application. There is a non-refundable \$100 application fee to process an application. This is not a deposit to secure a spot.

After the application has been processed and a fee agreement has been made, the family must pay a non-refundable tuition deposit of \$500 to retain the space for the child until the agreed start date. The deposit payment is typically due a month prior to the start date. If a family changes their mind before care starts, the deposit will not be refunded.

Re-enrollment occurs each April for the new academic year starting in September. The new fee agreement is dated June 1 and your deposit will be carried over to use as the deposit the next year. If a family decides, after June 1, not to start the program on the agreed start date of September 1, their deposit is not refunded.

For families that have given their notice to leave at the end of June, July or August before the June 1 deadline, deposits will be deducted from their last month's invoice. After June 1, it will be assumed that your plans are solid. We will not be returning deposits if you change plans in July or August.

In September, we return to the 1 month notice policy before the 1st of the month. If proper notice is given, the total amount of the deposit will be used toward your last month's fees or e-transferred back to you. *Please see our Refund Policy.*

FOUR-WEEK TRIAL POLICY

We believe it is vital for Nanaimo Innovation Academy to create a cohesive learning environment for all children in the program. All new children will be on a four-week trial period, whereby either the family or Nanaimo Innovation Academy reserve the right to withdraw the child from the program at any point during those four weeks.

We strongly believe that finding the best fit for your child is of the utmost importance. If he or she is not happy in our daycare environment or finds the program does not work with their style of learning, we are likely not the best place for them.

If a family decides that the Nanaimo Innovation Academy is not going to work for them, they would forfeit only the non-refundable tuition deposit and will be refunded any additional amount paid for any unused time.

If Nanaimo Innovation Academy decides that the fit is not a match, the deposit and all fees for unused time at the daycare will be refunded.

In some cases, the trial period may be extended by Nanaimo Innovation Academy. This will be discussed with parents prior to the end of the four-week trial.

FEE POLICY

To view the fees for the upcoming school year. Please go to our website:
<https://www.nanaimoinnovation.org/tuition-fees>

Fees are payable on or before the first day of each month. Our monthly billing is based on a four-week period. For example, a full-time space of 5 days per week is billed based on 20 days of care per month. A part time space of 3 days per week is billed based on 12 days per month.

Billing based on four-week periods is beneficial to you as it provides a regular monthly payment that does not fluctuate. This accounts for any holidays and scheduled closures.

Our monthly rates are based on:

- Low student to staff ratio

- Providing staff with livable wages, which helps to prevent high staff turnover. We are a BC certified Living Wage Employer.
- Providing healthy, high-quality, local, organic foods prepared by our in-house Chef

How to pay your fees:

- Email Transfer: Transfer funds to office@nanaimoinnovation.org. This is our preferred method.
- Cheque: If paying by cheque, please make it out to Nanaimo Innovation Academy Foundation. There is a \$50.00 fee for any NSF cheques.

We are a non-profit organization and operate on tight margins. Any delay in fee payments jeopardizes our ability to pay our bills, most of which are due on the 1st of the month. If payment is delayed beyond the due date there will be a late fee of \$10.00 per day, per child. This amount will be due in addition to the accompanying outstanding fees. If unpaid for more than 5 business days there will be a temporary suspension in care until fees are paid in full. Parents will be notified of this immediately.

For clients applying for government funding (such as the Affordable Child Care Benefit (ACCB)), full payment of fees is required for care to begin. Once your ACCB application is authorized and we have been able to claim the funds, you will be reimbursed. We only claim ACCB fund once a month on the 15th.

Your child must attend at least one day in a month to claim 50% of their ACCB. To claim 100%, children must attend at least two weeks within the month. The ACCB pays for up to 20 days in a month and will reduce the amount if less than 20 days are provided (due to closures).

See the *Affordable Child Care Benefit policy* for more info.

ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING/CASH POLICY

We will only be able to take fee payments by e-transfer or cheque.

Other non-fee related items may be purchased on our website using a credit card or in person with cash.

Any suspicious transactions, i.e. transactions where there are reasonable grounds to suspect that payment may involve the proceeds of crime, will be reported to the appropriate authorities.

REFUND AND CANCELLATION POLICY

Families are required to submit a non-refundable tuition deposit in order to retain the space for their child until the agreed start date (*See Application Fee and Deposit Policy*). The total amount of the deposit will be used toward your last month's fees, e-transferred to you, or carried over to use as the deposit the following year. If you decide not start the program on the agreed start date, your deposit is not refunded back to you. If you start the program on the agreed start date, appropriate notice must be given to have your deposit refunded to you.

FOR THE FAMILIES TO GIVE NOTICE:

Four weeks written notice is required **before** first day of the next consecutive month to terminate your fee agreement. The total amount of your tuition deposit will be used toward your last month's fees, provided there are no outstanding amounts owing on your account. The remainder of the monthly fees are due on the 1st of the month.

If appropriate notice is not given, full payment for the month is expected on the 1st and will be due payable as scheduled in the terms agreed to in this document (subject to late fees if unpaid). If you would like to leave and do not provide a full month's notice before the 1st of the month, you will forfeit your deposit.

Any changes in care needs or fees must be discussed in advance, with one-month notice before the 1st of the month. The provider may decline the request to the changes. Once changes are agreed upon, a new agreement will need to be signed.

No refund will be given for any prepaid amounts where the family has not given the appropriate written notice.

DEPOSIT REFUND DURING THE SUMMER:

Re-enrollment occurs each April for the new academic year starting in September. We ask families to let us know their summer plans, especially for children going to kindergarten, so we can plan our summer/fall enrollment. We ask families to let us know on April 15 (so we can prepare to open the waitlist on May 1), but not later than June 1. After June 1, families will forfeit their deposit if they decide to leave in July or August.

In September, we return to the 1 month notice policy before the 1st of the month.

FOR NANAIMO INNOVATION ACADEMY TO GIVE NOTICE:

If there are circumstances that prompt Nanaimo Innovation Academy to cancel our fee agreement, we will provide 1 month's written notice at the start of the month.

All families are expected to set a good example of respect and appropriate conduct. Disrespectful behavior toward the Nanaimo Innovation Academy staff or other adults/children, will not be tolerated.

If the staff, other adults and/or children at Nanaimo Innovation Academy are believed to be put in harm's way by any acts of aggressive or disrespectful behaviours by parents/guardians, fee agreements will be terminated immediately, without reimbursement of any fees or deposits.

If the staff feel physically or emotionally unsafe or threatened by any aggressive or disrespectful behaviours by parents/guardians, fee agreements will be terminated immediately, without reimbursement of any fees or deposits

Any behaviours, by children, that occur on an ongoing basis (more than once) and compromise the physical or emotional health and safety of our staff or children may prompt us to give less than a month notice to terminate our agreement. Notice may be given at any time in the month. The family will receive a reimbursement of any unused fees but will not receive a refund of their deposit.

In addition, please see our *Diversity and Inclusion Policy*.

AFFORDABLE CHILD CARE BENEFIT POLICY

The Province of BC's Affordable Child Care Benefit (ACCB) is a monthly funding program to help eligible families with the cost of child care. Factors that affect funding include income, family size and type of child care. This funding must be renewed on an annual basis. Families whose combined annual family income is less than \$111,000.00 are encouraged to apply.

ACCB is the sole responsibility of the parent; the daycare fills out a Child Care Arrangements form online once the application has been started by the parent. The parent then needs to submit all application requirements and paperwork in a timely manner for the ACCB to be authorized in time for care to begin on the agreed/required start date.

Families who apply for the ACCB from the government must have authorization in place before care can begin or must pay the full fee amount until their ACCB is approved.

Families applying for the ACCB will still be required to submit a tuition deposit of \$500 to secure their spot. If the ACCB is in place two weeks before the start date, then only the remaining fees not covered by ACCB will be due on the 1st of the month that care will start. If the ACCB is not in place two weeks before the 1st of the month, all fees are due on the 1st of the month. Once ACCB has been processed on the 15th of the month, Nanaimo Innovation Academy will retain the calculated parent portion due for the following month and refund the remaining balance to the parent responsible for payment of fees.

You must attend the daycare to receive the ACCB funding. If you attend less than 50% of your days, you receive %50 of your ACCB funding. If you attend over 50% of your days, you receive your full funding. If you do not attend a day during the month, you do not receive any funding for that month.

If care is no longer required after subsidy expiration date, please ensure you give the appropriate notification for terminating care arrangements with Nanaimo Innovation Academy (4-weeks notice from the 1st of the month). If appropriate notice is not given, full payment for the month is expected and will be due on the 1st of the month (subject to late fees if unpaid). If you would like to leave and do not provide a full 1 month's notice before the 1st of the month, you will forfeit your half-month deposit.

Communicating with the ACCB government office is the sole responsibility of the parent, not the daycare. You are responsible to know when your ACCB expires. We suggest that all families plan to renew their ACCB every July/August for September, as fees may change each September. From experience, it is suggested to plan on submitting your application or renewal 3-4 weeks before the authorization expiration date listed on your benefit authorization form. Failure to submit an application or renewal in time can result in the agreed financial obligation becoming the sole responsibility of the parent.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us to discuss.

TEMPORARY CLOSURE POLICY

Families will be required to pay for temporary closures due community health emergencies, illness/outbreaks, staff shortage, snow days or any other unexpected closure circumstances.

Nanaimo Innovation Academy follows the School District 68 school closures for weather and/or other such emergencies.

For community health emergencies, Nanaimo Innovation Academy typically follows the direction from the Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA) and/or the BC Ministry of Health. In cases where we feel the safety of the staff and children in our care are being compromised and are not being addressed, we may decide to follow other directives than that of Island Health and the BC Ministry of Health.

See our *Community Health Emergencies Policy*.

Government fee reduction programs such as the Affordable Child Care Benefit (ACCB) and Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative (CCFRI) may or may not be provided during a closure. If they are not provided, parents will be responsible for the full fee amount for the closure period.

Government fee reduction programs such as the Affordable Child Care Benefit (ACCB) and Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative (CCFRI) may or may not be provided during a closure. If they are not provided, parents will be responsible for the full fee amount for the closure period.

If the temporary closure lasts longer than three days in a row, the Board of Directors will meet to discuss how to go forward with providing care or possible fee discounts.

PERMANENT CLOSURE

If, for any reason, Nanaimo Innovation Academy permanently closes, families will be given as much notice as possible. A permanent closure means closing continuously for a period exceeding 12 months.

The NIA Board may decide to permanently close the daycare, following a public input process.

Following a decision to close a daycare, the NIA Board will provide, without delay, written notification to all invested parties of its decision and will include the name, facility number and address and the date the daycare will permanently close.

Public Input Process:

The NIA Board shall provide a public consultation process with respect to a proposed permanent closure. Following a NIA Board motion to consider the proposed closure of the daycare, the NIA Board shall provide a period of 30 days for public consultation.

The period of public consultation may be shortened if the NIA Board is satisfied that there is a pressing need for a shorter time frame and prior consultation has given the community adequate notice and an opportunity for input, such that the board has a full understanding of the impacts of the proposed closure.

Public consultation will include fair consideration of community input and adequate opportunity for the community to respond to the NIA Board's proposal to close the daycare permanently. At least one public meeting will be held, as part of the public consultation process.

The NIA Board shall provide an opportunity for affected persons to submit written responses to the Board regarding the proposed daycare closure. The NIA Board will provide information and directions on how to submit the written responses. Written submissions will be summarized and community concerns and proposed options will be acknowledged.

Fair consideration will be given to all input prior to the NIA Board making its final decision. Fair consideration includes the concept that the NIA Board's proposal to close the daycare could be changed or reversed.

Administrative Procedures:

The proposal to consider a daycare for closure shall be initiated through a NIA Board motion at a public meeting of the Board. The proposed effective date shall be specified. The proposed closure will be addressed and discussed in a public meeting involving the affected communities.

The time and location of the public meeting shall be widely advertised to notify affected persons or groups in the community. This will be done through a variety of methods including parent newsletters and notices, parents' advisory councils, meetings with employees, notices to rental groups, information posted on the daycare website, and other appropriate means.

The NIA Board will present the following at the beginning of the public meeting:

- Rationale for the proposed closure, including, but not limited to the pertinent facts and information related to the factors identified within the policy
- The timing of the proposed closure

Minutes of the public meeting will be kept to record concerns or options raised regarding the proposed closure. Following the public meeting, the NIA Board will give fair consideration to all input prior to making its final decision with respect to the proposed daycare closure.

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

It is the policy of Nanaimo Innovation Academy that any information or records held regarding your family and child will be kept confidential. The only release of information or records would be for a legal matter that is requested or required by law.

If we have to discuss an issue between your child and another, we cannot provide you with information about the other child. If a child or children is sick with an infectious disease, we cannot provide information regarding any children infected. We uphold the confidentiality of all children in our care.

It is also appreciated that any information you become aware of regarding other families at child care or operational daycare matters be kept confidential.

For security purposes, there are video surveillance cameras around the daycare. The video is on a continuous recording loop and the storage lasts for only about a month before it is recorded over. This footage is typically only reviewed if a suspected break in or crime has been committed.

SUPERVISION OF CHILD POLICY AND PROTOCOLS

Supervision is the most important element in the safe provision of child care. In combination with a well-planned environment, we aim to ensure children are safe from injury and accidents. When supervising children, it is essential to monitor what is happening on a continual basis so that we can instantly intervene to protect their health and safety. If something does happen, we will be able to explain the details of the incident, our supervision practices, staffing levels and what preventative measures have been put into place to ensure children are safe and not in danger or at an unacceptable risk of harm.

For field trips, parents will be given ample notice (10 days) and a detailed safety plan will be provided.

We promote active and positive supervision. Our educators are involved, aware and appreciative of children's behaviours. A low student to educator ratio allows for more oversight and involvement.

Our educators are in the best position to safeguard the children's well-being by:

- Knowing each child's abilities. Educators develop a good relationship with the children and learn their individual limitations, level of impulse control, and habits.
- Follow established clear and simple safety rules. The children are actively involved in creating and evaluating the safety rules for the daycare and natural consequences of breaking those rules.
- Being aware of potential hazards. Staff inspect the play areas, equipment, and facility on a daily basis. A log is kept of any concerns. These concerns are brought to the manager's attention so that they can be immediately dealt with. Regarding field trips, extra attention is provided to ensure that children are closely supervised. Pre-planning of field trips assists with identifying the potential hazards and supervision issues.
- Positioning themselves strategically. The daycare has an open floor plan so that all areas of the space can be supervised from any area of the room.
- Educators scan and circulate. They pay close attention to the group and group dynamics by moving around the room. This allows them to be aware of the group as a whole and to anticipate potential trouble spots. At various points throughout the day, our educators develop a plan of supervision and to avoid congregating together while supervising.
- We focus on the positive rather than the negative. Telling a child "Keep the water in the bucket" rather than "Don't splash the water" is a positive way to teach her what is safe for herself, others and the environment.
- Redirection is used to divert a child's attention from a negative action to a positive one. This avoids power struggles and allows the child to maintain a positive experience of care.

Supervision Protocols:

All teachers follow these supervision protocols to ensure the safety of children in our care.

- Parents must officially sign their child in to the daycare on the appropriate program attendance sheet and bring their child in to the yard or building to hand over the child directly to a teacher.
- Teachers must always follow the appropriate teacher to child ratio while supervising children (as designated by VIHA- 8-1 for the 30-months to school age category and 4-1 for the under 36-month category).
- By 9am all staff must know the total number for the day and this must be communicated to the kitchen and Office Manager (if not already known). At this time, a teacher must double check that the children's attendance information is transferred over to the mobile Velcro board and indoor white board.
- Teachers must use the mobile Velcro board and indoor white board to account for the children inside and outside of the class. If the group is divided to different areas of the daycare, this must be accounted for on the mobile Velcro board and indoor white board.
- All staff are responsible for accounting for children at all times.
- Teachers must do regular head counts throughout the day to ensure children are accounted for. Special attention must be made during transitions.
- When exiting and entering the building, the children must be counted out loud by one teacher (counting may be done in any language but must be confirmed in English). All the teachers must count along. This number must be checked with the teacher holding the mobile Velcro board and another source for confirmation (attendance sheet or indoor white board).
- When a child is picked up, a teacher must talk with the parent to communicate about the child's day. Then the mobile Velcro board and attendance sheet must be updated appropriately. Typically, the indoor white board does not need to be updated at the end of the day, as all the children are usually outside in the play yard for pick up.
- When on an excursion, extra care needs to be taken in ensuring the children's safety and supervision. We never go on an excursion with only one teacher. There must be a maximum of 6-1 ratio in the 30-month to school age program for excursions (7-1 in the Forest Program). Currently, IT is not doing excursions outside of the daycare.
- When preparing for an excursion, one teacher is assigned to ensure that mobile Velcro board and indoor white board are up to date. Before leaving the daycare premises, all the teachers must do one last count out loud to ensure that it matches the number on the mobile Velcro board held by the teacher.

REQUIREMENT TO REPORT SUSPECTED ABUSE OR NEGLECT

All employees at Nanaimo Innovation Academy are legally responsible to report any suspicion of child neglect or abuse to the British Columbia Ministry for Children and Family Development (under the Child, Family, and Community Service Act).

We will report any suspected abuse, any abuse that a child discloses, or any abuse that a third party discloses. Abuse, in this context, is defined as physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and/or neglect. In British Columbia, a child is anyone under the age of 19.

It is not our responsibility to investigate or question the circumstances of the suspected abuse. Nanaimo Innovation Academy will not inform you or anyone else of any suspicions and subsequent report to the Ministry. If you ask a staff member about any reports of abuse to the Ministry, the response all staff are instructed to tell you is "I do not know anything about this and even if I did, I'm bound by our confidentiality policy not to disclose any information".

It is the Ministry's responsibility to investigate any report and to inform all those involved of their investigation.

The health and well-being of the children is our first concern.

ACTIVE PLAY AND SCREEN USE POLICY

At Nanaimo Innovation Academy, we believe in the importance of Free Play (Un-facilitated Play) and Play-based Learning. Free Play is child chosen and self-directed, self-led movement, activity, or interaction which encourages children to use their imagination, discover their interests, and tap into their creativity. Free Play is open ended and not directed by an adult. This type of play does not include playing with electronic games, computers, tablets or video games.

We have a ZERO screen time policy in all of our daycare programs. Children are not allowed to bring a cell phone, tablet, or any other electronic device to the programs. Nanaimo Innovation Academy staff are only permitted to use their cell phone in case of emergency.

At Nanaimo Innovation Academy, we provide at least 120 minutes of outdoor time each day. Learning and playing in nature is an important aspect of our programming. We bring the children outside every day, rain or shine. It is important that your child has the appropriate clothing so that they stay dry during the wet season. Only if the weather poses a serious health risk to the children, we will keep them inside. In those rare instances, parents will be notified at either drop off or pick up. If a child is not healthy enough to participate in outdoor activities, they are likely not healthy enough to attend the daycare that day and may be asked to be picked up by a parent or guardian.

GUIDING CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOUR POLICY

Conflicts are normal. They provide children with the opportunity to learn about boundaries, to communicate and rectify situations, and to gain social skills needed to successfully interact with a group of their peers.

The goal for guiding children's behaviour is to assist children in developing respect, self-control, self-confidence and sensitivity in their interactions with others. Guiding children's behaviour is an ongoing process that takes skilled and supportive caregivers. Guiding children's behaviour is done while appropriate behaviour is occurring, as well as before, during, and after socially unacceptable behaviour is displayed.

Nanaimo Innovation Academy staff model the kind of good behaviour and communication skills that we would like the children to learn:

- Provide a caring and supportive environment
- Treat everyone with respect and kindness
- Teach respect for all living creatures and the environment
- Encourage honest, integrity, and to be genuine
- Use positive and respectful language
- Treat conflict situations with an open-mind and fairness
- Own up to mistake and be willing to learn from them
- Positive guidance techniques will be used to encourage appropriate behavior from children. They include:
 - Establishing clear, consistent, and simple limits
 - Stating limits in a positive way, rather than a negative way
 - Focusing on the behaviour, rather than on the child
 - Stating what is expected, rather than pose questions
 - Providing real choices
 - Allowing time for children to respond to expectations
 - Reinforce appropriate behaviour, with both words and gestures
 - Allow for children to practice conflict resolution skills and independent evaluation of how to right a situation.

- Encourage children to use a staff member or teacher as a resource when there are occasions that they cannot resolve issues on their own.
- Inevitably there will be occurrences of inappropriate behaviour; it is at these times that there may be a need to intervene. The following intervention strategies, or combination of the strategies, will be used to help ensure that guidance is supportive, rather than punitive.
- Gain attention in a respectful way
- Remind children of the appropriate behaviour.
- Acknowledge feelings before setting limits
- Redirect or divert when appropriate
- Model problem-solving skills
- Offer appropriate choices
- Use natural and logical consequences
- Provide opportunities for children to make amends. Rather than demand a superficial apology, encourage genuine opportunities for children to restore relationships after an incident of hurt or harm.

These strategies for guiding children’s behaviour are based on ‘Guiding Children’s Behaviour Handbook’ available at www.healthservices.gov.bc.ca/ccf/child/index.html#publications

It is not appropriate for any parent to have conversations about behavioural concerns or sensitive topics with any child at the daycare, except their own.

Any behavioural concerns will be discussed by the Program Manager with the family so that we might work together to come up with a plan to encourage appropriate behaviour.

CONDUCT/ STANDARDS/ DISCIPLINE POLICY

RESPECTFUL CONDUCT CODE

Teachers and staff at Nanaimo Innovation Academy support the children in every possible way to ensure that they have a supportive and caring environment in order to grow, learn, and explore.

They respect parents’/guardians’ knowledge of their child and work collaboratively with parents regarding areas of concern. Teachers and parents communicate on a regular basis regarding their child’s interest and progress. Teachers also require respect and support. Parents play a vital role in imparting and exemplifying the values reflected in this code and are partners with the students and faculty in its successful implementation.

Nanaimo Innovation Academy considers positive and supportive behaviours to be mandatory in order to preserve a safe and caring environment for growing and learning. All behaviours should be guided by RESPECT, CONSENT, AND KINDNESS.

NIA children are entitled to:

- Play and learn in an atmosphere of warmth and trust
- Receive respect for their rights, feelings, and property from peers, teachers, and staff
- Be in a safe environment
- Be free from physical and verbal abuse or shame

NIA children are responsible for:

- Following the instructions and guidance of the teachers and staff
- Being consistent and punctual in their attendance
- Treating each other with courtesy and respect
- Taking care not to damage the daycare, the daycare property, or materials
- Learning and practicing consent as it pertains to anyone’s body

NIA teachers and staff are entitled to:

- Respect, cooperation, consideration and support from their peers, students and parents
- Teach and work in a non-threatening and safe environment
- Support and training throughout the year to enhance their skill sets

NIA teachers and staff are responsible for:

- Planning and conducting programming based on the blend of Reggio, Waldorf, and/or Montessori curriculum and/or other methods
- Creating an environment that is clean, organized, and safe
- Supporting children in the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development
- Promoting children's self-esteem and self-help skills
- Displaying sensitivity to students' needs and rights
- Communicating with parents regarding developmental and behavioral concerns and achievements

NIA parents/guardians are entitled to:

- Respect and consideration from other parents/guardians
- Respect, consideration, and support from teachers and staff
- Attend NIA in a non-threatening and safe environment
- Ongoing communication from teachers regarding their child's social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development

NIA parents/guardians are responsible for:

- Behaving in a way that shows respect and consideration of other parents/guardians, teachers, staff, and children
- Working in partnership with teachers regarding their child's social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development
- Keeping teachers informed of changing or new needs by the family or for their child so optimal care can be provided

CONSEQUENCES FOR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOURS

Consequences for inappropriate behaviours will vary somewhat according to the circumstance, and may include any of the following:

- Informal discussions between student and teacher, daycare manager and/or peers
- Communications with parents (telephone, e-mail or note)
- Formal meeting(s) that may include parents, teacher, daycare manager, and/or external support (such as a support worker from the Child Development Centre)
- Arrangement of a 'Care and Support Plan' with the involvement of Program Manager, Executive Director and parents
- Restitution or service in kind for damage
- Examine the safety of participating in a daycare activity, field trip, or special program.
- Examine the seriousness of the behaviour and determine if care can be safely provided (*see Refund and Cancellation Policy*)

DISPUTE RESOLUTION/ APPEALS PROCESS POLICY

CHILD-EDUCATOR DISPUTES INVOLVING ONGOING BEHAVIOURAL CONCERNS

1. In the first instance, the teacher will speak with the child privately, listen to the student’s viewpoint, discuss expectations and brainstorm strategies together. The teacher may contact the parents/guardians to discuss the student’s behavioural challenges, strategies, and expectations.
2. If there is a pattern of behaviour or ongoing occurrences, the teacher will advise the Program Manager, and the child’s parents/guardians will be called to set up a meeting. At this point a ‘Care and Support Plan’ may be put in place, as discussed and agreed upon by all parties.
3. The student’s behaviour will be monitored and evaluated. A follow up meeting may be arranged to discuss and re-evaluate the ‘Care and Support Plan’.
4. At any point, NIA may seek support from external organizations such as the Child Development Centre (CDC), a family doctor, or other professional support.
5. If the behaviour risks the health, safety, and/or well-being of the staff or other children, we may need to suspend or cancel the fee agreement (see *Refund and Cancellation Policy*).

EDUCATOR, PARENT, BOARD MEMBERS, AND VOLUNTEER DISPUTES WITH EACH OTHER

1. Educators, parents, NIA Board Members, and volunteers should first try to resolve any dispute informally. Discuss the issue first with the other party/parties directly involved, using the *Respectful Conduct Code* guidelines.
2. If initiating a respectful discussion is too difficult, a more formal approach may become necessary. NIA will provide a fair and reasonable mechanism for resolution.
 - Request assistance in resolving the issue from the Executive Director, who may act as a mediator. The mediator’s role is neutral to ensure that the communication is respectful and that both parties are heard.
 - The Executive Director will speak with both parties separately.
 - The Executive Director will then arrange to speak to both parties jointly.
 - Either party may request the presence of a support person.
 - If the dispute cannot be resolved, as a last resort, either party can appeal to the Board of Directors for them to weigh in on the conflict. The NIA Board must be emailed a letter from each party involved. They will issue a final decision on the matter based on the letters received and the report of the Executive Director.
 - In the case of a dispute between Board Members, the other remaining Board Members will make the final decision.

EDUCATOR, PARENT, AND VOLUNTEER DISPUTES WITH THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

1. Educators, parents, and volunteers should first try to resolve any dispute informally with the Executive Director. Discuss the issue first with the other party/parties directly involved, using the *Respectful Conduct Code* guidelines.
2. If initiating a respectful discussion is too difficult, a more formal approach may become necessary. NIA will provide a fair and reasonable mechanism for resolution.
 - Request assistance in resolving the issue from the NIA Board of Directors, who will designate a NIA Board member as a mediator. The mediator’s role is neutral to ensure that the communication is respectful and that both parties are heard.
 - The NIA Board member will speak with both parties separately.
 - The NIA Board member will then arrange to speak to both parties jointly.
 - Either party may request the presence of a support person.
 - If the dispute cannot be resolved during the meeting, the Board of Directors will issue a final decision on the matter based on the report of the NIA Board member designated to be a mediator.

“HANDS OFF” POLICY

All staff at Nanaimo Innovation Academy discuss with all children the ‘Hands Off’ expectations and the safety concerns associated with playing roughly. We stress the importance of respecting each other and our personal

space. Our kids learn consent and the importance of asking anyone for consent before touching their bodies in any way.

This policy consists of verbalized limits set on rough play and consistent, positive preventative measures and/or direction given to the children as required. With this policy comes an expectation of understanding that we are to treat each other in a kind and friendly manner, therefore punching, hitting, kicking, and other dangerous physical aggression is not permitted amongst children or with the adults at the Nanaimo Innovation Academy. These types of aggressive behaviour will be intervened when the safety of a child or adult is in question. See the *Guiding Children's Behaviour Policy* for more information on the preventative measures staff and teachers will adhere to.

In the case of a child or children displaying aggressive or unsafe behaviour, parents will be notified on the day at pick up by the teacher on duty. Depending on the severity of the aggressive or unsafe behaviour, the parent may be called to collect their child early that day and a parent meeting will be scheduled to create a plan on how to go forward.

The safety of all the children in our care is our top priority. All parents want to feel that their child is safe from harm at daycare. For children with ongoing issues of aggressive or unsafe behaviours, we require families to seek a referral from their family doctor, the Child Development Centre (CDC) of Nanaimo, or other professional support person or group so that the family can have an assessment done. During the waiting period for assessment, Nanaimo Innovation Academy will work with the family to prepare an official 'Care and Support Plan' and will also discuss if a 'Pick Up Plan' is necessary so that the child may still attend the daycare, but that the other children in our care are safe.

When the family is working with their doctor, the CDC, or another appropriate professional support network, the staff at Nanaimo Innovation Academy will do our best to support the recommendations given. If the family refuses to seek the appropriate professional support and the aggressive behaviour does not change within a limited period, cancellation notice will be given to the family (see the *Refund and Cancellation Policy*).

Our staff policy is also one of 'Hands Off' with the exceptions of providing encouragement and comfort in the form of a hug or hand-holding. We feel children may need to be given a hug every now and then. We strive to teach children about consent and will only give a hug to a child if they initiate it or if asked if they like one and they consent to it. There are times when hand holding is appropriate and necessary, such as walking on the sidewalk during an outing or during a circle activity.

We emphasize and role model the importance of being kind to people and what kindness looks like— respectful play, honesty, sharing. Children will learn an understanding of these expectations, that will eventually contribute to their decision-making and self-control skills. With our support and guidance, we aim to help children learn how to make positive choices in their social environment.

RISKY PLAY POLICY

Risky play can be defined as a thrilling and exciting activity that involves a risk of physical injury, and play that provides opportunities for challenge, testing limits, exploring boundaries and learning about injury risk (Sandseter (2007; Little & Wyver, 2008).Feb 25, 2015)

Everyday life is full of risks and challenges and children need opportunities to develop the skills associated with managing risk and making informed judgements about risks from a very young age.

Researchers have identified six kinds:

1. Play at great heights

Jumping down from high places is basically a way of “losing control.” Most kids love jumping down from high places because it presents a mixture of excitement and fear. Climbing trees presents a similar thrill for kids, as there’s always the “threat” of potentially falling.

2. Play at high speed

Play at high speed is another risky play activity that seems to relate to “losing control.” For example, when riding a bicycle at high speed, there’s risk and excitement with the possibility of either crashing into something or someone, or even possibly falling off. Other high-speed examples include running down steep hills, swinging on playground swings, or travelling on zip lines.

3. Play with dangerous tools

In decades past, it wasn’t unusual to see Canadian children using hand saws to cut wood, hammers to build birdhouses and tree forts, and pocket knives to whittle sticks. With increased parent concerns over safety, playing with tools has all but disappeared among kids today. Still, kids tend to love using tools when they get the chance. While there’s always danger of personal injury, this kind of play encourages children to concentrate in order to mitigate the risk.

4. Play near dangerous elements

Play near dangerous elements includes things such as playing near fire, playing near cliffs, and playing near deep water. Not much needs to be said here—it’s easy to see the danger to life and limb posed by these elements! But again, children seem to thrill at testing their limits in these situations and environments.

5. Rough-and-tumble play

This type of play involves managing the balance between playful contact and real fighting. It can include play-wrestling, play-fighting, and fencing with sticks.

6. Play where children can “disappear” or get lost

This kind of play refers to occasions where children have the opportunity to explore spaces on their own, venturing into unknown areas with the danger of getting lost. Certainly, getting lost in a forest or an unknown city presents real dangers for a child, so this type of play challenges children to gauge distances and recognize and remember landmarks for navigation.

All risky activities at NIA are undertaken with the supervision of our educators. Clear guidelines will be submitted to VIHA for approval before engaging in high-risk activities.

Risky play helps to develop important life skills such as;

- Building resilience and persistence
- Balance and coordination
- Awareness of the capabilities and limits of their own bodies
- The ability to assess and make judgement about risk
- Handling tools safely and with purpose
- Understanding consequence to action
- Confidence and independence
- Resourcefulness
- Creativity and inventiveness
- Curiosity and wonder
- Problem solving

ROUGH AND TUMBLE PLAY AT NIA:

This is the type of play that allows children to explore the limits of their gross motor skills. This is play that involves the whole body—whether it is running, spinning, rolling, falling, or jumping. Children are sometimes so engrossed in the joys of movement that they lose all track of time. The benefits to this type of play are that

it allows the child to learn and explore their body's capacities, helps the child's confidence, and allows the opportunity for problem solving.

During 'rough and tumble' play, children will sometimes aggressively hug each other or roll around on the ground together. We always ask children to respect each other's space and only touch another person's body with consent. With consent, these types of things are allowed. When/if it crosses over into roughhousing or wrestling, we draw the line. There are too many children for staff to monitor roughhousing or wrestling in a safe manner.

PRETEND GUN PLAY AT NIA:

When it comes to gun play, we allow children to play with what they imagine to be guns (as we don't have gun toys) but have clear parameters around it.

- There is a conversation that real guns are dangerous and are never to be touched. Real guns could hurt people.
- With pretend gun play, we never shoot at living things. Only targets or pretend things like monsters, dinosaurs and such.
- Children only engage in gun play with other children that consent to playing gun play.
- Children playing gun play are encouraged to work together as a team (ie. to protect from dinosaurs).
- If children are not following these guidelines, we stop the gun play for the day and try again the next day they want to play.

PLAY WITH SNOWBALLS AT NIA:

We allow kids to throw snowballs. It seems cruel not to. Of course, we have some guidelines the children must follow:

- Children only engage in throwing snowballs with other children that consent to play with snowballs.
- Children must aim at the waist and below.
- Children must not add any other objects to the snowballs—rocks, sticks, or anything else.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

Nanaimo Innovation Academy is committed to providing an environment that celebrates diversity and promotes values of equity (1).

We firmly believe in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (as directed by the United Nations) and the Universal Rights of the Child (as directed by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child).

We believe in feminism—the belief in social, economic, and political equality of the sexes.

We support and promote Truth and Reconciliation for all Indigenous communities.

We are inclusive to all people. Discrimination on the grounds of gender, age, race, size, religion or belief, marriage or civil partnership, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, ethnic or national origin, or political belief will not be tolerated. Any such discrimination will be immediately addressed and may lead to termination of care or termination of employment with the daycare. We actively reject any belief that are prejudicial, biased or stereotyping. In addition, we reject any action that discriminates, promotes divisions, perpetuates racism, and treats others unkindly.

We believe in evidence-based thinking and we also recognize peoples' rights to adhere to a diverse range of beliefs, in so far as they do not infringe on the rights of others (2).

NIA does not prescribe to any particular religious belief at the daycare, but allows all individuals to have a safe space to share their ideas and practise their beliefs, provided that it does not infringe upon the rights of others (3).

We recognize the beauty, knowledge, and value in fostering our community's social, economic, and cultural diversity. Some of the ways Nanaimo Innovation Academy is committed to our Diversity and Inclusion Policy are:

- All families will be treated fairly and warmly welcomed in our daycare.
- We include and value the contribution of all families to our understanding of equity inclusion and diversity.
- We treat each child as an individual and respect their ideas, beliefs, and culture.
- We make inclusion a thread, which runs through the entirety of the daycare. We challenge all discriminatory behaviour by educating the children on inclusion, respect, and kindness.
- All activities and toys are offered to all children regardless of gender and appropriate to developmental needs. Indoor and outdoor activities are accessible for all children.
- We encourage positive role models, displayed through toys, imaginary play, books and posters that reflect a diverse range of people and lived experiences.
- All children will be encouraged to join in all activities i.e. dressing up, role play corner, dolls, climbing on large equipment, bikes etc.
- We regularly update toys, books, and other resources are selected intentionality with attention to diverse representation and reflection of a wide range of ways of knowing and learning. We source toys from lending libraries such as the Nanaimo Public Library and PacificCare.
- We celebrate a variety of International Days, festivals, holidays throughout the year. We encourage and welcome families to share cultural celebrations and traditions with our daycare community. We welcome speakers from our community who would like to be involved with widening our education about their history, culture, or beliefs.
- We recruit, select, train and promote individuals based on occupational skills. No job applicant or employee will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, sex, gender identity, disability, marriage or civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation and pregnancy or maternity. We will, however, require all employees to be mentally equipped to care for young children.
- We require a commitment to implementing and upholding our Diversity and Inclusion Policy from all staff. This is highlighted in each staff member's job description and is contained in the code of conduct.
- We actively counter, and support the children to counter, racism, bias, and stigma.
- Staff are encouraged and supported to continually improve our knowledge and understanding of issues of equity, inclusion and diversity by ensuring regular staff training.
- We provide assistance as requested by our parents/carers that use English as an additional language. Languages other than English are recognized and held up as valuable so that the children who are multilingual are encouraged to be proud of their bilingualism or multilingualism
- We provide childcare, wherever possible, for children who may have learning difficulties and/or disabilities or are deemed disadvantaged according to their circumstances, and the daycare's ability to provide the necessary standard of care.
- We strive to provide affordable childcare and work to support families in need of the Affordable Child Care Benefit.
- Work alongside other agencies when resources and relevant information is required. We have a strong partnership with Vancouver Island University and the Nanaimo Child Development Centre. We vow to only work with other agencies who were able to demonstrate alignment with our Diversity and Inclusion policies and values.

Recommended conduct to ensure an inclusive environment:

- Treat all individuals with respect and kindness
- Approach all situations with curiosity and an openness to understanding
- Be mindful of the language you use. Words have the power to include or exclude. Be inclusive.
- If you are unsure about something, ask for clarification or help.

Notes:

- 1) While equality is about sameness without differentiation, equity emphasizes equal opportunities and/or equal outcomes, recognizing that differential treatment is sometimes necessary to address unique needs and challenges.
- 2) With regards to our vaccination policy, we believe this is the best way to prevent the spread of dangerous diseases in children and so require this for the safety of the children.
- 3) Generally, we don't have religious conversations with children at the daycare, as this is something that is very personal for each family.

DRESS POLICY

We hold the philosophy that 'they're all play clothes'. Clothing worn to the daycare should be items that can get messy. Your child WILL get dirty—mud, paint, felts, grass stains, chalk, and more!

Dress for the Weather and Safety

Please ensure that your child is dressed appropriately for the weather and season. A detailed clothing list will be given to you for each season.

From October to April, waterproof outdoor gear and boots will be required. Sunscreen and hats must be sent to daycare from May-October. This can be kept at the daycare or brought daily. A separate set of indoor only shoes must be left in your child's cubby at the daycare. If your child is not dressed for the elements that day, you will be required to bring in the appropriate clothing or you may be called to pick up your child, as they may not be able to participate in the activities.

Label Everything

Please ensure that your child's clothing is labelled with your child's name. It is especially important to label jackets, shoes, boots, and hats.

Non-Commercialized Attire

We request that your child refrain from wearing clothing with commercialized graphics or have an offensive message. Commercialized graphics include Paw Patrol, Marvel Comics, Disney, Thomas the Train, and so on. While we require you to keep your child's clothing free from commercialized images, patterns or non-commercialized graphics are welcome as a way to express your child's personal style or originality.

Self-Expression

All children, regardless of gender identity, are encouraged to wear shorts, pants, skirts, dresses, kilts, saris, or whatever else they feel comfortable in. Children and parents are encouraged to think about the usefulness of their clothing for outdoor activities. Please remember, clothing worn to the daycare WILL get dirty!

Extra Clothes

If your child has an accident, we will have spare clothing to change them into. Please wash the item and bring it back to NIA at your earliest convenience. If you would rather pack extra clothing in their backpack, please feel free to do so. Please note that we do not always have spare underwear or socks. Those should be brought in if you feel your child will need them.

Toys

Toys from home must stay at home unless a child is bringing something for a special purpose such as show and tell or as a comfort item.

In our IT Program, we allow for a comfort item to be used throughout the day. In our other programs, we asked that it is only used for nap time or in special situations (where the child is upset). If your child has a special comfort item, please communicate this with their teacher so plans can be made for the best way to keep the item safe

Diapering In the Infant/Toddler Program

A weekly supply of diapers and wipes should be stored onsite. We will let you know when you need to bring in more. We would love to help save the planet and support any families that have decided to use cloth diapers.

For The Forest Program

Please review the dress suggestions in the [Forest Program Handbook](#). There are specific requirements to ensure the quality of the clothing with protect the children in the forest and from the cold.

SPECIAL EDUCATION POLICY

Nanaimo Innovation Academy is committed to providing programs and services to all children, including children with special support needs, which:

- Are characterized by inclusionary practices that promote participation and interaction for all children
- Supports those children to experience success and challenges them to strive toward their maximum potential
- Are organized to provide equitable access to all areas of the program across the daycare.

For children with support needs, we require families to seek a referral from their family doctor, the Child Development Centre (CDC) of Nanaimo, or other professional support person or group so that the family can have an assessment done. During the waiting period for assessment, Nanaimo Innovation Academy will work with the family to prepare an official 'Care and Support Plan' and will also discuss if a 'Pick Up Plan' is necessary so that the child may still attend the daycare, but that the other children in our care are safe.

When the family is working with their doctor, the CDC, or another appropriate professional support network, the staff at Nanaimo Innovation Academy will do our best to support the recommendations given.

If the family refuses to seek the appropriate professional support, NIA will consider providing a cancellation of care notice (see the Refund and Cancellation Policy). It takes a commitment from both the daycare and parents/guardians to support a child with extra needs.

While being committed to supporting children with special needs, we will also be clear with families of our abilities and limitations to supporting their child so that families can make the best and most informed choice.

BULLYING PREVENTION AND ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

Nanaimo Innovation is committed to:

- Operating in an environment free from bullying and/or harassment
- Recognizing and promoting the dignity of human beings of diverse backgrounds and needs
- Providing fair and confidential treatment, mutual respect, and cooperation to students, parents and faculty

Harassment or Bullying of any description will not be tolerated. We are committed to teaching children what harassment is, preventing it from happening, and providing parents, students and faculty with a mechanism to deal with harassment if it occurs. Individuals who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action (see the *Dispute Resolution/ Appeals Process Policy*)

HARASSMENT:

- is defined as "engaging in a course of vexatious (annoying) comment or conduct that is known or ought to be known to be unwelcome"
- can be physical, verbal or visible conduct which has the effect of being intimidating, offensive or hostile

- is discrimination
- is an abuse of power
- can involve favouritism

Harassment can take the form of verbal, physical, or sexual threats or assault such as:

- offensive remarks, jokes, innuendos, taunting
- unwelcome invitations or requests whether direct or indirect
- display of offensive or derogatory material
- use of a position of authority to coerce
- psychological abuse such as leering, badgering or intentional exclusion
- intense scrutiny or criticism which belittles, intimidates or has the effect of making a person feel powerless, inferior, dependent or threatens economic security
- any action that can reasonably be perceived as undermining another's right to equality or creates a hostile and offensive environment

BULLYING:

Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.

Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders.

ANTI-HARASSMENT/BULLYING DISCLOSURE FROM A CHILD TO ADULT:

If a child discloses to an adult that they have been harassed or bullied, the adult should react promptly in the following manner:

1. Thank the child for telling you and let them know that you will help them.
2. Let them know that the teacher's job is to keep them safe while at the daycare. Encourage the child to go to a teacher if they ever need support.
3. Talk with the Program Manager in the program about this concern. All of the teachers will now make a special effort to watch, intervene, and record any incidents of harassment and/or bullying.
4. If the behaviour towards the child is repeated or continues, take your concerns to the Executive Director.
5. You may file an official complaint by email to the Executive Director, to ensure the action will be taken promptly to stop the offending behaviour from continuing.
 - You may have a witness or advocate with you during these procedures.
 - You may withdraw your complaint at any time during the process.
 - Both the complainant's family and the alleged harasser's family will be treated with as much confidentiality as possible during the ensuing investigation of the complaint.
6. If the harassment continues, an appeal can be made to the NIA Board with a written submission outlining the details of the ongoing harassment. A course of action will be determined swiftly based on the written submissions and the information relayed by the Daycare Manager.

ANTI-HARASSMENT/BULLYING COMPLAINT PROCEDURE- PARENT, STAFF, BOARD MEMBER, AND VOLUNTEER:

Any person who experiences any form of harassment should react promptly in the following manner:

1. Tell the harasser to stop. Make it known to the harasser that the behaviour is unwelcome and offensive.
2. If the other person is in a position of power, have someone with you when you tell them to stop.
3. Make notes. Keep a record briefly describing the behaviour in question, including time, dates, and witnesses, if any.
4. Seek assistance. If the unwelcome behaviour is repeated or continues, and you are not comfortable in directly confronting the harasser, take your concerns to the Executive Director or the NIA Board of Directors.
5. You may file an official complaint by email to the Executive Director or the NIA Board of Directors, to ensure the action will be taken promptly to stop the offending behaviour from continuing.
 - You may have a witness or advocate with you during these procedures.
 - You may withdraw your complaint at any time during the process.
 - Both the complainant and the alleged harasser will be treated with as much confidentiality as possible during the ensuing investigation of the complaint.
6. If the harassment continues, an appeal can be made to the NIA Board with a written submission outlining the details of the ongoing harassment. A course of action will be determined swiftly based on the written submissions and the information relayed by others at the daycare.

THIRD PARTIES/WITNESSES

If you feel that you are witnessing harassment or discrimination towards a child, staff or parent, you are encouraged to raise the issue in confidence in a manner similar to that described above.

FOOD AND NUTRITION POLICY—KIDS HEALTHY EATING PROJECT

At Nanaimo Innovation Academy (NIA), we know that there is no better preparation for play and learning than a good meal and snacks. We strongly believe that offering children healthy, fresh, seasonal, home-made meals and snacks help to lay the foundation for a happy and healthy day. Two light snacks (morning and afternoon) and lunch are provided each day to nourish your child’s growing body and brain.

Eating together is an opportunity for education about nutrition and wellness, nature, personal growth, food economy, and culture. We are dedicated to transforming the health of children by designing hands-on educational experiences in the garden, kitchen, and dining area that connect children to food, nature, and each other.

We strive to support children in having a successful day on all levels and believe that it is important we take into consideration their nutrition, as part of their environment. The foods and liquids we consume provide our bodies with essential vitamins, nutrients, and minerals that keep us thriving and active. Our fuel for the day contributes greatly to our daily emotional, physical, and cognitive functions and successful development. We often observe the results of un/fulfilled nutritional needs and the connection to a child’s ability to manage their self-control, concentrate effectively, and develop problem-solving skills. If a child’s daily nutritional needs are not being met it may have an effect on their success throughout the day and ultimately their learning.

SCHEDULED EATING TIMES ARE ROUGHLY:

- 9:30 am - 1st Snack
- 12:00pm – Lunch
- 3:00- 2nd Snack

OUR MENU:

Our menu reflects our conscious effort to provide the best food using healthy, whole, local, sustainable, seasonal, and organic foods whenever possible. We prefer simple recipes that focus on the best nutritional

values to make fresh and flavourful meals. Menus and recipes are sent out to families in the mid-month update.

At NIA, we value the cultural aspects and variety in the foods we offer. Children at a young age should be exposed to an assortment of foods, tastes, and textures. Our meals are served family-style so that children can engage with food and learn skills to foster independence. Children participate in setting the tables for lunch each day and have opportunities to practice serving themselves.

The following principles help guide us in our menu planning:

- The Canada Food Guide has been recently updated and suggests roughly half of food intake consists of fruit and veg, 1/4 protein, and 1/4 whole grain.
- Consideration of food allergies and sensitivities.
- Low sodium, low sugar and low saturated fats.
- Avoiding preservatives, such as those found in deli meats or products with a long shelf life.
- Recipes, experiences, and thoughts from “The Languages of Food”, by Reggio Children, “The Art of Simple Food” and “Edible Schoolyard” by Alice Waters, and “The Family Dinner” by Laurie David.

FOOD BASICS:

- Children are always encouraged to try at least one bite of everything offered but are never forced to finish all food.
- Children may eat as much as they need to feel full. We encourage children to listen to their bodies.
- No child will be left unsupervised when consuming food or drinks.
- All food will be prepared so that the risks of choking are minimized (for example, cutting grapes into slivers).
- Weekly menus are available to parents. Parents may ask at any time for more information regarding the ingredients.
- We do not track the exact amount of food that was consumed each day by each child. The teacher may anecdotally relay information to parents if asked.
- We are focusing on a largely vegetarian menu. For items that include a meat protein, a vegetarian option of the dish will be offered for those identified as vegetarian.
- Drinking water is very important and will be served with every meal. We may provide smoothies on the occasion, but water will be the main beverage served.
- In addition to two snacks and lunch, there may be special baking projects at other times throughout the day.
- Food and drink are never used as a form of reward or punishment.
- Everything will be either raw, boiled, steamed, baked or pan-fried. We do not deep-fry anything.

What parents need to bring:

- We require families to bring a water bottle to leave at the daycare. It will be washed in the dishwasher each day.
- If your child is in the Infant/Toddler program, we will have a small fridge available for breast milk or formula.

Please note that if your child has a serious food allergy, ensure that this is noted in your registration forms. For the safety of children with allergies, we reserve the right to not serve certain foods when an allergy is disclosed.

ANAPHYLAXIS POLICY

DESCRIPTION OF ANAPHYLAXIS

Signs and symptoms of a severe allergic reaction can occur within minutes of exposure to an offending substance. Reactions usually occur within two hours of exposure, but in rarer cases can develop hours later.

Specific warning signs as well as the severity and intensity of symptoms can vary from person to person and sometimes from reaction to reaction in the same persons.

An anaphylactic reaction can involve **any** of the following symptoms, which may appear alone or in any combination, regardless of the triggering allergen:

- **Skin:** hives, swelling, itching, warmth, redness, rash
- **Respiratory (breathing):** wheezing, shortness of breath, throat tightness, cough, hoarse voice, chest pain/tightness, nasal congestion or hay fever-like symptoms (runny itchy nose and watery eyes, sneezing), trouble swallowing
- **Gastrointestinal (stomach):** nausea, pain/cramps, vomiting, diarrhoea
- **Cardiovascular (heart):** pale/blue colour, weak pulse, passing out, dizzy/light-headed, shock
- **Other:** anxiety, feeling of “impending doom”, headache, uterine cramps in females

Because of the unpredictability of reactions, early symptoms should never be ignored, especially if the person has suffered an anaphylactic reaction in the past.

It is important to note that anaphylaxis can occur without hives.

If an allergic student expresses any concern that a reaction might be starting, the student should always be taken seriously. When a reaction begins, it is important to respond immediately, following instructions in the child’s *Emergency Procedure Plan*. The cause of the reaction can be investigated later.

The following symptoms may lead to death if untreated:

- breathing difficulties caused by swelling of the airways; and/or
- a drop in blood pressure indicated by dizziness, light-headedness or feeling faint/weak.

IDENTIFYING INDIVIDUALS AT RISK

At the time of registration, parents are asked to report on their child’s medical conditions, including whether their child has a medical diagnosis of anaphylaxis. Information on a student’s life-threatening conditions will be recorded and updated in the child file annually.

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to:

- Inform Nanaimo Innovation Academy when their child is diagnosed as being at risk for anaphylaxis.
- In a timely manner, complete medical forms and the Emergency Procedure Plan which includes a photograph, description of the child’s allergy, emergency procedures, contact information, and consent to administer medication. The Emergency Procedure Plan should be posted in key areas such as in the child’s classroom, the office, the teacher’s daybook, and food consumption areas (e.g. lunch rooms, kitchen). Parental permission is required to post or distribute the plan.
- Provide the daycare with updated medical information at the beginning of each academic year, and whenever there is a significant change related to their child.

Nanaimo Innovation Academy will contact parents of anaphylactic children to encourage the use of medical identifying information (e.g. MedicAlert® bracelet). The identifying information could alert others to the child’s allergies and indicate that the child carries an epinephrine auto-injector. Information accessed through a special number on the identifying information can also assist first responders, such as paramedics, to access important information quickly.

RECORD KEEPING – MONITORING AND REPORTING

For each identified student, we will keep an Emergency Procedure Plan on file. These plans will contain the following information:

- Name

- Contact information
- Diagnosis
- Symptoms
- Emergency Response Plan
- Emergency procedures/treatment
- Physician section including the student's diagnosis, medication and physician's signature.

It is our responsibility for collecting and managing the information on children's life threatening health conditions and sharing that information with all of the educators. We will also review that information annually to form part of the students' file.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURE PLANS

In the case of an emergency, the teachers will follow this plan:

1. Administer the student's auto-injector (single dose) at the first sign of a reaction. The use of epinephrine for a potentially life-threatening allergic reaction will not harm a normally healthy child, if epinephrine was not required. Note time of administration.
2. Call emergency medical care (911 – where available)
3. Contact the child's parent/guardian
4. A second auto-injector may be administered within 5 to 15 minutes after the first dose is given IF symptoms have not improved (i.e. the reaction is continuing, getting worse, or has recurred).
5. If an auto-injector has been administered, the student must be transported to a hospital (the effects of the auto-injector may not last, and the student may have another anaphylactic reaction).
6. One person stays with the child at all times.
7. One person goes for help or calls for help.

All staff member must ensure that emergency plan measures are in place for scenarios where students are off-site (e.g. bringing additional single dose auto-injectors on field trips).

PROVISION AND STORAGE OF MEDICATION

Children at risk of anaphylaxis must have at least one auto-injector left at the daycare at all times. It must be stored in the classroom which the child attends but out of the children's reach. All teachers and staff must know it's location.

It is the parents' responsibility:

- to provide the appropriate medication (e.g. single dose epinephrine auto-injectors) for their anaphylactic child;
- to inform the daycare when they deem the child competent to carry their own medication/s (children who have demonstrated maturity, perhaps in the 4-5 Forest School Program, should carry their own auto-injector), and it is their duty to ensure their child understands they must carry their medication on their person at all times;
- to ensure anaphylaxis medications have not expired; and
- to ensure that they replace expired medications.

ALLERGY AWARENESS, PREVENTION AND AVOIDANCE STRATEGIES

a) Awareness

- All staff receive training annually, in the recognition of a severe allergic reaction and the use of single dose auto-injectors and standard emergency procedure plans.

- That all staff, practicum students, and volunteers have appropriate information about severe allergies including background information on allergies, anaphylaxis and safety procedures.
- With the consent of the parent, teachers must ensure that the other children are provided with information on severe allergies in a manner that is appropriate for the age and maturity level of the students, and that strategies to reduce teasing and bullying are incorporated into this information.

Posters which describe signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis and how to administer a single dose auto-injector should be placed in the kitchen area and with the first aid kits.

b) Avoidance/Prevention

The daycare participates in creating an “allergy-aware” environment. Special care is taken to avoid exposure to allergy-causing substances. The kitchen is aware of all allergies that have been reported to the daycare. Parents of children with allergies may consult with the chef about food being served in the program. Recipes for the Kids Healthy Eating Project are selected, taking into consideration allergies. All recipes will be sent to all families at the start of the month. The risk of accidental exposure to a food allergen can be significantly diminished by means of such measures.

Given that anaphylaxis can be triggered by minute amounts of an allergen when ingested, we take the following precautions:

- Ensure food service staff understands the life-threatening nature of their allergy. When in doubt, avoid the food item in question.
- All children and staff wash hands before and after eating.
- Children do not share food, utensils or containers.
- All surfaces are bleached before use. We place food on a plate or napkin rather than in direct contact with a desk or table.

Non-food allergens (e.g. medications, latex) will be identified and restricted from classrooms and common areas where a child with a related allergy may encounter that substance.

TESTING LEAD CONTENT IN DRINKING WATER

Children’s health and safety is a concern shared by all. This policy provides minimum requirements for testing lead content in drinking water of daycare facilities, reporting of the results, and mitigation strategies to eliminate or reduce any risks to children and staff.

AT NANAIMO INNOVATION ACADEMY WE:

- test the lead content in our drinking water on a regular basis (the full reports are available by contacting the Executive Director). Testing is done every two years.
- follow daily routines to ensure the water is safe to drink at any time without hesitation. All taps in our daycare are safe to drink from, provided they have been flushed using the cold water tap for a minimum of two minutes. To ensure safety we flush all the taps every morning and record this on the daily safety checklist.
- work with the Vancouver Island Health Authority and communicate results of the testing and mitigation strategies with parents, students and staff, if testing ever finds drinking water concentrations of lead at or above the maximum acceptable level

RESTING POLICY

Nanaimo Innovation Academy provides a cot with a sheet and blanket for all children that require rest. We wash these items throughout the week to ensure cleanliness. Families may choose to bring in an item of comfort that can be left at the daycare.

Children will not be forced to nap. We help children fall asleep by singing, rocking, or rubbing their back with their consent.

In both the Pre-K and Infant/Toddler Programs we use sound machines to drown out the outside noise during rest time. The sound machines are placed at least 3 feet away from the sleeping children and the sound is kept below 50 decibels, as suggested by the American Pediatrics Association.

FOR THE PRE-K PROGRAM:

We divide the group up into nappers and non-nappers, typically based on age and desire to nap that day. While the nappers are sleeping, the others work on an outdoor project or go on outdoor excursions.

Each day from 1:00-3:00pm we have rest time for children that may like to nap or have a quiet break in the day. Children wanting a rest can choose to either nap, lay quietly and rest their body, or participate in quiet time activities. We only wake up children prior to 3pm if it has been requested by a parent.

FOR THE IT PROGRAM:

Each day from 10:00-10:30am (optional) and 1:00-3:00pm we have rest time for children. These times may vary, depending on the length of sleep each child needs. Children will wake on their own, ensuring their rest needs are met. All children are placed on their back for sleeping.

FOR THE FOREST PROGRAM

Typically, children are age 4-5 in this program and do not nap. Some children need a quiet space to read or rest their body in the afternoon, which will be provided.

ILLNESS AND WELLNESS POLICY

The health, safety, and well-being of all of the children are our main concerns. Families are asked to adhere to this policy closely.

In order to promote and maintain a healthy environment for everyone here, we undertake the following measures:

- Proper hygiene is maintained
- Universal precautions are used for handling all bodily fluids
- Frequent and proper hand washing techniques are used by all children and adults
- Families are informed of any outbreak of a contagious diseases

A child must be kept at home (or picked up through appropriate measures) when the child:

- Is suffering from one or more of the below symptoms, or
- Is not well enough to take part in the regular programs of the program.

Your child must not attend daycare if they display any of the following symptoms:

- Fever of 100 degrees F/37.7 degrees C or higher
- Any complaints of unexplained or undiagnosed pain (dependant on the severity)
- A contagious common cold with fever, listlessness, runny nose and eyes, coughing or sore throat.
- Once the child's temperature, well-being and energy have returned to normal, the child may no longer be contagious, and may be able to return to the child care even though coughing and runny nose may persist. If the symptoms are caused by a known allergy (e.g. hay fever, asthma) the child is not contagious and does not have to be excluded
- Persistent and productive cough with phlegm/mucus suspected

- Sinus congestion with discoloured mucus.
 - Green mucus = stay home
 - Yellow mucus= stay home
- Sore throat or trouble swallowing
- Infected skin or eyes, or an undiagnosed rash
- Headache and stiff neck (should see physician)
- Unexplained diarrhea or loose stool (may or may not be combined with nausea, vomiting or stomach cramps). These symptoms may indicate a bacterial or viral gastrointestinal infection which is very easily passed from one child to another via the fecal-oral route.
- Nausea and vomiting. (Exceptions considered for children whose diets still includes lots of milk/breastfeeding – under 3 years)
- Severe itching, dry skin of either body or scalp if caused by head or body lice or scabies
- Children with known or suspected communicable diseases. A doctor's note may be required before the child can return

A child may return to daycare when:

- Their fever has remained below 100 degrees (38.8 C) for 24 hours without medication
- 24 hours after they have had at least one normal bowel movement
- 24 hours free of vomiting
- Only has a mild lingering cough or mild lingering clear runny nose.
- 24 hours after they started prescription antibiotics
- They have been examined by a doctor and has received medical clearance

INFECTIOUSNESS:

Nanaimo Innovation Academy must be informed if your child has come in contact with any communicable disease or head lice/scabies or other things that may spread to other children.

Lice or Scabies:

In the case of lice or scabies there will need to be a suspension in care provision dependent on the result of home care to remedy the problem.

If your child has head lice, please keep your child home for the day to commence treatment (medicated shampoo and combing out the lice and nits). We require children to be lice and nit free before returning to the daycare. After treatment, you should still recheck your child's head regularly—every day for the first week and then every 3-4 days for a full month. Once a case of lice has been disclosed, we check all of the children's hair daily at the daycare for at least a week.

Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease (HFMD):

HFMD is contagious for about 7 to 10 days. We require the child stay off for at least another 7 days once the fever breaks, so not to get the other children sick.

Warts:

All warts are contagious. One of the concerns is that we are hand washing often, and warts can spread most when they are damp. The kids engage in a lot of sensory play and with many shared toys.

If a child has warts on their hands or a place where it is easily spread, it would be best if they wear waterproof bandaids while at NIA to prevent any spread. Parents must put on waterproof bandaids each day and provide some back up waterproof bandaids in case they come off.

Cold Sores:

The child must stay away from daycare until they are fully healed.

Pinworms:

If a child has pinworms, the whole family must be examined and, if needed, treated. The child must stay away from daycare for 48 hours after the treatment starts. Then must shower every morning before care, ensuring that the anal area has been washed with soapy water to get rid of any pinworm eggs. If your child or any other child at the daycare itches their anal area during the transmission period (2-weeks), they will be sent home. The child and family must take a second dose of treatment 2-weeks after the first dose to ensure that the pinworms have been fully removed and there is no further risk of spread.

It is essential that you wash all bedding, clothes, and toys, as well as disinfect all surfaces in your house to kill all of the eggs. The daycare will also do a deep clean to help stop the spread.

COVID:

If your child has COVID symptoms, you must test them for COVID. If positive, they must stay home for 5 days. They may return to the daycare after 5 days if they have no fever and only mild lingering symptoms of cough and/or clear runny nose.

Ultimately, the care of a child who is ill is the parent's responsibility. If your child becomes ill at daycare, staff will call you or alternative contacts listed on file, to come and pick up your child within 30 minutes. Staff will endeavour to keep the child calm and comfortable until you arrive. If staff feel it is an emergency situation, an ambulance will be called for the child and you (or alternative contacts) will be contacted immediately.

IMMUNIZATION POLICY

Immunizations are one of the most effective ways of preventing the spread of communicable diseases. At Nanaimo Innovation Academy, we require that all children in our daycare programs have up to date immunization records, following the BC Routine Immunization Schedule and that immunizations are kept up to date thereafter.

An official printed record of your child's immunizations is required upon registration. Additionally, we require updates to your child's immunization record after each subsequent immunization.

If your child is unable to be vaccinated because of a medical condition, we require a note from your doctor outlining the circumstances. In this case, an exemption would be made.

MEDICATION POLICY

Nanaimo Innovation Academy staff will only administer non-prescription medication to children with a completed Parent's Medication Release Form on file prior to needing the medication.

We do not administer Tylenol for a fever, as the child should not be attending if they have a fever.

Nanaimo Innovation Academy staff will only administer prescription medication that is in its original pharmacy container and is accompanied with a doctor's prescription. The child's name, medication name, dosage, and times to administer must be clearly stated by the physician. A Parent's Medication Release Form must also be completed before medications are administered.

All medications (excluding epi-pens) will be stored in a secured area while at daycare (in the daycare administrator's office or kitchen). Epi-pens will be stored in an unlocked area easily accessible to the staff. Please remember to ask staff to return the medication at the end of the day, if it is not able to be kept at the daycare.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN POLICY

The Nanaimo Innovation Academy emergency evacuation policy is reviewed, practiced, and recorded on a regular basis. In preparing for emergency situations:

- Smoke alarms are tested monthly.
- Children and staff are taught what to do in the case of fire, earthquake and other emergencies. Evacuation drills, fire drills, and earthquake drills are practiced monthly.
- A first aid kit, an attendance record, a pen or pencil, and an emergency information card for each child and each staff member is kept near the main exit door for quick and easy access.
- Emergency supplies, including water and food, are kept in an accessible place. The supplies are checked and rotated on a regular schedule.
- During an emergency, a buddy system will be adopted and practiced regardless of the number of children in the facility.
- All staff know how to work the fire extinguishers. They also know how to shut off gas lines, hydro, water and furnace.
- A simple diagram of exit paths from the building to the meeting place is posted in various locations around the daycare, along with all emergency phone numbers.
- There is a designated meeting place outside the building that all children and staff know the location.
- In the case that we are unable to stay at the daycare, we will seek shelter at the nearest designated public Reception Center. The Reception Center nearest to us is the **Nanaimo Aquatic Center**. Depending on the severity of the emergency we will be seeking shelter closer to our immediate location. There is a high possibility that other temporary Reception Centers will be opened and we will seek out that which is closest to us.
- Alternate contact numbers are listed below and should be called if you cannot locate us. These contacts will be regularly updated by the Nanaimo Innovation Academy staff in order to communicate effectively with families. One contact will be out of town and will be our designated 'Out of Town Emergency Contact' for all emergency situations resulting in loss of communications.
- It is expected that families will attempt to retrieve their child as promptly as possible in any emergency situation

Emergency Contact Information:

1. Keely Freeman 604-898-7300 (cell) 778-441-4545 (home)
1078 Haliburton Street Nanaimo BC Canada V9R 6N6
2. Alternate Nanaimo resident contact: Rob Freeman 250-327-2290 (cell)
3. Out of Town Contact is Keely's mom, Ann Stott (West Kelowna, BC) 778-754-1880 (home)

EMERGENCY ZIPLOCK BAG POLICY

In the event of unplanned emergency situations, such as natural disasters or other hazardous events, Nanaimo Innovation Academy keeps an emergency bin on site—full of emergency supplies for 20 children and 4 staff members. All families must prepare a medium-sized ziplock bag containing the below items. Your child's ziplock bag will be added to our emergency bin.

Items to include in the ziplock bag:

- 1-2 non-perishable packaged snacks that your child will want to eat (for example—granola bars, nuts, tuna and crackers).
- Light stick (the ones you snap to make them work)
- A small comfort item (object the child will recognize and associate with loved ones at home)
- Photos of family members
- A positive note from family members
- A copy of your emergency contacts

- Any other item your child might need for a 24-hour period – required medicines, special diet requirements, health conditions, glasses and so on.

PERMISSION TO TRANSPORT DURING AN EMERGENCY

In the case that Nanaimo Innovation Academy is required to continue care during an emergency situation resulting in an evacuation notice or unsafe property damage, you give Nanaimo Innovation Academy permission to transport your child to a designated reception center or otherwise, in order to seek temporary shelter for my child.

By reading this, you understand the emergency plan and agree to provide accurate and current contact information for emergency contacts on file. In the case of lost communication, Nanaimo Innovation Academy will contact the out of town emergency contact to relay messages.

You will immediately attempt to retrieve your child from Nanaimo Innovation Academy staff and understand that, if necessary, they will seek the assistance of available responsible adults in order to manage the care appropriately during the emergency situation.

GENERAL FIELD TRIP AUTHORIZATION FORM

It is suggested that providers have two field trip permission forms. One is a 'General Field Trip Authorization Form' that is signed once by the family for everyday activities such as walking to a school or park. Please fill out the Emergency and Field Trip Permission Card provided by the daycare administration. This will permit us authorization to take your child out for a walk or small field trip within a 25 minutes walking distance from the daycare. The card will be brought by a teacher every time the group is outside of the building.

The second is a 'Specific Field Trip Authorization Form' that will be used for each field trip that is a little more out of the ordinary such as swimming, out of town destinations, or visiting a farm. The 'Specific Field Trip Authorization Form' will be given to families no later than one week prior to the excursion.

MISSING CHILD POLICY

At Nanaimo Innovation Academy, we anticipate no such incidents but as a precaution we have instituted the following procedures:

1. As soon as we realize a child in our care is missing from the group, one of the staff will secure the other children, while the other staff begin a search of the immediate area.
2. After two minutes, we will expand the search area. If we are in a public building, we will have the child paged, if possible.
3. We will get as many people involved as we can in the search.
4. After 7 minutes, we will call the police and inform them of the child's name, age, weight, height, clothing, and footwear. We will record the file number that the police give us in order to relay it to the parents.
5. The parent or guardian will be called to inform them of what has happened, what is being done, and that they will be called back in a few minutes with an update.
6. When the child is found, a staff member will contact the parent or guardian immediately. After that the staff member will alert everyone else involved and hold a debriefing session as soon as possible.

7. As a follow-up, Nanaimo Innovation Academy staff will review and assess the incident and will make changes, if necessary, to avoid the risk of a similar incident. As well, we would further educate the children in my care about the importance of staying with the group.

COMMUNITY HEALTH EMERGENCY

A Community Health Emergency is an outbreak of an infectious disease, as announced by one or all of the following governing agencies—BC Ministry of Health, Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA/ Island Health), Health Canada, or World Health Organization (WHO). The outbreak may or may not result in an epidemic or pandemic.

- Epidemic is an outbreak of a contagious disease that spreads rapidly and extensively and affecting many individuals simultaneously in an area or a population.
- Pandemic is an epidemic that spreads across a large region (for example a continent), or even worldwide.

In the case of an announced community health emergency in Nanaimo or at Nanaimo Innovation Academy, we will follow the direction of Island Health and the BC Ministry of Health. In cases where the safety of the staff and children in our care are being compromised and they are not being addressed, we may follow other directives than that of Island Health and the BC Ministry of Health. Our Emergency Procedure protocol will be implemented immediately or as advised by health authorities.

Guidelines governing cleaning and disinfecting protocols and health and wellness of staff, children, families, and the surrounding community will be followed and shared with families.

We will work cooperatively with health authorities with respect to contact interviewing, screening, decontamination and quarantine procedures

Policies applying directly to current families attending and staff at Nanaimo Innovation Academy include any or all of the following:

1. Handwashing:
 - a. We will increase discussion, education, and practice of handwashing with the children and anyone entering the daycare.
 - b. We may increase supervision of handwashing of the children to ensure that the handwashing is meeting the handwashing recommendations provided by Island Health.
 - c. We may require all people entering the daycare to wash their hands upon entry.
2. Illness
 - a. We will remind families of the current Health and Wellness policy, as it pertains to illness.
 - b. We may amend the policy at any notice to address the current health emergency.
 - c. We may refuse entry into the daycare of anyone that we deem is not following the policy we have in place at that time.
 - d. Depending on the parameters of the community health emergency, we may require individuals to self-quarantine if exposed to possible health risks or seek a doctor's approval of health before entering the daycare.
3. Cleaning
 - a. Cleaning and disinfecting procedures will be reviewed and possibly amended to address the health concerns.
 - b. Cleaning, health, and hygiene protocols and schedules will be posted and followed.
 - c. Record keeping of all cleaning procedures will be kept and initial by the individual that completed each task.

4. Schedule

- a. We will do our best to follow our regular daily schedule, so not to disrupt the routine for the children.
- b. We may choose to spend more time outside for play activities, as this decreases the time in a confined area and helps mitigate the spread of germs.
- c. We may cancel or limit any scheduled field trips or visitors to the daycare.
- d. Napping and/or mealtime routines may be reviewed and amended.

5. Closure

- a. We will do our best to follow Island Health's and the BC Ministry of Health instructions as it pertains to daycare closures due to a community health emergency. If we are mandated to close, we may have no say on how long the closure would be, as this will be directed by local health authorities.
- b. We will inform current families of a closure as soon as possible. This will be done by email, Facebook page, and our private Parent Facebook group.
- c. We will do our best to provide updates to the closure on a regular basis by communicating with families by email, Facebook page, and our private Parent Facebook group.
- d. If the daycare has to close, limit the operation hours, or limit the number of children in attendance, because of a staff shortage or Island Health recommendations due to the community health emergency, we will send communication as soon as possible and let families know the parameters of the limitations.

6. Fee Payment

- a. For closures due to community health emergencies, parents will be required to pay regular fees (unless additional funding is provided by the government to compensate for these fees) and will not be refunded for missed days. The fees will be used to pay for fixed overhead costs (rent, hydro, utilities) and to top up staff wages.
- b. Government fee reduction programs such as the Affordable Child Care Benefit (ACCB) and Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative (CCFRI) may or may not be provided during a closure. If they are not provided, parents will be responsible for the full fee amount for the closure period.
- c. If the closure lasts longer than 3 days, the fee payment policy may be re-evaluated by the Board of Directors.

7. Self-Isolation & Quarantine

- a. In the case of some community health emergencies, the health authorities may put restrictions on travel outside and inside the country. Individuals may be required to self-isolate prior to returning to the daycare. We will follow the health authorities' recommendations on matters of travel and self-isolation/quarantine. We may feel the need to bring forth further restrictions, as it pertains to our individual circumstances at Nanaimo Innovation Academy.
- b. Return to the daycare will only be allowed once family members are past the transmissible period and are symptom free.
- c. Families are responsible for full fee payment while their child is not in attendance due to self-isolations or quarantines.
- d. Staff may collect Employment Insurance during any time away for self-isolations or quarantines. There will be no wage top up for this time away.

8. A Non-Biased, Inclusive Approach

- a. Fear-based responses in times of pandemic or communicable disease, have historically led to actions stemming from bias and self-protective measures. Not only can these measures lead to conflict between parents, child care educators, and community members, but they can also lead to actions rooted in racism, bigotry, and other intolerances.

- b. Nanaimo Innovation Academy has an inclusive-based approach and works to be a safe space for all families and children; we will not tolerate acts of racism or bigotry towards any parent, child, employee, or community member. Any such acts may be subject to an immediate dismissal from our program.

STUDENT AND VOLUNTEER POLICY

Nanaimo Innovation Academy may have Early Childhood Education and/or Bachelor of Education students completing practicum or volunteers working within the daycare throughout the year.

NIA also has a wonderful Artist in Residence Program, which is a volunteer that comes to NIA for a defined period to share their skills and talents in the arts.

At all times, students and volunteers will be under the supervision of Nanaimo Innovation Academy staff. Students and/or volunteers are never left alone with the children.

All students and volunteers must have on file a current criminal record check, two letters of recommendation, and a resume. Families will be notified when a student or volunteer starts at the daycare.

TELEPHONE POLICY

Our main responsibility at Nanaimo Innovation Academy is to provide care to the children.

Staff will not bring their personal phones into the classroom or outside in the yard. Phones must be left in a secured cupboard in the kitchen either turned off or with all ringer/notifications off.

To get a hold of a staff member, please call the office line at 250-591-7700.

While each program has a portable office phone, we may not be able to answer the office phone at all times during our operating hours.

We will, however, answer the phone when possible and will check the answering machine messages periodically throughout the day. We will do our best to return all calls promptly, so please leave a message.

Staff may carry cell phones on them while on excursions outside of the daycare grounds for emergency use only.

Children are not permitted to bring cell phones or other electronic devices to the daycare.