

PARENT HANDBOOK



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McKernan Child Development Centre

McKernan Child Development Centre

Contact information:

We are located inside McKernan Baptist Church. Our entrance is through the South doors of the building downstairs.

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PLEASE SAVE THIS HANDBOOK FOR REFERENCE. THIS IS A LIVE DOCUMENT & AN UPDATED COPY WILL BE ACCESSIBLE ON OUR WEBPAGE FOR YOUR REFERENCE.

This handbook is your valuable, informative document during your stay at the McKernan Child Development Centre (MCDC). It answers many of your questions and it is the responsibility of the family to ensure you are reviewing this information as well as the updates regularly & bringing any questions you might have to the office as they arise. Updates will also be shared with our community via Storypark or email.

The Board of McKernan Child Development Centre reserves the right to change any policy upon Board decision. Families will be informed if that happens. This handbook will be reviewed and updated annually. In the event of a discrepancy, the most recent copy of the handbook will be used.



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

At McKernan Child Development Centre, we understand the importance of community, families, and educators working together to provide optimal learning opportunities for the children in our care. We see each contributor as an essential piece to our success as a program. MCDC welcomes children of all backgrounds and developmental abilities.

1.1 Philosophy:

Our program is based on a “Learning through Play” philosophy and emergent curriculum model. As a program, we are inspired by the practices articulated in:

- [Flight: Alberta's Early Learning and Care Framework](#),
- [Magda Gerber's Educaring® Approach](#)
- [Reggio Emilia Approach](#).
- [GRIT ASaP \(Access, Support, and participation\)](#).

At MCDC, we believe that all children have a natural capacity for learning and will progress optimally, through play experiences that engage their interests. We offer exciting opportunities for them to build on their current knowledge and skills. It is our goal as educators to help them in this journey.

1.2 Vision:

Our goal is to share God's love in a practical way to all families while showcasing a team of professionals that excels in the field of Early Learning and childcare. As a team it is our desire to share the importance of our profession to our community and appreciate the opportunity to learn along with the children in our care. We envision a program that showcases quality in these ways:

Staff Team/Educators:

- Hire educators that have training in the field of Early Learning and Childcare.
- Facilitate a working environment that supports and promotes professional standards. (PD days, planning and documentation time, providing resources, etc)
- Challenge our team to reach their potential as educators.
- Encourage and mentor students from MacEwan University and Lethbridge College, within the Early Learning and Childcare field as they further their skills.
- Maintain active memberships to our provincial childcare association. (AECEA)

Environment/ Play Space:

- Provide an environment that encourages and supports Curiosity, Wonder, Imagination, and Discovery
- Utilize natural elements that engage children's natural capacity for learning and provide a sense of calm and wellbeing.
- Maintain a safe and inviting space for children, families and educators to spend time in.

Planning & Programming:

- Provide meaningful learning experiences for children.
- Build on children's current knowledge and offer opportunities for further development of skills.
- Recognize children's individual needs and plan a program that supports their developmental stage.
- Take time to learn from children and collaborate with families.
- Learn from other programs and philosophies.
- Build nurturing relationships with the children in our care.

1.3 MISSION STATEMENT:

Children, families, and educators learning and growing together.

Our Core Values

McKernan Child Development Center is an integral part of the programs of McKernan Baptist Church, which values right relationship with God through Jesus Christ, right relationship with one another, and right relationship with our neighbors. All programs of McKernan Baptist Church function on the foundation of the Statement of Beliefs and Constitution of the Church.

Early 2017, the MCDC team worked collaboratively to define five (5) core values that we feel best represent what we believe and want to uphold as an organization. These values are listed below. When choosing to work within our team, educators are encouraged to use this document as a guide for their work and to complement their own personal values as individuals.

Responsive Environments

We believe...

- Children and educators deserve a beautifully designed and well cared for space to spend time in.
- In the principle of using the indoor and outdoor environment as the third teacher and recognize the importance of choosing materials and set-ups thoughtfully.
- In using natural items and neutral colors for our spaces. We believe in creating displays that are visually appealing and professional when sharing our work.
- It is important to reflect on our classroom environment to ensure it is meeting the needs of the current MCDL community then make changes, as necessary.

Collaborative Relationships

We believe...

- Effective communication is essential to our success.
- Children deserve to have their voices be heard - in general conversations, in planning, and in decisions that impact them.
- In the importance of learning from one another and respectfully listening to others' opinions.
- In effective problem solving for adults and children. We will promote strategies that support this in our work.
- In ongoing learning, professional development, and reflective practice. This will be evident in our administrative structures, schedules, and yearly planning as a program.
- In the importance of strong, positive relationships (with families, with children, and within our team and community partnerships).

Joyful Work

We believe...

- In the value of playfulness with children and with each other; enjoying and fully being in each moment, sharing laughter, joy, and exploration together.
- That spending time in beautiful spaces and outdoors in nature, contribute to our mental and physical health and well-being. This contributes to our effectiveness and individuals.
- In showing respect and consideration in all of our interactions.
- Our role as educators is to be co-imaginors, co-researchers, and co-learners alongside the children in our care.
- MCDL deserves a team that is passionate about excellence in Early Learning and Childcare.
- Every day is a new beginning.

Children As Individuals

We believe...

- All children deserve the right to grow in their skills according to their own timing and readiness.
- Children's ideas, interests, and individually will guide our classroom and routines. Flexibility is crucial.
- In the importance of observation and reflective practice to best understand what's happening for all children and to make wise curriculum decisions.
- We appreciate all families and children are unique have various needs and culturally practices that should be respected.

Intentionality

We believe...

- That all decisions should be made purposefully with consideration for everyone involved.
- That schedules, staffing, resources, and policies should support our team in facilitating a program of excellence.
- Children deserve limits and clear expectations. In offering this we offer a
- safe and supportive environment where they can thrive.
- Our interactions should be pro-active and supportive.

Communication effectiveness is a must.

- In seizing every moment.
- That we can impact the next generation's role in society. We use that to guide our curriculum decisions and relationships within the MCDC community.

2.0 Hours/days of operation

We operate from 7:30 am to 5:30 pm, Monday to Friday, except statutory holidays (Table 1) and closures listed below. In the event that a statutory holiday falls on the weekend, the daycare will be closed for a day in lieu.

Our program is closed for one week in July for our annual summer closure.

Table 1. 2024/2025 Program Closures and Days to Remember

July 8-12, 2024	Summer Closure
August 5, 2024	Heritage Day
August 30, 2024	PD Day
September 2, 2024	Labor Day
September 6, 2024	Fall kick off (more information coming soon)
October 4, 2024	PD Day
October 14, 2024	Thanksgiving Day
November 11, 2024	Remembrance Day
December 6, 2024	Christmas Potluck (6pm – 8pm)
Dec 23-Jan 1, 2025	Christmas Closure (back to work on the 2 nd)
Feb 17, 2025	Family Day *PD day follows*
February 18, 2025	PD day
April 6, 2025	Spring potluck (6pm – 8pm)
April 18, 2025	Good Friday
April 21, 2025	Easter Monday
May 19, 2025	Victoria Day *PD day follows*
May 20, 2025	PD day
July 7-11, 2025	Summer Closure
August 4, 2025	Heritage Day
August 29, 2025	PD day

3.0 Fees

Fees are due the first of each month. You will receive an automatic debit form so that fees can be deducted directly from your account. Details regarding subsidies and affordability grants available to parents can be found on our webpage. Please note that we do not offer part-time fees, shared spaces, or reduced rates. If space is available, drop-in childcare can be arranged at a rate of \$50 per day.

Annually, the budget will be evaluated, and the board will assess if changes are necessary for the following year. (Our fiscal year is July-June) Parents will be notified in advance if adjustments to fees will occur.

3.1 Registration fees

A registration fee (\$100) is required at the time you register, to ensure a space is held for your child. This payment is collected via E-Transfer to daycare@mckernanbaptist.ca. This will be refunded to you at the end of your stay, provided your account is in good standing as a credit to your account in your last month of care.

3.2 Subsidy

Parents needing financial assistance must complete a Subsidy Application Form. The live link & pertinent information are available on our website. **Parents are solely responsible for completing and updating their subsidy forms and must provide copies of approval to the daycare before a fee reduction will occur.** Subsidy information and updates will not be sent to the daycare so please be sure to keep on top of your renewals and payment amounts. (See Section 4.2.1 for attendance requirements).

3.3 Holding fees

You may hold your child's space if you are away, e.g., summer holidays, if you pay the **full-time fee** for each month that the space will be held. If you chose not to pay the fee, your child will be removed from enrollment and placed on the waitlist for the next available spot. There are no guarantees that a spot will be available at requested date if child withdraws from the program as current waitlist is lengthy.

3.4 Late child pick-up fees

Our program closes **at 5:30**. Out of respect for our team and to ensure time to close at the end of the day, **please arrive by 5:20** so you have adequate time to gather your child's belongings and exit by 5:30 daily. If you are late, you will be informed a late fee will be charged: \$10.00 within the first 15 minutes and an additional \$10 for every 15 minutes (or portion) thereafter (Section 4.2.2). You will be notified via email and payment will be added to your next month's fees. If late arrivals continue to occur, alternate childcare arrangements may need to be considered. All efforts will be made to support families prior to this action being taken.

4.0 Admission, attendance, withdrawal

4.1 Admission

An enrolment package will be given to you when you register at MCDC. All sections of this document must be completed in full and returned within 30 days of registration or 2 weeks prior to start day. (Section 3.1).

Please keep your personal information record current. It is imperative that the team be informed immediately of any change in:

- Home address
- Phone numbers
- Place/hours of employment
- Emergency contacts (**local address & phone #**)
- Changes in other personal information

Annually we will coordinate a file update to ensure all records are accurate.

Inclusion Policy

Inclusion is a priority and we will collaborate with our team and the families in our program to offer the best opportunities for everyone involved. Genuine inclusion is meaningful participation in the daily routines and programming for all children. With that in mind, prior to the enrollment of any child, we will assess our current programming, staffing, and enrollment to ensure we can offer optimal care to each family before offering a spot. If we are unable to offer what a family is needing, we will collaborate with the family and other agencies to find suitable alternatives for the child needing care. On an ongoing basis, MCDC will reflect on our current practice, team and program to see where needs could be addressed and improvements could be made. These areas may be:

- Assessing the needs of children in each classroom. Completing observations or assessments with the group. Accessing additional resources to provide more support to children needing it.
- Hiring additional support team members and classroom aides to accommodate smaller groupings or 1:1 assistance for children requiring it.
- Meeting regularly as educator teams to discuss challenges and successes and collaborate on best ways to meet the needs of all children we serve.
- Collaborating with outside agencies to support our MCDC community (GRIT, CO, Infant and Preschool Assessment Service (IPAS)...etc.)
- Communicating with parents to determine how things are working and how we can best support them.

- Assessing our classroom environment and making adaptations as necessary & possible.
- Reflecting on our practice and interactions as a team. Assessing areas of need for skill development and offering additional training opportunities for our team.
- Allowing time and opportunity for all children to learn at their own pace and showcase their best within the classroom community. (Guiding behavior, modeling positive, respectful dialogue & interactions within the group, and being open to questions the children may have.)

4.2 Attendance

Your child will receive maximum benefit from the program by attending regularly. In consideration of the needs of all the children in the center, we ask that arrival times do not interfere with nap time (12:30-2:30). **It is highly recommended that you arrive before 10am so that your child has time to play prior to lunch and naptime.** Please follow these daily rituals:

- Notify your child's caregiver immediately upon arrival. Adults must make personal contact with a staff member before departing.
- Notify us if your child will be absent, arrive later, or leave earlier than usual. In the case of illness, please call and report symptoms so we can track for Alberta Health and be aware of any potential outbreaks.
- An educator will sign your child in when they arrive
- *If you take your child out of the center for a few hours, then return them for care, an educator will document their mid-day arrival/departure time on the sign in/out sheet

*Note: This is particularly important for child head count during and after practice fire drills (Section 7.4.1).

4.2.1 Subsidy attendance

Children receiving subsidy must attend a minimum of 100 hours per month to receive full subsidy. Parents who do not use their 100 hours minimum will be surcharged for the difference. The subsidy office will regulate this. Refer to section 3.2 for other information regarding subsidy.

4.2.2 Late child pick-up after 5:30pm

All children must be exiting the building by 5:30pm. In the event that you are running late, please call the center, otherwise the staff will call you by closing time. Your emergency contact will be contacted if we are unable to reach you. **Late fee charges will apply** (Section 3.4).

4.3 Withdrawal from MCDC

Parents may withdraw their child from MCDC at any time, by giving **8 weeks' notice**. At this time, we require a **written letter or email** stating the withdrawal date (last day of care) to be submitted to the director. If the last day of care is sooner than 8 weeks, the next month's full fee will be charged to your account. Annually in May, children that are eligible for kindergarten will be given a form to update our file and share their plans for the upcoming school year (whether staying at MCDC or moving on to an OSC).

5.0 Facilities

MCDC operates in the lower level of McKernan Baptist Church building. It is a bright and stimulating environment designed for infants to pre-school aged children. Outdoor play is an important part of our programming, and every effort is made to include these types of experiences 1-2 times daily in all seasons. In extreme conditions, we can use a large gym space for programming & music class. Our playground is nature inspired and completely enclosed for your child's safety. The Centre also accesses the adjoining McKernan Park for year around activity as well as community parks listed on the attached document.

6.0 Families

Families are a very important part of our program. We believe the Childcare centre is a partner to the family, not an agency that takes the place of the family while the child is in care. We have an open-door policy, and we welcome parents to visit at any time. We ask that you keep visiting during regular playtime rather than during naptime so that all of the children's needs are considered. **Our team reserves the right to reschedule parent visits at anytime if they feel that it is interfering with the child's daily routine.** Scheduled meetings with the Director or any other team member may be arranged whenever a parent or educator feels this is necessary. See section 6.2 for events that families can participate in.

6.1 Communication with parents/guardians

Information is given to parents/guardians from these places:

- Verbal communication from team
- Parent Handbook
- **StoryPark***- on-line system used to share info, photos and connect with team & full MCDC community. All families have their own account and access. ***This is our main source of communication***
- **Email updates** *please ensure your emails have been shared with us.
- Bulletin Boards
- Memos

Reminders will be posted on the entrance door or on the parent board inside the main entrance. *Most memos/handouts will be sent via email or StoryPark unless a hard copy is requested.*

***Our team abides by a code of ethics that ensures they maintain confidentiality and professionalism at all times. They will only be able to give information regarding your child and their interactions with them. Information regarding other children or team members will be kept confidential.**

6.2 Family events

Each year we hold events to gather daycare families and encourage a sense of community with one another. Everyone is welcome to attend.

The activities include:

- Family potlucks
- Field Trips
- Mother's Day & Father's Day
- Year end event in June
- Community Events with McKernan Baptist Church

7.0 Health and safety

The health and safety of your child is important to us. Our Health inspector and the fire department visit us regularly. We have procedures in place to respond to a variety of health and safety matters. The safety statement followed by all employees at MCDC is posted in the staff room.

7.1 Illness

Your child will be sent home according to these guidelines:

- Fever of over 38 degrees. We will take temperature twice within a 30 minute period.
- Diarrhea – 2 or more within a 30 minute period.
- Vomit – Once. Along with unable to participate in activities or along with other symptoms.
- Cold like symptoms – cough, runny nose along with unable able to participate in classroom activities. (evaluated as symptoms present with each child)

When your child is ill please keep them at home for **a minimum of 24hrs** and notify MCDC of their symptoms. Determining the return to care will be based on the following:

- **Fever, vomiting, diarrhea, or unexplained rash**
 - follow minimum 24 hr rule.
 - If new symptom appears within that 24 hrs period, please keep you child home for an additional 24 hrs (from onset of second symptom).
 - In the event of an outbreak (2 or more cases) AHS will be contacted and outbreak procedures will be followed. *policy manual*
- **Cough, runny nose, 2 or more cold like symptoms**
 - no additional symptoms within the 24 hrs have appeared and initial symptoms have improved before returning to care.
- **All other communicable illness-** follow the advice of your healthcare practitioner following the 24 hrs policy.
- **Pre-existing conditions:** will be taken into consideration (asthma, allergies). If you have a doctor's note on file this should be updated annually.

Please note that this assessment is based on their symptoms without the aide of medications. Also note, if a child returns but shows signs of returning or worsening symptoms or is unable to fully participate in the daily routine, the team will call to send your child home for further recovery time.

The children go outside most days either to play or to go on a walk. **If your child is too ill to go outside, he/she should not be in care.** (We always remain indoors if the temperature reaches -20°C or below, with/without the wind-chill factor.) Be sure to pack weather appropriate clothing for your child daily. Our team monitors air quality and other weather advisories (sun, extreme weather) and will use their discretion prior to spending time outdoors.

MCDC shall not be held responsible for contraction of illness by a child.

Updated July 2024

7.2 Administering medication

Medication may be administered by our team **only** if the medication is:

- In the original container labeled and showing the name of the physician
- Has a label with the patient's name
- Labeled with date of issue & expiry.
- Labeled with Instructions and times for administering.
- A medication form must be completed and signed.

Medication Record

The primary educator who administers medication shall complete and initial the medication record each time the medication is administered.

The medication record must be signed by the parent and include:

- Date
- Full name of the child
- Name of medication
- Time and amount of medication administered at home.
- Date, time, and amount of medication to be administered.

It shall also include:

- Date and time medication was administered.
- Name and amount of medication administered.
- Signature of staff administering medication

Patent medications such as Tylenol and cough syrups will not be given unless parents give an indication of the exact times & dose that should be administered by our team (not to be administered to reduce fever). **The medication record cannot indicate “if needed” or “as needed”**. An indicator would be, for consistent cough, teething, or give an exact time for administration.

Team members are not authorized to determine if the child needs the medication- these indications are to be determined in writing by the parent.

The Centre shall not, without the written consent of the parent, giving specific information and instructions on administering medication, give the child any form of medication other than emergency medication where time is of the essence. The most common medications in this category will be those to treat allergies including such things as:

- Epipen, Acupen
- Adrenaline base medication (Anaphylactic kit)
- Asthma medications

Close liaison and consultation with the parents shall be maintained on an ongoing basis in order to ensure that staff and parents are fully aware of when medications have been administered to the child.

Persons administering medication shall be designated and shall have a valid first aid in child care certificate. 911 will be called if administered. There will be a minimum of 1 staff at all times on duty with valid first aid.

7.3 Incident/accident reporting and first aid accidents

First aid will only be administered by the team member who has a valid First Aid in Child Care Certificate. The team member will assess the injury and if it is necessary, administer first aid. The Director and parents will be notified. The emergency contact person will be notified if parents are unavailable. If the accident is deemed serious enough for immediate medical attention, emergency medical authorities will be notified and then as soon as possible parents or emergency contact will be notified. In this event, licensing will be contacted, and a critical incident report will be submitted.

***Parents are solely responsible for any costs incurred by emergency medical aid.**

An Incident/Accident Report will be made out by educators in attendance, reviewed and signed by a parent and the director. If other children were involved, their names will be kept confidential.

Incident Report

An incident includes anything which may have an adverse effect on the child. A written report will be filled out by the educator present at the time of the incident. Parents will review and sign the report. All reports are kept in the child's file for future reference if necessary. Parents may request a copy of the report if they desire. * In the event of a critical incident, it will be immediately reported to licensing and a report will be submitted as per regulations.* Reports are tracked in the incident binder in the office to be made aware of any repeated events (biting, falling/balance issues) and if further actions need to be taken by our team to best support children involved. Ongoing communication with parents will occur if this is deemed necessary.

7.4 Emergency evacuation procedure plan

MCDC's emergency procedure plan will be in effect in the case of a fire drill, actual fire, or other disaster. Of course, we hope that we will never need to use these procedures, but regular practices are a must to ensure that all the staff realize their responsibilities in an emergency situation. A copy of our fire drill procedure is in our policy manual & posted in the hallway and entrance. In the case of an emergency, parents will be called and children will be taken to the **University Tender Loving Care Centre (11224 76 Ave NW)** with staff to wait for parents to pick them up.

7.4.1 Fire drills

We are inspected regularly by Fire Dept. authorities.

A regular fire drill will be held, and staff shall assume their duties when the alarm is triggered. These practice drills will take place regularly.

7.5 Prohibited items

For the health and safety of the children, we encourage you not to bring these items to the Centre:

- NO NUTS due to allergies, and popcorn due to a choking hazard

7.6 Nutrition

As of September 2022, MCDC is no longer able to provide on-site meal service. Parents have the option of packing a lunch kit with snacks and a mid-day meal option (ensure it has an ice pack or thermos for hot foods), or you are welcome to **utilize services through Second Chef to have a meal prepared and delivered for your child at an extra cost**. Information about this service and pricing can be found here: <https://thesecondchef.com/> MCDC will provide milk and water daily. Please bring a labeled water bottle for your child to keep in their classroom.

7.6.1 Birthdays/cakes On your child's birthday, if you would like a special treat served, **we ask that you purchase (we are not allowed to serve homemade cakes or items prepped at home– Health Department licensing order) individually wrapped items if you wish to share in your child's classroom.** ****Please note that all items must be NUT FREE ****

Each birthday child will be given the opportunity to select their own book as a birthday surprise from the office.

7.6.2 Other

Minimize junk food such as candy, gum, pop and juice. Please cut grapes, and cherry tomatoes length wise to reduce a choking hazard.

8.0 Supervision:

At MCDC, we practice active supervision and utilize a combination of observation & team communication to promote safety within our program. We believe that children function best in an environment that is safe & supportive and by watching the children closely, we will be able to see opportunities to build on their play experiences. We will use active supervision as a prevention strategy prior to implementing our guidance strategies. Supervision will be a deliberate and active process. Every day within our classroom, active supervision will be used. It involves:

Moving

-educators will move through their classroom positioning themselves within close proximity to groups that may need support. Once positioning is selected, we encourage **educators and all visitors to sit down** to bring a calm & active presence to their engagement with children.

Scanning

-educators will scan the environment visually to focus on areas, behaviors & children that might need support. They will be able to identify and attend to signs that are typically precede problem behavior. They will listen to conversation and use cues to determine if intervention is necessary.

Positive interactions

-educators will engage with the children in their care (through active presence/observation, as well as through play when invited) and offer opportunities for independence when safety & skill allows. Interactions will be respectful & supportive in order to build trust and security within their group of

children. Educators will utilize the practice of “Observing, Waiting, and then responding” to ensure a respectful & intentional engagement. They will be available for children to provide comfort, encouragement & assistance with skills. Children will be supported in the problem-solving process- offering language, opportunity and time to solve the issue.

Reinforcement

- Communication that clearly describes the positive behavior to the child
- rules & expectations will be clearly defined and explained

‘Teachable’ moments

- adults will use opportunities during playtime and general conversation to support positive behaviors and strategies that the children can later use independently.

Observation

- of each child in the classroom will be utilized to personally build relationships with the entire group. Learning stories showcasing the children’s personalities, interests and capabilities will enhance the team’s ability to plan, appropriately engage, and support the children within their group.

When intervention is necessary, we will utilize strategies listed in our guidance procedures.

Independence & Self-Help Skills: Returning/retrieving items from cubbies:

We understand that our role is to use play and routines as opportunities to scaffold learning and skill development for the children in our care. One of the ways we feel we can support independence and competence, is to give manageable tasks for the older children to try such as returning or retrieving an item from their cubby (steps from the classroom door) or helping with other program tasks that are developmentally appropriate. By offering these opportunities, we can support children’s understanding of safety, following rules, and promote self-help skills and independence in a supportive and safe manner. For these situations, our educators will follow the procedures below:

*At MCDC, this will be limited to children that have demonstrated their ability to safely and sufficiently complete this task independently. It will not be used in the first months of the children joining the group (must establish trust and relationship first) and will be primarily the older children using this. The following guidelines will support this procedure:

- This procedure will only be in place when the group is in the classroom.
- One at a time, the children will be able to return an item to their cubby in the hallway. They must understand this process clearly and be able to:
 - Walk carefully with the item.
 - Get items safely into cubbies- be able to reach their hook or basket.
 - Show successful self-help skills and be able to follow direction
 - Return to main part of classroom efficiently-walking.
 - **Ask permission first**

***This is a privilege that can be discontinued if necessary. ***

Children will be observed by educators in order to determine their readiness with this skill. Prior to offering this privilege, the educators will talk with the children about safety and returning to the classroom efficiently (using child friendly language). They will be given clear directions to follow through on their task and the educators will watch to see that they are following those directions when they allow this privilege. If staff observe that a child is unable to successfully complete these tasks, the child will be asked to wait for an educator to take them along with a small group of children to complete this task as a group. They will no longer be able to go independently but may be given the opportunity to try again at a later date. Younger children will prepare for this future opportunity by participating in self-help skills such as self-serving at meal times, cleaning up dishes, and following simple directions.

8.1 Guidance Policy

As a childcare team, we feel that routine & consistency are key factors in achieving positive behaviors within our program.

In guiding children's behavior, we use two types of strategies: (1) prevention (active supervision) and (2) intervention (guidance strategies). Preventative strategies are used to encourage and support appropriate behaviors. There are a wide range of specific preventative strategies that can be used, such as ensuring the daily program is well-planned and executed, setting clear, simple rules that a child can remember, and reinforcing positive behavior. Intervention strategies are used to stop or redirect undesirable behavior when it occurs. These methods include: calming, redirecting and problem solving with children. In the event verbal guidance strategies have been exhausted and are not offering a positive outcome, non-violent crisis intervention strategies may be used.

****Under no circumstances will physical punishment take place. Other discipline methods such as humiliation, confinement, physical restraint, isolation, withholding food, clothing, bedding, etc., are not accepted nor practiced at any time. ****

McKernan Child Development Centre has adopted the following guidance policy:

1. SETTING LIMITS

ie.) Children will assist in classroom care and clean up, & children must stay with the group during outings etc.

2. REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

Understanding the child's growth and development and only asking what they are capable of achieving. The daily routine will offer consistency to help children anticipate what comes next & be actively involved.

3. SKILL IN EXPRESSING AND HANDLING FEELINGS

Educators model age appropriate language and assist in problem solving with the children. ie) "Tom looks sad. His tower crashed down" OR "You are angry, let's see what we can do to help", "I won't let you hit ____ but if you can hit this pillow." and will stay close by to help co-regulate with the child. A calm voice & clear directions will be used to support calming when ready.

4. PERIODIC REVIEW OF GUIDANCE STRATEGIES (REFLECTIVE PRACTICE)

Observation will be used as a tool to better understand what is happening and reflective questions will be asked to assess next steps such as: Is it working? Are there areas where we could improve? Is our program developmentally appropriate? Do we need to adjust routines etc?

5. POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT

To strengthen desirable behavior: appreciation, privileges.

ie) "Thank you for cleaning up. Now we are ready to go to the gym."

****Studies have shown this to be the most effective deterrent to negative behavior. Note: this is different than praise or reward system strategies that we do not promote within MCDC****

6. MODIFYING ENVIRONMENT

Putting toys where children can reach them, having enough to go around
De-cluttering the space, using the classroom environment as 'third teacher.'

7. NATURAL CONSEQUENCES

ie) Providing it will not endanger the child's life, a child who refuses to put his mitts on will have cold hands on the playground.

8. LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES

The results of a child's actions- If you throw the blocks you might need to take a break from that space & return when you are able to use them in a safe way.

9. REMOVAL FROM THE SITUATION

Used as a calming down process. Child is removed from the particular activity where he/she is having difficulty. It is a break, **not a punishment**, and is not used as a threat.

- i. It is used only when children have lost control. They are separated from others to provide safety and give time to regain self-control with an educator close by to offer support.
- ii. The child will be given a space where they can appropriately deal with their anger or frustration with an educator's help.
- iii. Educator will address feelings and assist child in acting on them appropriately. Visuals may be used to offer support.
- iv. Privileges may be revoked if the child continues to act inappropriately in a specific play area.
- v. When the child is ready to participate appropriately, they can return to playing. No set time limit is given but rather, the child's cues are acknowledged. The child is an active participant in this process.

10. ALTERNATING THE ENVIRONMENT

Is it stimulating? Is it well planned and set up? (See #6)

11. REDIRECTING

Affirm the child's feelings and try to understand the situation. Offer developmentally appropriate choices to move forward positively

12. ALTERNATING THE ENVIRONMENT

Is it stimulating? Is it well planned and set up? (See #6)

13. SUBSTITUTING

Offering manageable and appropriate choices for the child. ie) "I see you want to climb- here is where you can do that. This table is not for climbing."

14. MODELING

Adults model the behavior expected of the child. If a child is expected to use manners, then the adult must use manners and respect the child.

**Changing behavior takes time and there will be a period of adjustment for children that are replacing undesirable habits with more positive solutions. If you require further explanation of these guidance methods, or would like more information, please feel free to see the Director. Ongoing communication with each family regarding guidance strategies will take place. **



"Give children enough guidance to make the decisions you want them to make. Don't tell them what to do but encourage them to do what is best." -Jimmy Johnson

9.0 Clothing, bedding

Please label **everything** with your child's name.

Send your child in clothing that is suitable for all types of play and allows for full movement. Clothing should be comfortable and able to get dirty. Clothing should also be appropriate for indoors and outdoors, according to the daily weather and season.

Each child needs a blanket and a fitted crib sheet for nap time. Bedding is sent home to be laundered every Friday. Please ensure that you return it the following Monday.

Bring these items to your classroom:

- Fitted crib sheet & blanket.
- Indoor shoes & weather appropriate outer wear
- **Complete** spare set of clothes, kept at the childcare center.

Be sure to check child's cubby regularly to ensure their spare clothing is the correct size

10.0 Programs

Our program is divided into 4 classrooms, named to reflect stages of development and experiences of children. The room names are: **Curiosity, Wonder, Imagination, & Discovery**. The age range is flexible to suit the current enrollment during the year. Programming will be based on each group according current developmental stage.

10.1 CURIOSITY ROOM Infants & Toddlers

This is our youngest group and will accommodate up to 7 children. There are always a minimum of two caregivers in this room to maintain a 1:4 ratio (1:3 for children under 12 months as per regulations) with an additional educator in the classroom team to offer enhanced ratios & support. We understand and respect that infants eat/sleep on their own time. Therefore, there is a very flexible schedule (Appendix III) to suit each child's individual needs. Children will have opportunities to play in the gym and go outside for walks or playtime in the park, (weather permitting) usually around 10:00am. We have strollers for this group if needed.

The feeding schedule will follow the needs of the child. Also, for children under 13 months, it is helpful for parents to put in writing their child's feeding habits.

Please bring:

- Bottles, liners, nipples
 - Formula/breast milk
 - Footwear, spare clothes
 - Supply of diapers, wipes, diaper rash cream
- *If using cloth diapers- bring storage bag to take home daily***
- **Supply of food that your infant will eat.** The food can be stored in our refrigerator in the Curiosity room. Families can coordinate food provision through Second Chef once your child is able to eat solids if you wish. (see section 7.6)

10.2 WONDER ROOM Toddlers

Toddlers experience a more structured environment of activities, and time spans for each activity are scheduled to suit toddler-aged children (Appendix IV). Learning topics are shared via StoryPark and posted in the room and on classroom windows.

Please bring:

- Supply of diapers or Pull Ups, wipes, & diaper rash cream
- If using cloth diapers, bring storage bag to take home daily.
- Spare clothes

- Pack lunch & snacks in cooler bag or thermos to maintain safe temperature for storage *Or select food service for lunch through Second Chef as in section 7.6*

The educators in this room will offer opportunities for the children to practice self-help and toileting skills as they show interest and readiness to do so. Feel free to discuss goals for your child with the team at any time. A team of 3 educators work in this room, and ratios for this age group is 1:6. (enhanced ratios)

10.3 IMAGINATION ROOM Ages 3+up

This room has a team of 3 educators, and this age group has a ratio of 1:8. (enhanced ratios) Time spans for each activity are planned to suit the children's developmental abilities, current interests, and needs. The team will share information about the topics they are exploring, and daily/weekly activities are posted in the room, on Story Park & on documentation boards. Field trips are scheduled throughout the year. They will be mentioned on StoryPark and posted on the door a few days before the trip. Sometimes parent assistants may be needed. Please let us know closer to the trip if you want to assist us. **Please note that there is naptime in this group as well.** Children that do not nap will be asked to stay quietly on their mat for a period of time and then be provided with quiet activities that they can do independently. All children are required to bring a complete change of clothes to be left at the centre.

10.4 DISCOVERY ROOM 4+ up

Similar programming to the Imagination Rm, this classroom will offer a mixed grouping and diverse play experiences to challenge the variety of ages and stages represented. Intentionally set up as a small group with a max of 10 children (1:10 ratio) allows for deeper exploration for our older children and more 1:1. There are 2 educators that work within this classroom team. There will be a rest period in this room to allow children who still need a nap.

11.0 Transitions: Moving up from group to group

Your child will transition from one classroom to the next on the first of the month *after* your child has reached an eligible age or sooner if space allows and your child is developmentally ready. You will receive a message at that time outlining information pertinent to their transition. **This will occur only if there is space in the group. The director reserves the right to delay transitions if it is in the best interest of the children and program.**

- Children will be moved up on the basis of age & developmental readiness, e.g., the oldest child in the group who is ready to move up, will move up first no matter how long he/she has attended the center.
- Children will move up as soon as a space becomes available.
- No spaces will be reserved unless the full fee is paid for the current space as well as the reserved space.

- Fees will be charged according to the classroom rate that child is in even if your child's age would allow him/her to move up; e.g., your child is 20 months old but cannot be moved from the infant room to the toddler room – the fee is still the infant fee because of the child/caregiver ratio in that group.
- To ensure a high quality of programming, the teachers will adapt their classroom routines for each developmental level in the group and plan activities accordingly.
- In order to serve you better this decision was approved at the board level. We trust the decision is satisfactory to all of those parents who may be affected.

Typically, one month before your child transitions to the next room (or as soon as space will allow) we will adapt their routine to prepare them for the older group. Your child will begin to:

- Sleep in the room for some naps
- Visit for some meals/snacks
- Visit for various activities

At the end of the transition month, your child will be familiar with the daily routine and staff. You will receive a transition letter at that time. Staff can answer any questions or concerns you may have.

12.0 Cold weather policy

Our cold weather policy states that children do not go outside if the temperature is -20°C or colder (with or without wind chill factor). The weather will be checked prior to planning outdoor activities (around 9:30am) for the morning and then again for the afternoon following naptime and staff will use their discretion to determine if outdoor playtime is beneficial for their current group at that time. This policy is for the protection of the staff and children in severely cold weather. Alternate gross motor activities will be planned for the children that can take place indoors whenever possible.

13.0 Charitable donations to MCDC

McKernan Child Development Centre is part of McKernan Baptist Church, Charitable # 11903 5780 RR 0001. Funding sources are:

- Parent fees
- U of A grant
- Financial support from the church & donations

If you make a donation you will receive an official Tax Receipt from the McKernan Baptist Church.

12.0 Administration

Our not-for-profit center is administered through the McKernan Baptist Church, by a volunteer Board consisting of 3-5 members from the McKernan Baptist Church. Monthly, the director submits a board report and regularly meets with the pastoral representative that offers oversight to the daily operations of MCDC. The pastoral representative takes all communication to the board but does not have voting rights. If necessary, the director may attend board meetings. The board provides oversight to the vision, values, policies and finances of the center. The daily operation of MCDC is carried out by the Director along with the support of the Team Lead, (with consultation from the pastoral representative of McKernan Baptist Church, regarding personnel issues) and input from the board if required. A minimum of 3 parent reps are chosen each year (preferably 1 per classroom). These individuals act as the liaison between the families & program and keep in regular communication with the director as needed.

12.1 2024/2025 Pastoral Representative for the Board:

Terry Okken- executive pastor

2023-2024 Parent reps: Heather Knowles (Aiden), Yun Gao (Laura), Erin Heintz (Jack), Mandy Macleod (Asher & Tamoh). We are looking to possibly add an additional parent. If you are interested, please connect with Angie for further details.

** Parent reps act as the liaison between the director and parent community. If needed, they will meet with the director directly for discussions, otherwise periodic check ins throughout the year will happen. Parent reps coordinate gifts or appreciation for the team annually and help offer feedback for bigger program questions.**

13.0 Formal grievance procedure

If a parent thinks MCDC is in non-compliance with Child and Family Services Authority (780-427-0444), the parent may contact them. However, please first see the MCDC Director to attempt to resolve your concern.

In the event, that a parent has an objection or grievance to any decision made by the Director concerning the operation of MCDC, it is understood and encouraged that the parent approach the Director to seek resolution of any problem before pursuing formal grievance procedures. If this is unsatisfactory, formal steps should be followed:

1. In the event that the problem relates to a specific team member's actions, the parent(s) should approach that team member and discuss privately their concern. If they do not feel it can be dealt with in that manner, they are to approach the MCDC Director or Team Lead to attempt to resolve the problem. Educators usually will be able to answer your questions and can make immediate change to their actions if they are communicated effectively.

If they are not satisfied with the outcome of the issue or actions taken by the

director, parents may approach the parent reps or board directly. Parent(s) must submit the objection or grievance in writing along with reasons for the objection/grievance to the Board within seven days of any decision taken under #1, above.

2. The Board will investigate the objection/grievance of the parent(s), and may request a verbal or written submission from the parent(s) and from the Director.
3. As soon as possible, the Board will provide the parent(s) and the Director with its decision, in writing, with respect to the grievance.

In the event of persistent conflicts when all reasonable attempts have been made to solve problems have been exhausted, for the sake of the child, family, and Childcare Program. Family may be asked to find alternate childcare arrangements.

13.1 Termination of service

Families and the relationship between them and the team are a very important part of our program. Every effort will be made to build and support these relationships; however, we do recognize that there may be situations where our center is not the best fit for some families.

The McKernan Child Development Centre can terminate its services to a family under the following circumstances:

- If fees are not paid in full and on time or if suitable arrangements cannot be agreed upon
- If, in the assessment of the team, a child is unable to manage safely in a group of children in the given child-staff ratio and after exhausting all strategies & supports
- If the center cannot satisfactorily resolve a problem with a family
- If a family member threatens or commits an unlawful act towards a team member or child in our program

16.0 Licensing

The Centre is licensed by Capital Region Child and Family Services Authority. We receive our license annually. The license is posted on the main entry bulletin board. MCDC is inspected by a licensing officer at least twice per year without prior notification.

Recent inspection reports from licensing, fire and health are posted on the bulletin board in the main entrance. If you have any questions regarding these reports at any time, please ask. As of 2020, accreditation was suspended by the government of Alberta. As a previously accredited center we acknowledge that annual goal setting and long term plans to showcase excellence is a priority and will continue to be so even without this formal process and oversight. We will share these plans with our community and make offering high quality programming and advocacy for this in our province a priority. We encourage and appreciate family feedback to help us with this process.



Terms of Agreement for Admission

1. McKernan Child Development Centre will be in operation all year except on holidays and closures listed in the parent handbook. The Centre is open from 7:30 am to 5:30 pm. Should you be late to pick up your child then a fine of **\$10.00 for the first 15 min. will be charged to your next month's fees. (see section 3.4)**
2. Parents should notify the Centre by 9:30am, if the child will be late or absent.
3. Please do not leave the Centre until your child's presence is made known to a team member and your child is signed in. When picking your child up, please make sure the child's teacher is made aware of the departure and your child is signed out.
4. If someone other than the parent is assigned to pick up your child from the Centre, then the parent must inform the Centre for each day to arranged. If that person is not listed on the child's file with granted permission for pick up, an alternate pick-up form will be completed by educator prior to dismissal time. We will then ask for ID to confirm who is picking up child.
5. A resting mat will be provided for your child at nap time. Parents must send a fitted crib sheet and a blanket. Bedding will be sent home at the end of each week to be washed and returned to the daycare. **Naptime/rest time is part of the daily schedule for ALL rooms. If your child does not nap, they must respect & follow the routines set in place.**
6. Each child should bring a water bottle, complete change of clothing and weather appropriate outer wear to the daycare. **Please make sure all of your child's belongings are clearly labeled with his/her name** because staff may not be able to identify all items.
7. Should your child become ill during the course of the day, you will be contacted. If we feel your child would be better cared for at home while he/she is ill, you will be asked to make such arrangements. The emergency contact will be used as a last resort.
8. If your child is too ill to participate in the daily activities of the childcare center such as outside play, he/she is too ill to attend and must be cared for at home.

Medication will be administered by educators *only* if it is in the original container with all pertinent information listed in the parent handbook section 7.2. Parents must sign a *Daily Medication Administration Log* stating the exact amount, time and date medication is to be given. Educators cannot give medication if it is signed "if

needed”, or “as needed”. Please ask staff for further clarification. **Please do not leave medication in the child’s backpack.**

9. Should an emergency situation occur where your child becomes ill or injured and needs medical attention, parents or an emergency contact person will be called. If the situation needs immediate medical attention, an ambulance will be summoned at the sole expense of the parent or guardian.
10. Report any change in contact, phone numbers, address, etc., immediately.
11. Fees are paid at the first of each month by preauthorized payments from your account. Drop-in fees must be paid daily. A fee of \$25 will be charged for accounts with insufficient funds to process the monthly payment.
12. A \$100 deposit will be taken upon registration of your child. The deposit will be returned providing: (1) your account is in good standing, (2) you have provided the Centre with notice as outlined in the handbook. If a deposit is made to hold a space and you decide not to take the space, your deposit is not returned.
13. I give permission for my child to join the McKernan Child Development Centre to play at McKernan Park and go on walks in the vicinity of MDCD. I understand I must give written permission for various field trips on the *Field Trip Permission* form that will be provided before the time of the field trip.
14. The Centre will use all due care and diligence in caring for all the children and their belongings. Nevertheless, we will not be liable for any loss of or damage to clothing or other belongings, not for any accident, injury, sickness or disease, harm or neglect, whatsoever that may occur to any child while in the care of the Centre but resulting from circumstances outside of the Centre.

In signing below I accept the terms of agreement and have read and understand the policies and procedures outlined in the parent handbook. This includes the child guidance policy. I understand this document is a live document and policies are subject to change. It is my responsibility to review this document and any updates regularly. The most recent copy of the handbook will be followed in the case of a discrepancy.

McKernan Child Development Centre

Neighborhood Parks

As a part of our commitment to spending time outdoors and actively engaging in what our community has to offer, the MCDC team has planned to include the following community parks as potential 'adventure locations' during their outdoor playtime. These adventure locations will be considered a part of our regular programming not as additional fieldtrips. All fieldtrips will have detailed fieldtrip forms filled out prior to those specific events.

Violet Archer Park	10920 70Ave
Belgravia Community Park	116St/74Ave
Park Allen Community Garden	11104-65 Ave NW
Park Allen Park	11104-65 Ave NW
Queen Alexandra Park	10722-73 Ave NW
McKernan School Park	11330 76 Ave NW

not during school hrs

When taking the children to these places the educator team will follow these procedures to ensure clear communication & safety is considered:

- Regular transition routines & procedures (roll call, head counts etc.) will be followed as per usual.