

Hammonds Plains Children's Centre

ForestKids Early Learning

1 Yankeetown Road, Hammonds Plains, NS, Canada B3Z 1K7
Phone 902 835-1804 Fax 902 835-4156 forestkids.ca terri@forestkids.ca

Parent Handbook

Welcome to the Hammonds Plains Children's Centre and our program ForestKids Early Learning. This handbook contains information to help familiarize you with your child's program. It contains our child care policies, daily schedule outlines, parent guidelines, and our price list.

Our Philosophy, Mission Statement and our license are viewable in the entryway near the main entrance.

Philosophy

The operator and staff of the Hammonds Plains Children's Centre will provide a safe, caring, and inclusive environment. It is important to us that each child's physical and emotional needs are met. We recognize the value of active play in helping children learn and helping them to develop trusting relationships with their peers.

Our early childhood education program provides:

- a carefully planned program that provides opportunities for children to explore, investigate, and communicate with friends and caregivers
- opportunities for children to build on their experiences and interests and to celebrate their individuality and cultural background
- a planned program that encourages the children to develop physically, socially, emotionally, morally, cognitively, and musically.
- A healthy environment in which each child's self-esteem is enhanced, play is encouraged, and children are enabled to participate to their full potential in environments carefully planned to serve individual needs
- supports for the family through parent participation and on-going communication
- the incorporation of resources available through the community

Mission Statement

Hammonds Plains Children's Centre is a privately owned child care centre whose early childhood educators are committed to providing a nurturing, stimulating environment with excellent child care services for all families in the community. We provide child care for children ages 3 months to 12 years. We will provide this care through a developmentally and individually appropriate daily program in a stimulating natural setting.

ForestKids Early Learning Values

We value children being able to explore nature as I did as a child. I was able to go out whenever I wanted to: I could play in the mud, climb trees, go coasting, swing on rope swings, throw rocks in the brook, play hide and seek in the tall grass, and play baseball. As a family we roasted wieners, marshmallows, and other treats; we went fishing, had picnics, went swimming and, best of all, we enjoyed all this in all weather.

ForestKids Early Learning will assist children to grow and learn in nature. Our program will begin at 9:30

every morning. The children will have free access to enjoy nature as they see it. They will learn social development, as so many things in nature can be happily explored with more than one child. They will help each other learn to climb trees, make shelters, go nature hunting for animals, insects, birds and pathways. They will have the freedom to play, learn, explore and feel the connection with nature.

Children will soon enough be asked to sit inside a school, join sports where they will be challenged to win their games, or enrolled in activities where they will be asked to perform to do their best. Children will live in a world where they will have to exceed expectations soon enough. ForestKids Early Learning allows the children to be themselves, find their own strengths and passions without pressure, learn and understand when they are ready, and build a strong healthy relationship with others and the world around them.

Public Documents

The following documents are posted on the bulletin board in main entrance (upper level):

- act and regulations
- parent handbook
- most recent inspection report
- HPCC's behaviour guidance policy
- current menu
- daily program plan and routine
- list of members of the Parent Committee
- notification of funding provided

Our Program

We provide an emergent nature approach program for children 3 months to 12 years old. We are licensed for 70 children. The centre is open from 6:30 am to 6:30 pm.

We are a full-day child care centre. We do have a number of part-time spaces available for children 18 months to 12 years; these require a minimum enrolment of 2 days per week (whether your child attends these 2 days or not).

Inclusion Policy

ForestKids Early Learning provides a developmentally appropriate program that aims to meet the needs of the individual child and the group in the child care environment. Staff, trained in early childhood education and special needs, participate in planning individual program plans (IPP) and individual family service plans (IFSP) in collaboration with the child's family and with any specialist that may be involved with the child (i.e. early intervention, speech and language, family physician, occupational therapist, etc.). IPP and/or IFSP goals will be incorporated into all aspects of the daily schedule.

Hammonds Plains Children's Centre staff provide opportunities for children to participate to their full potential in environments that are carefully planned to facilitate the child's progress in the social, emotional, physical and cognitive areas of development. Children with special needs will be enrolled in the program as space permits and as Hammonds Plains Children's Centre allows. Criteria for the enrolment of children with special needs include the child being ambulatory, our ability to keep the child safe and provide for the child's social and developmental needs. Please note that Hammonds Plains Children's Centre is not wheelchair accessible for the upper level.

Registration

Our forms are available on our website, forestkids.ca (If you do not have access to a computer, we can print the forms for you.) All forms must be given to HPCC prior to your child's first day.

Please include:

- deposit of \$170.00 [Note: deposit will be applied to the first month's invoice and is non-refundable]
- the **Application Form** (including the outing consent), signed
- the **Child's Health Questionnaire** (including immunization dates given), signed

Your Child's First Day at HPCC

Hammonds Plains Children's Centre gives 3 days at no charge prior to your child's start date, to use as you wish, to transition your child into our centre.

We urge parents to come and visit with their child for an hour before using any of the 3 days. The 3 days may be used over a period of time or together. If you have any questions regarding these days, call or email and we will try our best to help you.

What to Bring

Please dress your child according to the weather. A change of clothes is required for your child at all times, if your child is potty training, please send several changes of clothes, extra socks and footwear.

Take the necessary precautions to protect your child from the ultraviolet rays of the sun (sunglasses with straps, a wide brimmed hat that ties so the wind does not blow it off).

Spaghetti straps are not permitted on any clothing for outside wear. Please have your child's shoulders covered with a light-weight cotton long-sleeved shirt. Flip-flops are not permitted in the playground or on outings.

Your child may bring a soft cuddly stuffy and blanket for quiet time. We encourage children to leave toys and personal items at home.

Hammonds Plains Children's Centre does not provide the following items:

- baby food
- diapers (diapers are a necessity and if HPCC has to provide your child with diapers at anytime a fee of \$5.00 per diaper will be charged to your invoice)
- diaper cream
- diaper wipes (if HPCC has to provide your child with diaper wipes at anytime a fee of \$5.00 per day will be charged to your invoice)

Parent Involvement

We encourage parents and family members to be part of the centre's extended family. Once your child is comfortable in their setting, we invite parents to play an active role in your child's program when appropriate. Such involvement can be arranged with the director. We welcome comments and suggestions. Should a problem arise in your child's class, please discuss it with the teacher. If this does not satisfy your concern, feel free to contact the director or one of the parents on the Parent Committee.

If you would like to volunteer at the centre, please contact the director.

Nutrition

We follow the criteria of the **Manual for Food and Nutrition in Regulated Child Care Settings**, serving food which provides the essential nutrients, minimal use of food which has low or no nutritional content and absence of food which is harmful to the body. Menus run on a four week rotation. Menus are posted on the main parent board on the upper level. Any menu substitutes will also be posted that same day.

Mothers are welcome to breastfeed their babies anywhere in our centre they feel comfortable to do so. A warm and comfortable space will be provided by the centre to welcome breastfeeding moms.

Foods that have been donated to or purchased for HPCC must:

- be labelled with the name of the source of the food
- include a list of ingredients and any special preparation, storage or serving instructions
- be in accordance with *Standard 6 (special dietary considerations)*

Staff of HPCC are responsive to children's cues around hunger and provide snacks and meals outside of the regular schedule as required. HPCC provides a relaxing and enjoyable meal environment. HPCC staff encourage children to respond to hunger and feelings of fullness and the children are not pressured to finish food that has been served. When working with the children, HPCC staff model healthy eating practices that are consistent with these standards.

Fee Payment Structure

Fees are to be paid by the first day of every month. Part-time schedules provided must be paid whether your child attends these scheduled days or not; any extra days added within the month will be added to the next month's invoice as balance owing for previous month. Any fees not paid in full by the 15th day of each month will result in your child not being permitted to attend HPCC until all monies owing are paid in full. While your child is not attending HPCC due to non-payment, you will still be charged regular daycare fees until your child returns or you give your two weeks notice to terminate. Any unpaid invoices for more than 30 days will be submitted to collections.

There will be a service charge of \$40.00 for every NSF cheque (non-sufficient-funds).

Children must be picked up by 6:30 pm. A late charge of \$2.00 is due for every minute or part thereof. This money is payable to the closing staff member on duty at the time of lateness. You will be required to sign a late slip if payment is not made on the day of lateness. Tax receipts will be issued by the end of February for the tax year. A deposit made to hold a space is payable at the time of application and is non-refundable. Payment may be made by cheque, E-transfer, or cash.

Vacation Days, Holidays, Storm Days

Any and all vacation days taken will be invoiced as regular daycare days. Part time parents using a schedule will be charged the mandatory 2 days per week while on vacation. The centre is closed the following holidays: New Year's Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, Natal Day, Labour Day, Thanksgiving Day, Remembrance Day, Christmas Day, Boxing Day. Please note that REGULAR fees will be charged for these days. If the centre is closed due to a storm regular fees will be charged for that day.

Health Policies

Children will be excluded from the centre if they have any of the following symptoms: fever, diarrhea, vomiting, persistent cough, breathing difficulty, rash with a fever. A child will not be accepted at the centre if he/she displays any of the above symptoms that may spread disease. Staff will check children on daily arrival for signs of illness. If your child shows any of the above symptoms during the day, you will be notified to have your child picked up as soon as possible. Parents are required to provide the centre with detailed information relating to their child's illness. Hammonds Plains Children's Centre is committed to reporting outbreaks of communicable disease to Public Health

Services.

Medication

Medications will be administered only with written directions from a doctor. All prescription medication must be labeled from the pharmacy which it came from, in addition to the parents filling out and signing an authorization slip giving the staff permission to administer the required medication.

A new authorization slip is required for each new medication.

Over-the-counter medications will not be given by the staff unless written instructions are received from the parent or the physician, as indicated above.

Emergency Medical Attention

All HPCC staff have been trained in First Aid and Infant CPR. If a child requires emergency medical treatment due to illness or injury, the parent will be contacted immediately. If the parent is unable to be reached, the authorized emergency contact will be notified (contact with the parent will continue to be attempted). If contact with the parent or authorized person cannot be made and the child requires immediate medical attention, a staff person will accompany the child to the IWK Health Centre in a taxi (or director's car if taxi is not available). If a child's condition is life threatening, an ambulance will be called and a staff person will accompany the child to the hospital. Parents are asked to complete a *Parental Consent for Emergency Care and Transportation Form* at registration.

Napping

Infants nap when they are tired; toddlers nap from 12:30pm – 2:00pm; preschoolers nap from 1:00pm - 2:00pm. It is required for all children to have a 30 minute quiet time. If your child does not nap, he/she will be given a quiet activity on his/her bed until quiet time is over.

Behaviour Guidance Policy

Our program is designed to develop within each child the ability to act appropriately and acceptably in given situations. We do not use physical or verbal punishment, threats or withdrawal of affection as disciplinary measures, and we ask the you refrain from similar measures while at the centre. We avoid withholding food as a disciplinary measure unless the child's abuse of food in itself is the problem. We will make arrangements to discuss the child's behaviour at any time upon parent request or when we as the management feel the need to do so.

Hammonds Plains Children's Centre will not permit:

- any corporal punishment, including but not limited to the following:
- striking a child directly or with any physical object
- shaking, shoving, spanking, or other forms of aggressive physical contact
- requiring or forcing a child to repeat physical movement
- harsh, humiliating, belittling or degrading responses of any form, including verbal, emotional, or physical ones
- confinement of or isolation of a child or children
- deprivation of a child of their basic needs including food, shelter, clothing or bedding

Hammonds Plains Children's Centre Discipline Policy

- limits
- setting standards of behaviour
- providing explanations
- providing choices
- being firm but flexible
- anticipating the child's needs
- recognizing child differences in age, temperament and experience
- ignoring where appropriate
- distracting and removing the child from the situation

Prevention Strategies

- establish clear consistent and simple limits and provide explanations for the limits
- state limits in a positive way and periodically remind children
- provide opportunities for children to make choices throughout the day
- focus on the behaviour, not on the child
- ignore minor incidents
- prepare children for transitions
- model and encourage appropriate behaviour
- interact with children

Intervention Strategies

- physical closeness and touch
- remind and redirect if necessary
- get child's attention
- acknowledge feelings
- assist children in problem-solving the situation
- removal of a privilege

Child Abuse Policy

Staff of Hammonds Plains Children's Centre are required to report any and all incidents of suspected child abuse and neglect to the Child Welfare and Early Childhood Development Services.

Parent Committee

The Parent Committee provides a forum in which parents provide input and receive notice of any matters of interest or concern to the parents. The Parent Committee consists of at least 3 parents of children currently enrolled at HPCC, the director, and 1 staff who provide regular care for children.

Meetings

- the parent committee will meet at least 2 times per year
- the parent committee meetings will be opened to all parents of enrolled children
- 2 weeks notice will be given prior to a parent committee meeting in writing to each parent as well as being posted on the bulletin board
- parents will be able to add items to the meetings agenda

The basic agenda of the Parent Committee meeting will be as follows:

- the safety, care and well-being of the children
- the status of HPCC license
- HPCC programs
- the equipment and materials used for the children
- staffing patterns and staff qualifications

The minutes of the meeting will be posted within 2 weeks from the date of the meeting and will remain posted until the next meeting.

To help our environment, we will send your invoices and newsletters by email. Please advise us if you do not have email access and prefer them mailed.

Fees

Age Group	Full Time \$ per Day	Part Time \$ per Day	Half Day \$ per half-day
Infants 3 months - 18 months	40.00		
Toddlers 18 months - 3 years	38.00	40.00	20.00
Preschool 3 years - 5 years	36.00	38.00	19.00
School age 5 years (must be attending school) - 12 years	20.00 for regular school days* 30.00 per non-regular school day**	22.00 for regular school days 32.00 per non-regular school day	10.00 per part day (regular school days) 12.00 per half day (non-regular school day)

* regular school day when children are present in school

** non-regular school day when children are not present in school (ex: summer vacation, March break, etc.)

Note: children who are 4 years of age and attending school will receive the school age rate starting in September.

Additionally:

- There will be a \$4.00 transportation charge added to any outings or trips.
- Full time families will receive a \$2.00 discount per day for the second child and each child thereafter.
- Part time families will receive a \$1.00 discount per day for the second child and each child thereafter.

Daily Schedules

Infant Schedule (Ages 3 months - 18 months)

NOTE: Infants 3 months - 12 months sleep when they are tired and eat when they are hungry. Nature experience will take place inside in case of extreme weather conditions.

Activity

Arrival, free play

Unobstructed outside play

Snack

Nature experience outside time

Books /cuddly time

Lunch

Nap

Nature experience outside time

Snack

Unobstructed outside play

Inside free play

Centre closed 6:30

Toddler Schedule (Ages 18 months - 3 years) Nature experience will take place inside in case of extreme weather conditions.

Activity

Arrival, free play

Unobstructed outside play

Snack

Nature experience outside time

Books/Puzzles

Lunch

Nap

Unobstructed outside play

Snack

Nature experience outside play

Unobstructed outside play

Inside free play

Centre closed 6:30

Preschool Schedule (ages 3 - 5 years)

Activity

Arrival / free play
Unobstructed outside play
Snack
Nature experience outside time
Unobstructed outside play
Lunch
Rest
Nature experience outside time
Snack
Unobstructed outside play
Inside free play
Centre closed 6:30

School Age Schedule (Full Day) - Ages 5 years(must be attending school) - 12 years

Activity

Arrival
Unobstructed outside play
Snack
Nature experience outside time
Lunch
Free time – videos,games, movies, relaxed time
Nature experience outside time
Snack
Unobstructed outside play
Inside free play
Centre closed 6:30

Please sign the following statement :

I have read the Parent Policy of the Hammonds Plains Children's Centre and I accept the terms and conditions outlined within this policy.

Parent / Guardian signature(s): _____

Dated:_____

This document needs to be submitted and will become a part of your child's file. If this document is not submitted to HPCC, please note that the terms and conditions will be applied by HPCC regardless of signature.

Thank you

Terri Kottwitz
owner/director