



# AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

*Group Child Care (School Age)*

**Located at the Summerland Montessori School**

*Information Handbook*

**Updated for September 2024**

10317 Prairie Valley, Box 603  
Summerland, British Columbia

V0H 1Z0

250- 494-7266

Fax: 250- 494-7286

[smsoffice@shaw.ca](mailto:smsoffice@shaw.ca)

[www.summerlandmontessori.com](http://www.summerlandmontessori.com)

## Mission Statement

The Summerland Early Learning Centre provides a licensed, group child care (School Age) program that nurtures the joy of discovery and the love of learning.

## Goals and Objectives

Our goal is to instill a lifelong love of learning, self-confidence, a capable positive attitude and a universal respect for the world and its inhabitants. Our objective is to facilitate a joyous learning journey by providing a stimulating environment which will help children to develop within themselves the attitudes, habits, skills and ideas essential for a lifetime of independent, creative thinking and learning. We provide the children with an opportunity to learn, play and make friends.

## Organizational Structure

The After School Program is located in the Summerland Montessori School building and falls under the Summerland Early Learning Centre Child Care License.

The South Okanagan Montessori School Society (SOMSS) administers the Summerland Early Learning Centre and the Summerland Montessori School. The SOMSS is a not-for-profit, registered charity, operated by a Board of Directors. The Board is comprised of volunteer members of the Summerland Montessori School, the Summerland Early Learning Centre, and the greater community, and is elected by its membership each year at the Annual General Meeting. The Board is responsible for the overall administration of the society and its programs.

The Summerland Early Learning Centre Manager has overall responsibility for the daily operations of the child care programs. Our After School Staff, meet the licensing regulations with regards to required credentials and experience and work together as a cohesive team to ensure the nurturing and guiding of all children in their care. All staff are employees of the society.

# Program of Activities offered at SELC School Age Program

We believe that children are naturally curious and active participants in their learning journey. As an after school child care centre we encourage children to engage in activities according to their interests. We provide access to art activities as well as indoor and outdoor play activities. Since children have already spent the day in structured activities at school we believe that the after school program should provide primarily un-facilitated activities that provide indirect learning opportunities.

## Summerland Early Learning Centre Policies

### Active Play Policy

Children will spend 30-60 minutes each day playing outdoors in all weather conditions (unless for some reason the weather conditions are deemed unsafe). Please make sure your child has weather appropriate clothing to utilize outdoors each day.

### Attendance and Punctuality

For the sake of your child's safety, if your child will be late or absent, please call and let us know by 8:30 am. We cannot allow children to make their own play date arrangements with friends after school and require a parent/guardian to call the SMS office to notify us that your child will be absent in the event you plan an after-school play date. If a child is in attendance in our After School Program and is picked up from our program for a play date or an extracurricular activity, please make sure the person who will be picking up your child is listed as a 'Person Authorized to pick up your child'. We cannot release your child if the person is not authorized.

Please ensure that your child is picked up by 5:30 pm at the latest. If your child has not been picked up by 5:45pm we will try and contact the parents/guardians on file. If we cannot reach the parents/guardians, we will contact the next authorized person to pick up your child as indicated on your child's registration form. If your child is repeatedly picked up late, we may recommend that you find a childcare centre that can better accommodate the hours of care that you require. Please note, once a parent has entered the school premises the child is released to the parent and the child is no longer the responsibility of the Summerland Early Learning Centre.

After school program parent/guardian needs to let the office know by 1:00 pm day of absence if child will be away or picked up after school by another adult.

***All children must be signed out, by a parent/guardian or authorized pick up, every day they attend the SELC. Please make sure your authorized pick up information remains current as we cannot release the child to anyone who is not on that list.***

## Behavioural Guidance Policy

Behavioural Guidance describes the teaching, guidance and support that educators offer to children as they grow and learn appropriate behaviour. This positive and supportive guidance helps children as they learn self-regulation and find appropriate ways to express their wants, needs, views and feelings. Behavioural Guidance provides children with appropriate and positive models of behaviour and helps them to develop respect, self-confidence and empathy as they learn and grow in a social environment. Guiding children's behaviour is an ongoing and varied process.

The SELC Behavioural Guidance Policy (see Appendix 1) includes prevention and intervention strategies that are based on age-appropriate child development. Consistency is important and we have laid out our Behavioural Guidance Policy in detail to assist parents/guardians to make use of these strategies at home. Please take the time to read it.

If a child has a 'Care Plan' that includes instructions respecting behavioural guidance, the educators will use behavioural guidance strategies consistent with those instructions.

**A child who is in repeated conflict with SELC's Behavioural Guidance Policy may be asked to withdraw from the program, under the recommendation of the SELC staff, manager, coordinator or Board of Directors, and find a child care centre that is better suited to the child's needs.**

## Child Abuse and Neglect

Any concern regarding child abuse and neglect that the staff of the SELC has about a child, will be reported to the Ministry of Children and Family Development. If a child is believed to be in immediate danger, the police will be contacted as well. Staff will reference *The BC Handbook for Action on Child Abuse and Neglect* in regards to what constitutes abuse, how to recognize abuse, how to respond when children disclose abuse, and how to report abuse or neglect concerns.

A copy of *The BC Handbook for Action on Child Abuse and Neglect* is available at the SMS office.

## Clothing

Children are required to wear comfortable, season appropriate clothing. Please provide appropriate accessories (mitts, hats, sunscreen etc.) each day.

Outdoor footwear must be removed upon entering the SELC and clean indoor footwear is required. Please provide one set of indoor footwear (Velcro runners or slippers with rubber soles) that can remain at the Centre.

## Communication

The SELC is committed to creating an atmosphere of trust and open communication.

Parents/guardians are welcome to seek an educator's help or input regarding their child's after school program experience at any time during the year.

## Conflict Resolution

There are times where problems might arise. In order to maintain the trust and integrity of the SELC and home relationships the following procedures will apply.

1. Concerns will initially be addressed with the educator involved.
2. If the concern or problem is not satisfactorily addressed, then the parent should contact the manager of the SELC.
3. If the problem or concern has still not been dealt with satisfactorily, the parent may contact the Board of Directors directly.
4. If the concern relates to the safety of the children within the SELC it can be directed to the Child Care Licensing Officer.

## Custody and Access Agreements

If parents have agreed to live separately, the SELC will abide by the information given by the enrolling parent. However, without a custody or court order on file, the SELC cannot deny access to the non-enrolling parent. A copy of a custody or court order must be submitted at time of registration. Staff of the SELC will call the RCMP if assistance is required to ensure compliance with a custody order. Please make sure that you inform us of changes to names of people who are NOT permitted access to your child. It is critical that you keep this information up to date as staff will only use the information provided on the registration form.

## Emergency Preparedness

Earthquake and fire drills are practiced monthly according to Licensing Regulation Standards. Emergency evacuation plans are posted at each exit in the SELC. Parents/guardians are encouraged to make themselves familiar with the exit routes and meeting places. The SELC will store emergency provisions in the event children are required to stay at the Centre for an extended period of time due to an emergency situation such as an earthquake or other disaster.

In the event of a medical emergency, a child will be taken to the nearest emergency centre by ambulance in accordance with the signed medical emergency consent form.

At all times we will have one staff member who is trained in First Aid present at SELC.

## Enrolment and Re-Enrolment Policy

Our After School Program operates in accordance with the Summerland Montessori school year. Enrolment is for the duration of the current school year, September to June. All enrolled children are given priority to re-enrol for the following year and the SMS office must receive a re-enrolment request no later than June 1<sup>st</sup> to maintain your child's spot in our After School Program. If we have not received a re-enrolment request by June 1<sup>st</sup>, your enrolment will automatically expire at the end of June. In this case we cannot guarantee a spot for the upcoming

school year and a new registration package will be required (including the \$50 non-refundable registration fee).

## Fees, Payment and Repayment Agreement

Monthly Fees are based on the specified days per week that you selected on your registration form. Once your child is enrolled, a position is reserved for the entire school year. ***The monthly fees reflect an annual amount, divided into 10 equal payments.*** The SELC operating and funding budget is based on fees for enrolled spaces and cannot be reduced for children's absence from the program due to illness, vacation or other circumstances. Changes to specified days requires a 30 day notice. Withdrawal from the After School Program, prior to the end of the current school year, requires a written 30 day notice.

SELC is a licensed child care facility and qualifies for Ministry funding. You may be eligible for funding to help offset the cost of your child care fees. To find out more contact the Summerland Montessori School Office.

### Payment

Payment is due on the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to care. We accept the following methods of payment: cash, cheque, debit/credit card, or e-transfer. ***New registrations require a \$50 non-refundable registration fee.*** (This does not apply to children who are re-registering)

***Please make post-dated cheques payable to 'SOMSS'*** for the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month prior to the month for which the fees are payable. All NSF fees will be borne by the parents/guardians. Each month, from September to June, requires a full month's fee even though we are closed for school holidays and stat holidays including Easter Monday. (We have divided an annual fee into 10 equal monthly payments)

### Repayment Agreement

In the event the SMS office is in possession of post-dated cheques dated after the official withdrawal date of your child, the SMS office will return these post-dated cheques to the mailing address on your child's registration form. To meet Child Care Licensing Regulation Standards, parents/guardians are required to sign a Repayment agreement which forms part of your child's enrolment documentation.

## Health/ Emergency Care Policy

**Children must stay home if they are sick.**

**The SELC has a NO ILLNESS POLICY which means that only those children demonstrating NO ILLNESS may attend. The SELC cannot admit a child who is ill.**

Our responsibility is to the health and safety of all staff and children in our care. We strictly enforce health regulations as illness can spread rapidly. Please respect our staff's judgement if they request that your child needs to go home.

Children are required to be symptom free for 24 hours before returning to the SELC (this includes diarrhea and vomiting), or under the advisement of a medical practitioner been on medication for 24 hours and a doctor's clearance to return to the SELC. Please notify the SELC staff if your child or anyone in your family has come into contact with a communicable/contagious illness.

Please note: If your child shows any symptoms of illness while at the SELC the parent/guardian or emergency contact will be notified and requested to come pick up the child. It is the SELC policy to notify parents/guardians immediately when a child requires medical attention. For a medical emergency, if we are unable to contact the parents/guardians or the emergency contacts as indicated on the emergency consent form, we will make the necessary arrangements to take the child to the nearest emergency service by ambulance. The ambulance fee is the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

Staff at the SELC can only administer medication with a signed 'Medication Authorization Form' and the medication must be in the original bottle.

**If at any time the SELC deems it necessary to take precautionary measures due to suspected contagious illness, the facility may close at short notice at the discretion of the SELC.**

## Items from Home

No items from home are allowed at the ASP. All nonessential items pose a potential health risk to the other children and our staff.

The SELC is a "weapon-free" zone.

## Hours/Days of Operation and Closure

The ASP is open on school days, Monday to Friday from 3:00pm – 5:30pm. Since we are an After School Program **we only accommodate children on the days they attend school. We do not offer care on Pro-D days.** We do however accommodate early dismissal. We are closed on all BC statutory holidays as well as Easter Monday and all school holidays. Please note, **full fees apply to each month regardless of closure**, even in the event the Centre is required to close for unforeseen circumstances. We reserve the right to close the ASP at short notice if required for any reason. (Our fees are calculated as an annual fee divided into 10 installments)

## Personal Information Privacy Policy

The South Okanagan Montessori School Society, Summerland Montessori School and Summerland Early Learning Centre acknowledges that there will be no disclosure of personal information to unauthorized personnel or third parties who are not directly involved in school management or the care, supervision and instruction of your child at this school/Early Learning Centre, unless written authorization from a parent or legal guardian is provided to the school/Early Learning Centre. The school/Early Learning Centre will securely store all digital and hard copy parent and child personal information.

## Nutrition/Snack

We will provide fruit and/or vegetables and filtered water. Please consult the latest Canada Food Guide for nutrition information. Your child's health is dependent on what you provide for food.

***Summerland Early Learning Centre is a "peanut free" facility.***

## Safe Release of Child Policy

In accordance with child care licensing regulations, a child in our care will only be released to the authorized parents/guardians or authorized persons as indicated on the registration form.

It is the staff's legal responsibility to ensure the safe release of children from their care. In the event an authorized person arrives to pick up a child and it is evident to the staff that the authorized person is unable to adequately care for the child and the child is at risk, the staff member will not release the child and instead contact an alternate authorized person to pick up the child.

If an unauthorized person (as indicated on the registration form) arrives to pick up the child, the staff will not release the child and continue to care for the child until such time that an authorized person arrives to pick up the child.

It is crucial that information regarding authorized and unauthorized persons remain up to date.

## Screen Use Policy

Summerland Early Learning Centre follows a screen-free policy. We do not incorporate any screen use in our daily program of activities related to devices such as TV, computer or handheld screens (such as tablets or other)



## Smoking

The SELC/ASP follows a no smoking and vaping policy on all the South Okanagan Montessori SchoolSociety premises (includes e-cigarettes and cannabis).

## Transportation

We do not transport children unless it is a medical emergency in which case the child will be transported by an ambulance. In the event a field trip is planned which requires children to be transported, a separate consent form will be sent home prior to transporting the children

## Trial Period

Trial Period: Every child attending the program will have a three-week trial period to ensure our program is a good fit for the child. A child must be able to follow instructions set out by the staff, treat staff and other children with respect, and not physically or verbally harm another person in any way. It is important to us that all children enjoy the program.

# Appendix 1

## Behavioural Guidance Policy

Behavioural Guidance describes the teaching, guidance and support that educators offer to children as they grow and learn appropriate behaviour. This positive and supportive guidance helps children as they learn self-regulation and find appropriate ways to express their wants, needs, views and feelings. Behavioural Guidance provides children with appropriate and positive models of behaviour and helps them to develop respect, self-confidence, and empathy as they learn and grow in a social environment. Guiding children's behaviour is an ongoing and varied process. The SELC Behavioural Guidance Policy includes prevention and intervention strategies that are based on age-appropriate child development. Consistency is important and we have laid out our Behavioural Guidance Policy in detail to assist parents/guardians to make use of these strategies at home.

### **Prevention strategies used by educators at SELC**

- *Establish clear, consistent, and simple limits.* Limits are statements of what behaviour is appropriate (Example: "Inside we walk")
- *Say limits in a positive way rather than a negative way* (Example: "Inside we walk" rather than "Don't run")
- *Give easy to understand explanations for limits* (Example: "Sand stays down so it doesn't get in your eyes")
- *Focus on the behaviour, rather than on the child* (Example: "It's not safe to climb on tables" rather than "Bad boy")
- *Say what is expected rather than ask* (Example: "It is time to clean up now" rather than "Do you want to help clean up?")
- *Provide choices when appropriate* (Example: "Do you want to put your pants on first, or your shirt?" rather than "Do you want to get dressed")
- *Give children enough time to respond to expectations.* Children need cues and warnings ahead of time to help them prepare for change (Example: "When everyone is sitting quietly, then I will begin the story" rather than "If you don't sit down there won't be a story")
- *Ignore minor incidents.* As long as children's activities are safe, not harming others or the environment, minor incidents can be ignored
- *Reinforce appropriate behaviour with words and gestures.* Positive reinforcement helps children build self-confidence and a desire to repeat appropriate behaviour (Example: Thank you for taking turns" rather than "Good girl")
- *Encourage children to use the educators as a resource* (Example: "If you're not sure what to do, ask me and I'll help you" rather than "Don't be silly, just do it")
- *Alertness, proximity, and nearness.* Sometimes it is necessary for educators to stay close by when young children are still learning to play together

### **Intervention strategies used by educators at SELC**

Educators are required to intervene during episodes of inappropriate behaviour. The following intervention strategies or a combination of these will be used during these episodes

- *Get the child's attention in a respectful way.* Other than in situations where children are in physical danger, educators state the child's name and get down to the child's eye level, speaking in a calm and controlled voice to ensure the child feels safe, secure and cared for.

- *Use proximity and/or a shoulder touch* as a gentle reminder that they are nearby and that the child should think about what they are doing.
- *Use simple, positive reminders to clarify or reinforce limits* (Example: “Remember, bikes stay on the bike path”)
- *Acknowledge the child’s feelings before setting limits* (Example: “You look frustrated. Remember to wait your turn in the line”)
- *Redirect the child.* Changing the situation that is contributing to the inappropriate behaviour, such as engaging them in some other activity or offering a substitute toy (Example: “I can see you have a lot of energy today. Let’s jump up and try reach the sky”)
- *Offer appropriate choices* (Example: “Do you want to wait in line for your turn or do you want to find something else to do?”)
- *Use natural and logical consequences.* Natural consequences are inevitable as a result of the child’s actions. A statement of natural consequences clarifies the inevitable or unavoidable outcome of a behaviour (Example: “When you don’t put your art away, it’s difficult to find it when you go home”). Logical consequences are imposed by the educator as a result of the child’s actions and are related to the problem. A statement of logical consequence can help the child understand the problem and the solution (Example: “I can see the spilled paint. Here is a sponge for wiping it up”)
- *Limit the use of toys or equipment.* Educators use this strategy sparingly and only when other strategies have been unsuccessful (Example: “Since you are still having a difficult time keeping the sand low, I’m going to close the sand table until after snack”)
- *Model problem-solving skills.* It’s natural for children to react or get upset. Educators offer help to teach children how to problem solve by guiding the child through the problem solving steps (Example: “Tim has the bike and you want to use it. Have you asked Tim to give you the bike when he is finished? Tell Tim you would like to use the bike when he’s finished. Next time you want to use the bike, you can remember to ask to have it when they are finished”)
- *Provide opportunities to make amends.* Rather than encourage superficial apologies, educators offer genuine opportunities for children to restore relationships after an incident (Example: “Would you like to help Daisy pick up the dolls and put them back on their chairs?”)
- *Redirecting to a calming area.* Educators will redirect a child to a calming activity if the child is in an overstimulating area that is causing or about to cause inappropriate behaviour. This strategy provides an opportunity for the child to develop self-regulation and regain control of their emotional or physical state (Example: “Daisy, please go to the audio table and listen to a CD”)

If a child has a care plan that includes instructions respecting behavioural guidance, the educators will ensure that the behavioural guidance given to the child is consistent with those instructions. A child who is in repeated conflict with SELC’s Behavioural Guidance Policy may be asked to withdraw from the program, under the recommendation of the SELC staff, manager, coordinator and Board of Directors, and find a child care centre that is better suited to the child’s needs.

