

# Swamp Willow Preschool False Creek Community Centre



## Parent Handbook 2019

1318 Cartwright Street  
Vancouver, B.C. V6H 3R8

**Preschool: 604-257-6997 Administration: 604-257-6998**

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## 1) History of Swamp Willow Preschool

Parents in the False Creek area needed a Preschool in their neighbourhood. In 1979, after many months of organizing, Swamp Willow Preschool began as a parent participation Preschool. Classes were first held in the meeting room of a housing complex, now the Montessori School. Preschool parents and teachers lobbied for a permanent Preschool room to be built within the proposed False Creek Community Centre, and were successful. Swamp Willow has been running successfully at the False Creek Community Centre since 1980, providing a caring and enjoyable learning environment for preschool aged children.



## 2) **Structure of the False Creek Community Centre**

False Creek Community Association jointly operates the False Creek Community Centre with the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation. The Association is a non-profit society and consists of fifteen elected volunteer board members, whose responsibilities include setting policies for the operation of all child care services within the Centre.

### **What Does It Mean To Be A Licensed Preschool?**

Swamp Willow Preschool is licensed by Community Care Facilities Licensing, Vancouver/Richmond Health Board. The Preschool has met all the requirements set out by the C.C.F.L., such as teacher's qualifications and health and safety standards. The program has been issued a Preschool license. A Child Care Consultant makes regular inspections to ensure C.C.F.L. regulations are met and to advise on Preschool matters of importance so that the best possible service is provided.

### **Insurance**

The operations of the False Creek Community Centre and the False Creek Community Association are indemnified/insured by the City of Vancouver.

### **Children to be Served**

The majority of the three and four year old children attending Swamp Willow Preschool reside in the False Creek, Fairview Slopes and Kitsilano neighbourhoods. However, children from all areas are welcome.

### **Enrolment**

A child enrolled in the three year old program at Swamp Willow Preschool, must be three years of age by Dec. 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019. Similarly, in the four year old program, the child must be four years of age by Dec. 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019. **All children attending Preschool should be toilet-trained.**

Children Enrolled in the 4's program will receive priority registration into our Out of School Care program. However a space is not guaranteed. Spaces will be given in order of enrollment into the 4's program on an "as available" basis.

### **3) Philosophy**

#### **Children –**

We strongly believe in the benefit of learning through play. Children are unique and have individual ways of expressing themselves and their knowledge. We work with children individually and in a group setting to ensure each one's needs are being met. We believe in the importance of an organized and aesthetically appealing environment. This will invite them to try new things and excite their curiosity. We provide the children with a safe and supported environment in which to explore and build friendships.

We teach children to respect themselves, others and the environment. Turn-taking and problem-solving skills are modeled and encouraged.

All children have the right to be included and be given the opportunity to develop physically, emotionally, socially, cognitively, and linguistically. We believe that diversity and inclusion enhance the preschool experience by fostering positive attitudes.

#### **Families –**

We work collaboratively with families to ensure the growth and healthy development of their children. We believe that families' involvement in a child's educational experience is important to their sense of well-being and contributes to their educational success. Families will be informed about their child's progress, difficulties and triumphs on an ongoing basis

Families may find it helpful to reach out to other families, teachers and health professionals for assurance or questions on issues of interest. We welcome the opportunity to share information and experiences.

#### **Teachers –**

We believe teachers need to be respected by their peers, children, parents, Board, and community. It is essential that they be acknowledged for the skill, experience and education they possess. Our teachers participate in continuing education on an ongoing basis in order to update skills and best practices. Teachers will keep families updated on their children's progress through newsletters, documentation and parent/teacher discussions.

#### **4) Teacher Profiles**

##### **Sandy Galpin**

My name is Sandy Galpin and I'm a licensed Early Childhood Educator. I've been in the field of early childhood education for over 15 years working in daycare, out of school care, and preschool. While my two children were younger, I ran a licensed daycare out of my home. Now that my son and daughter are in elementary school, I'm excited to work in a more formal setting out in the community.

I'm passionate about seeing children develop and setting them up for success. During mornings at preschool, I look forward to seeing children's creativity blossom, curiosity expand, and knowledge grow. It's truly a gift to share this time with children and walk alongside their families.

##### **Cheryl Taylor Lee**

Cheryl Taylor Lee has been an Early Childhood Educator, Special Needs Educator, and an Infant and Toddler Educator for over 20 years in a variety of settings. She has been a Mother Goose Instructor, Facilitator for the Healthy Baby and Me Group, Designer and Teacher of art base classes through various community centres. She values being a lifelong learner through collaboration with others. She currently is an Appetite to Play facilitator guiding the Early Childhood Community with creative ways to include healthy eating and exercise within early childhood settings.

Cheryl completed her Bachelors in Early Childhood Education in the Spring of 2017 from Capilano University. Embracing the arts and play based learning led her to focus her graduation seminar research provocations on listening to how children live movement.

Cheryl enjoys spending her time hiking, biking and jumping on the trampoline with her two sons Nico and Oliver.

## **5) Program Description**

The Swamp Willow Preschool is a licensed program with two qualified teachers and a maximum capacity of twenty children. Through observations and interactions of the experienced teachers with the children, a collaborative curriculum develops.

As the classroom is a shared space, it is set up each morning with an inviting freshness that encourages children to explore through play. Group, or circle time involves the sharing of the children's ideas, interests and knowledge, which is further developed through the teachers' supported questioning. Group times for the three year olds are shorter and more teacher-guided.

Through the year the group times evolve. As the children mature, the teachers adjust the morning's schedule to suit their developmental needs and growing interests.

Carefully chosen literature is a focus of the program. It supports the children's inquisitiveness and curiosities.

We like to focus on what is part of or happening in the child's environment to make learning relevant to the child's experience.

The Preschool program provides opportunities for active play both indoors and outdoors, creative activities, dramatic play and movement, intellectual growth through experimentation and investigation, music, books, stories, and poems.

Program time is flexible, but the order of activities is quite regular. This flexibility allows for the spontaneous and unpredictable events that add such joy to a Preschool day.

## **6) Orientation**

### **Three Year Olds**

A one hour orientation session will be held on the first day of Preschool. You will be notified as to the date and time of your session. One parent is required to stay for this first Preschool visit. This is a wonderful opportunity for you and your child to get to know the teachers and become familiar with the classroom. Your child will have a chance to participate in activities and meet some new friends with the security of Mom, Dad, or grandparents being nearby. We hope this orientation session will help ease the transition and make separation a little easier when your child attends the next class on his/her own.

### **Four Year Olds**

The majority of the children in the four-year-old preschool class attended the three year old program and are familiar with the teachers and the program. We will hold a one hour orientation on the first day of school. You will be notified as to the time of your session. This is a good time to review the program specifics and ask any questions that you may have. Regular attendance will begin on the second day of Preschool.

### **3's and 4's**

### **Starting later in the Preschool Year**

An orientation session is an excellent idea if your child starts the program later in the Preschool year. After registering, please call the Swamp Willow Preschool (604-257-6997) and the teachers will set up a time for you and your child to visit.

## 7) Preschool Schedule for Three Year Olds

9:15 am	Children Arrive	<b>(Please be prompt!)</b>
9:20 am	Circle Time	The sharing of ideas, knowledge and interests through discussion, stories, music, poems, drama, and movement
9:35 am	Free Play	A wide choice of activities including art, blocks, dramatic play, books, puzzles, table top toys, light box, water and sand play, and wildlife environments
10:40 am	Tidy-up Time	
10:45 am	Snack Time	
11:05 am	Outdoor Play	<b>(Please dress for the weather)</b>
11:30 am	Time to say "Goodbye"	

## Preschool Schedule for Four Year Olds

9:15 am	Children Arrive	<b>(Please be prompt!)</b>
9:20 am	Circle Time	The sharing of ideas, knowledge and interests through discussion, stories, music, poems, drama, and movement
9:40 am	Free Play	A wide choice of activities including art, blocks, dramatic play, books, puzzles, table top toys, light box, water and sand play, and wildlife environments
10:45 am	Tidy-up Time	
10:50 am	Snack Time	
11:10 am	Outdoor Play	<b>(Please dress for the weather)</b>
11:45 am	Time to say "Goodbye"	

*\*Please note that this schedule is subject to change depending on the energy level, interest and attention span of the group.*

## **8) Preschool Hours & Program Information**

Three year olds:	Tuesday & Thursday	9:15 - 11:30
Four year olds:	Monday, Wednesday & Friday	9:15 - 11:45

### **Holidays**

The Preschool will be **closed** on the following holidays:

Thanksgiving	Remembrance Day	Christmas Break (2 weeks)
Family Day	Good Friday	Easter Monday
Victoria Day	Spring Break (closed one week).	

- \* **Preschool closes one week before the public schools in June for administrative purposes.**
- \* Parents will receive a list of preschool closure dates before the school year starts in September.

### **Fees** (subject to increase in September)

<b>Three year olds - \$133.00/month</b>	<b>(2 mornings /week)</b>
<b>Four year olds - \$171.00/month</b>	<b>(3 mornings /week)</b>

**To reserve your spot we require a registration fee and deposit.**

The registration fee of \$25.00 is non-refundable and will be applied to program supplies.

The deposit is one month's fees and becomes your last month's fee. If you leave before the end of the school year it will be applied to your last month provided you give at least 1 month's written notice of your withdraw. Notice must be given before the first of the month to apply. If you complete the school year your deposit will become your June payment.

Nine cheques dated the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month, September through May are due the first day of class. Cheques are to be made out to the **City of Vancouver**. There is a **\$30.00 charge for cheques returned N.S.F.** Visa and Master Card will be also accepted as a form of payment. Please complete the appropriate form if you wish to authorize credit card withdraws. Preschool fees fall under the Arts & Culture Child Tax Credit.

**\*PLEASE RETAIN YOUR ORIGINAL RECEIPTS.  
NO DUPLICATE RECEIPTS WILL BE ISSUED!!**

### **Holiday and Preschool Closure**

Preschool fees remain the same during periods that contain closings for holidays: Christmas Break, Spring Break and in June for administrative purposes.

In the event of a snow day or building closure, parents will be notified by phone, email, and our Seesaw app.

### **Withdrawal**

**One month's written notice is required** when withdrawing from the program, by the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the previous month. (i.e. Dec. 31<sup>st</sup> notice for Feb.1<sup>st</sup> withdrawal. Please submit your letter to the attention of the Association Manager.

If a child is temporarily withdrawn for vacation or illness, the full month's fees must be paid if the space is to be reserved.



## 9) Attendance

The Preschool program begins at **9:15 a.m. SHARP**. **Please make every attempt to arrive by this time** so that your child will have the full opportunity to participate in all of the activities planned for the morning.

Please call **before** 8:45 a.m. if your child will be absent.

Our phone number is 257-6997.

### Absence

If your child is absent, due to illness or vacation, the fees remain the same. We cannot refund or credit fees for days missed.

### Arrival & Departure

It is important to everyone concerned that your child be brought directly into the classroom. Please do not drop your child off at the door. When you bring your child into the Preschool, make sure that a teacher greets you both. This allows time for an exchange of information, and is also a safety measure to ensure that the teacher knows your child has arrived. This is very important! When you are leaving, make sure you say goodbye. **Parents are required to sign their children in and out of the program daily.**

As well, when you collect your child at the end of the Preschool class, allow time for teachers to say goodbye and to share things of interest that may have happened during the morning. **Please be punctual when picking up your child.** If you are going to be late, the teachers would appreciate a phone call.

### Late Fee

A late fee of \$10.00 per 15 minute period (or part there of), and \$1.00 for each additional minute thereafter, will be charged if you are late picking up your child after Preschool. A late form will be issued by one of the teachers, and the fee is to be paid at the front office before the next Preschool session.

### Authorized Pick-up People

If an alternate person will be picking up your child, please notify the teachers in writing. Authorized people named on your child's registration form are free to pick up your child without written notice. If you wish your child to go home with a classmate, please notify the teachers in the morning.

## **10) General Information**

### **Toys from Home**

Please leave your child's toys at home. They easily get mixed up with the classroom equipment, and could become lost or broken. The teachers may invite the children to bring a toy, story, or puzzle to share at school relating to a special theme, such as boats or animals.

### **Clothing**

Preschool is a place to have fun and to learn. In order for your child to gain the most from our program, please send him/her in comfortable clothing... something in which he/she can be relaxed and creative (which can sometimes be very messy, but fun).

Please send a clothing change in your child's backpack in case of bathroom accidents.

### **Outdoor Clothing**

Please send your child appropriately dressed for the weather, as going outside is a regular part of our program. Licensing requires us to have 30 minutes of outdoor play every day except in extreme weather.

#### **E.g.**

- \* 'muddy buddy', rain suit or rain jacket & 'mud' pants
- \* boots \* hat \* mittens
- \* sun hat (for the Spring)

### **Shoes**

Running shoes are recommended for inside wear and are required in the gym for your child's safety. Party shoes or slippers are not recommended for Preschool.

### **Birthdays**

You are welcome to bring a special birthday treat for your child to share with the class. Please speak to one of the teachers if you are interested in bringing a treat.

### **Information**

To keep you informed as to what the children have been and will be doing please refer to the bulletin board outside of the classroom. We also post information from Vancouver Coastal Health and our Public Health Nurse. If you wish a copy of any posting (our play dough recipe, for example) we would be happy to copy it for you. Occasionally, information will be sent home to you.

## **10) General Information (continued)**

### **Social Events**

In June, we will have a "farewell" party. Everyone is invited, including siblings. Come and join us for a fun morning and help us to celebrate the end of our year at Swamp Willow Preschool.

### **Snack**

Please send a healthy snack and water in a water bottle for your child in a lunch box or backpack labelled with your child's name. Please avoid sending chocolate milk or juice or any nut products.

### **Healthy Snack Suggestions:**

- \* FRUIT, VEGETABLES, CHEESE, CRACKERS, MUFFIN, GRANOLA BAR, DRYCEREAL.
- \* NO junk food please! This includes chocolate bars, candy, soft drinks and chips.
- \* The Public Health Department advises that for optimal dental health, raisins, fruit leathers and other dried fruit be avoided.
- \* Hot dogs, popcorn, or whole grapes are primary choking hazards for young children. (Grapes which are halved are fine)
- \* Please do not send your child with nuts as we are a nut aware facility and share our space with other programs.

## **11) Health and Safety**

### **Health**

A child who is well can enjoy and participate in all areas of the program.

### **Illness**

*Please do not bring a sick child to Preschool.* The City of Vancouver Health Department provides guidelines in determining when a child is too ill to attend Preschool. Please refer to the following page entitled "When is a child too ill to attend Preschool?"

If your child is on medication, please make the teachers aware in case of any side effects. The teachers also need to be made aware of any allergies or health conditions.

If a child becomes ill during class time, one of the teachers will notify you so that arrangements can be made to have your child taken home. Should an emergency arise, you will be contacted immediately. For this reason it is essential for emergency information to be up to date on all registration and emergency forms.

In an emergency your child will be taken to Children's Hospital. A consent form is signed when registering for the Preschool program that gives the teachers permission to seek emergency medical care for your child.

### **Immunization**

You are strongly encouraged to ensure that all your child's immunizations are up to date before enrolling in Preschool, and that your child has had a recent medical exam.

### **First Aid**

Our Preschool teachers have current first aid certification.

### **Fire Drill**

The Preschool has a written procedure for fire drills that has been approved by the Vancouver Fire Department. Each staff member is familiar with this procedure, and the Preschool room has specific instructions for moving the children safely out of the building. Fire drills are practiced once a month.

### **Emergency Evacuation**

Regular emergency evacuation drills are held throughout the year. In case of an emergency that makes the Centre's premises unsafe, the children will be evacuated from the building. Arrangements have been made with Emily Carr University to stay there until the children can be picked up by their parents or guardians.

### **Emergency Shelter:**

Emily Carr University  
1399 Johnston Street  
Granville Island 604-844-3800

## 12) WHEN IS A CHILD TOO ILL TO ATTEND PRESCHOOL?

Children in preschool are grouped together at the ages when they are most susceptible to infections. To determine what is a significant illness in a child is difficult for both parents and staff. There are three important issues in determining when a child is too ill to attend preschool:

1. The protection of other children from communicable disease.
2. The comfort and safety of the child who is ill.
3. The capacity of the preschool to look after an ill child.

With these issues in mind the following guidelines are given:

- \*1. Any child too ill to participate in normal activities of the preschool should be excluded.
- \*2. Children with upper respiratory infection but no fever need not be excluded for the protection of other children. Respiratory viruses are so common that it does not make sense to single out for exclusion those who exhibit minimal symptoms.
- \*3. Children on antibiotics who don't have a fever and are otherwise well need not be excluded.
- \*4. Children with suspected or known measles, mumps, rubella or chickenpox should be excluded until non-infectious. Children with generalized rash and fever are suspect of having measles and should be excluded pending diagnosis.
- \*5. In addition to the illnesses mentioned (4), there may be other less common communicable diseases, which would necessitate exclusion for a period of time. In the case of diagnosed communicable diseases the preschool should advise the Public Health Nurse at the local health Unit.
- \*6. Children with a chronic symptom such as a persistent cough or persistent fever warrant a medical evaluation. Once appropriate medical evaluation is obtained, they need not be excluded from the preschool unless they fall under the terms of 1), 4), or 5) above.
- \*7. Whenever a child attending a preschool develops new symptoms of illness (whether mentioned above or not), or has a worsening of symptoms, the parent should be notified to take the child home.
- \*8. Children with gastro-intestinal problems (e.g. vomiting, diarrhea) should be excluded from the preschool.

\*Reference:

Trumpp C.E., Karasic R: Management of Communicable Disease in Daycare Centres. Pediatric Annuals 12:3, Pages 219-229 Revised 94/05/05 0274.COV

### **13) Supervision & Behaviour Guidance**

**Supervision** Children attending Swamp Willow Preschool are supervised by qualified Preschool teachers at all times.

#### **Behaviour Guidance**

The goal of using guidance techniques in early childhood programs is to help children develop safe and appropriate ways of interacting with others and with the environment. One of our goals is to help children develop tools to problem solve. Young children learn by exploring boundaries, and experiencing consequences of their behaviour. In the process of setting and enforcing limits our teachers assist the children in developing self control and respect for the rights and property of others.

Children need to learn the rules of getting along in a group and teachers need to balance the need for individual rights and self expression with the needs of the group. Rules and limits in a Preschool setting may differ from those in a child's home because of the need to protect the rights and safety of other children.

Our teachers are trained to help your child, by word and example, to realize that the following actions are not acceptable classroom behaviours:

- \* hitting or harming other children or adults;
- \* teasing or name calling;
- \* leaving the group not accompanied by a teacher or parent
- \* mistreatment of classroom materials

Children are not expected to immediately understand or immediately fully comply with all the rules. Therefore, they are reminded and redirected. However, when safety is an issue the teachers act immediately or intervene in situations that children cannot manage appropriately on their own.

**Guidance and discipline techniques** that will be used with the children include:

- \* modelling acceptable behaviour;
- \* recognizing each child's individual needs;
- \* recognizing the children's efforts;
- \* anticipating and eliminating potential problems;
- \* redirection;
- \* planning the daily schedule in such a manner as to allow the children a successful mixture of choice and structure;
- \* use of natural and logical consequences;
- \* clear and positive phrasing of requirements & limits;
- \* providing consistency and following through;
- \* offering a choice, when possible;

In an atmosphere of support, acceptance, and warmth, we give children the security of guidance. The rules are kept simple and consistent and are determined by the need for safety, the rights of others (peers & teachers) and respect for their classroom environment.

## 14) Behaviour Management Procedure

When a child's behaviour is inappropriate or interferes with the safety or rights of others, the following procedure will be practiced.

1. A **verbal reminder** to the child which includes a discussion as to why the behaviour is undesirable.

If the undesirable behaviour is repeated...

2. A **written documentation** will be noted.

If the behaviour is repeated...

3. Contact with the parent/guardian to establish a **support network** for the child in his/her efforts to change behaviour.

If the inappropriate behaviour does not change...

4. **Outside resources** may be sought with parental consent (i.e. The Vancouver Health Unit, Vancouver Supported Childcare, The Neurological Centre).

5. Every effort will be made by the teachers to meet the individual child's needs. If the teachers determine that the behaviour is consistently and severely disruptive, and that the welfare of other children is seriously jeopardized, then a meeting will be held with parents, teachers, the childcare coordinator, and outside resource professionals. The meeting's ultimate purpose would be to find a collective solution that best addresses the child's needs and the family's wishes. This may result in finding a more appropriate program that better supports the child and the family.

Withdrawal from the program is something we make every attempt to avoid. After all resources have been exhausted it may be a final recommendation.

## **15) Feedback, Suggestions or Concerns**

We welcome your comments and suggestions. Please feel free to approach the teachers after Preschool class if there is anything you would like to discuss. Your feedback is a great way to let us know how we're doing! If an area of concern arises, please bring it to the attention of the teachers. It is important to us to hear your suggestion and/or concern and every effort will be made to work through your concerns. For any additional communication, questions or concerns please contact the Association Administrator. Contact us at any time.

### **Preschool Teachers ~ 604-257-6997**

Sandy Galpin

Cheryl Taylor Lee

### **Association Manager ~ 604-257-6998**

Krystal Santor

# 16) Swamp Willow Preschool Parental Agreement Form

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Please check "yes" or "no" to the following statements, sign your name and return one copy to the Preschool. Retain the other copy in the Parent Handbook for your records.

NO      YES

I have received and read the Parent Handbook \_\_\_\_\_

I have been informed of and understand the policies and procedures of the Preschool. \_\_\_\_\_

I have been informed of the goals and overall program for the Preschool. \_\_\_\_\_

I am aware that I will be informed of specifics through postings on the class bulletin board. \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that one calendar month's written notice is required when withdrawing from the program. \_\_\_\_\_

Throughout the preschool program, photographs may be taken. I give permission for my child to be photographed. \_\_\_\_\_

I give permission for these photos to be used in the Community Centre's brochure and advertising. \_\_\_\_\_

I agree that it is the responsibility of both the teachers of the Preschool program and I/we as parent(s) to keep an open line of communication between us during the school year. \_\_\_\_\_

I agree to pick up my child on time and understand that a late fee will be charged should I not do so. \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that June's Preschool fees are due by Aug. 1st as confirmation of registration in the Fall. A series of Post-dated cheques or credit card authorization (for September-May) are to be given to the administrator on the first day of class. Failure to pay fees in a timely manner may result in discontinuation of service. \_\_\_\_\_

I will retain my original receipts as duplicate receipts will not be issued. I have provided the program with all written information that has been requested, including names of emergency contacts, and have signed both sides of the emergency consent card & registration forms. I have also provided the dates of my child's immunizations. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Staff