



CORNERSTONE CHILDREN'S CENTRE
AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM
AT HUME ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

PARENT HANDBOOK

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A Ministry of the First Baptist Church.

WELCOME TO CORNERSTONE!!

Childcare is the heart of the matter, for both parents, guardians, and caregivers. Cornerstone acknowledges and respects your trust in us to care for and educate your School Age Care children.

Cornerstone recognizes the vital role that parents play in every aspect of child development, that home and family remain the Centre of your child's life. We strive to complement home and family life, not to substitute it; therefore, a certain amount of parent involvement is expected.

Please take some time to read through this handbook, as it explains the **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES** of our Centre. You will be given a **Parent/Caregiver Agreement** form to sign that will indicate that you understand and have agreed to abide by all our policies and procedures.

If you have any question or concerns, please bring them to us, your feedback is important.

OUR HISTORY

In September 1992, several mothers (from First Baptist Church) decided to start a play group for family support, child development and pleasure. In October of that year a one morning-a week drop-in program began. A men's group at the church provided seed money for supplies, donated material and built equipment to supply adequate furnishings. Initially toys were loaned to the group, with new toys being donated or purchased later.

This Play Group experienced tremendous success in early 1993 and the idea of parent involvement preschool evolved, the core of which remains a vital part of our program today.

In 2000 an After-school program was implemented. This program ran successfully for several years until cuts in government funding rendered it unaffordable for most families, and therefore it was no longer financially viable for Cornerstone Children's Centre to operate.

In response to the Childcare Crisis in 2006, we amended our license to a Group Childcare (School Age Care) Program, thus adding 20 much needed childcare spaces to our community. These programs and our Centre continue to grow and develop, aided by grant money and generous support from many of our families.

In 2021 we responded to a need to increase our School Age Care program. We licensed a new facility at Hume Elementary School operating out of their gym. We are now licensed for 48 school age children.

In March 2024 we start the \$10.00 per day Pilot program with the Government. For all the kindergartens.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

The name, Cornerstone summarizes the history of our philosophy; that a child's home and family are the foundation of all early learning and care experiences and that each experience builds upon this foundation. Therefore, at Cornerstone we seek to work together with parents/guardians to construct the best possible out-of-home care and learning environments for all children.

Each child is recognized and valued as an individual, created in the image of a loving and welcoming God. Each child's needs, values, and culture are respected, and in this way we all learn to appreciate each other, our shared environment, and our individual place in this world.

The First Baptist Church welcomes all Cornerstone Families, and along with praying for us regularly, they will pass on information about special church services and celebrations.

Our Program at Cornerstone continues to evolve, striving to keep aware of the latest and most updated insights and theories within the School Age Care environment. This philosophy challenges us to think outside the box, and to see children in a new and very exciting light. At Cornerstone we will endeavor to document this learning on an ongoing basis, making it visible for the children, parents, and caregivers.

The purpose of documentation is multi-faceted; it educates, informs, helps children and caregivers reflect upon their shared experiences, enables deeper learning experiences, and it creates accountability between caregivers and parents, and accountability between caregivers and children. It demonstrates that striving to be in tune and to observe with both our eyes and ears to the ordinary moments in a child's day, where learning and growth happens. It invokes questions and encourages us to explore and seek answers and ultimately ask more questions!

GUIDANCE

Is defined as a supportive and non-threatening approach to children when conflict or inappropriate behavior arises. This approach preserves relationships and strengthens social skills. All staff must use the following techniques in attempt to achieve the above goals:

- Develop a respectful relationship with each child.
- Provide a warm, nurturing, and secure atmosphere.
- Plan balanced, age-appropriate activities.
- Reinforce appropriate behavior.

From time-to-time inappropriate behavior will arise. Staff are expected to handle these situations using positive and supportive techniques such as:

- Natural and/ or logical consequences.
- Modeling appropriate behavior, as children learn through imitation.
- Diverting or changing children's activities.
- Acknowledging children's feelings and helping them learn to express them in a socially conscience manner.

Any form of discipline that compromises a child's physical and/or emotional wellbeing is prohibited.

Examples of this include, but are not limited to:

- Corporal punishment on the part of the staff, a parent/guardian, or another child/group of children.
- Deliberate harsh or degrading measures that humiliates or undermine a child's self-respect.
- Locking entry doors or using a locked room or structure for that purpose of confining a child.
- Denying a child's basic needs, such as food, clothing, or bedding.

Denying is immeasurably different than a child refusing these items by their own will.

A word on children with challenging behaviors

Some children come with a unique set of challenges for themselves and those around them. At times, these situations can look and feel very frightening to the other children.

Please do not hesitate to talk to the staff about such circumstances should they arise. Also, please be aware that in these cases the Ministry is almost always involved in some capacity, either through supported childcare or counseling, and an approved care plan will be, or has been, established for implementation and documentation purposes.

OUR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.

Centre	Hours of operation	Age of children	Fees
Cornerstone Children Centre	2:30-5:30 & full days 8:00-5:00	Kindergarten	\$10.00
At Hume School	2:30-5:30 school year.	6 to 12 years old.	\$20.50 Just After Sch. \$27. Before & after S.. \$27.00/ Early Dis.
At Hume School	8:00-5:00 During School breaks/ Pro-D Days etc.	6 to 12 Years old.	\$49.00/ Full days
Cellphones # by Group	Kindergarten 250 777 2306	Group A (First and Second Grade) 250 777 8052	Group B (Third, fourth, Five and six grade) 250 505 4148

Drop off and Pick up Times.

Cornerstone Children's Centre is open Monday to Friday. Children can be dropped off at Hume School at **8:00 am on full days**, and at Cornerstone Children's Centre at **7:00 am Before School** and must be picked between **5:00 during full days and 5:15 during After School Care**. Late pick-up fee is **-\$10.00 for every 5 minutes late**. This will be applied to your following month's bill.

Fees and Financial Arrangements

The financial viability and continued operation of Cornerstone Children's Centre is dependent upon childcare fees **being paid in full and on time**. Fees are payable in advance. Parents will receive an invoice for the upcoming month's fees during the first week of the month. Payment is due **by the 15th days** of each month. Credit will be given the following month for any holiday daytime when two weeks 'notice has been given. **You may lose your spot if a month have passed without any payment. You can talk to the Director to arrange payments.**

Payments can be done by:

1. E-Transfer (to sacnelsondaycare@gmail.com)
2. Cheque

Affordable Childcare Benefit

Parents/guardians are responsible for applying and re-applying as necessary for the BC Affordable Childcare Benefit. This benefit program does not cover 100% of childcare fees. Parents/guardians receiving the benefit are responsible for the portion of their childcare fees not covered by the benefit.

Childcare Cancellation/Termination of Care

Parents/guardians **are required to give one month notice, in writing,** if they wish to terminate care. For absents parents/guardians are required **to give two weeks'** notice for us to give credit for those days (**This policy does not apply to kindergarten**). **Cancellation less than two weeks' notice will be charged.** The parent/guardians are responsible for full payment of fees. It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to contact the Centre to advise of absences.

If a cheque is returned for insufficient funds and therefore fees have not been paid on time a note will be placed on the parent's statement requesting the parent contact the Director of Childcare Program to arrange payment or an action plan for payment. There will be a \$25.00 banking charge levied by Cornerstone Children's Centre on all NSF cheques.

TERMINATION OF SERVICES:

We are committed to providing a caring and supportive environment for all families. When a conflict arises, staff will make every attempt to work with the child and family to resolve the issue to the mutual satisfaction of all parties. However, we will not **compromise the mission and values of Cornerstone Children's Centre,** nor put staff or children participating in the program at risk. The Programmer may come to the decision that it is no longer appropriate for the child to continue involvement in the program.

Listed below are situations that would warrant termination of services.

Resolve Conflicts:

Cornerstone is a nurturing environment where children learn to resolve conflicts, build relationships, and develop social-emotional skills.

If a child in our program needs extra help resolving conflicts, such as disrespecting staff members or peers, hitting another child, swearing, bullying, or displaying racism, we will initiate a three-month period of circle meetings involving parents/guardians, and the child.

Family Group Conferences

First Meeting:

We will convene a meeting with the parents, guardians, and child to create a plan to address the conflicts that arise during School Age Care time. In this meeting, we will:

Acknowledge the Conflict:

Listen Actively:

Express Feelings

Find Common Ground

Agree on a Solution

Plan Development:

Continued Support:

At Cornerstone, we will use restorative practices to understand the underlying causes and support the child's growth. If the issue continues, we believe in implementing appropriate consequences that promote accountability and learning. In such cases, the child may be suspended from our program for a week or permanent depending in the case.

Parent Meeting Policy

When a supervisor or director requests a meeting, it is mandatory for parents to attend. This policy ensures open communication and the effective resolution of any concerns regarding the child's well-being, development, or behavior.

INAPPROPRIATE CONDUCT:

A family will be asked to leave the program if any member of the family harasses, threatens, or commits a violent act toward a staff member, child, or other family involved in the out-of-school programs. **Cornerstone Children's Centre has zero tolerance of Violence.**

Late Pick-up:

If a family is routinely late in picking up their child, and staff are unable to resolve this issue with the family, they will be asked to leave the program.

Late Pick-up Policy

If a parent/guardian is more than 5 minutes late to pick up their child/children, a fee of \$10.00 per of each subsequent 5 minutes will be charged. Should extenuating circumstances arise beyond the parent's control that cause the late to pick up their child, the Director will have the discretion to waive the late fee. If a parent/authorized individual fails to inform the center one hour before center closure that they will be delayed, the child will be released to their emergency contact. If no authorized person can be reached, the child/children will be released to the Ministry of Children and Family Development. The late pick-up fee(s) will be charged on the next invoice and shown separately. The parents will be required to sign the Late Pick-up book to confirm that the child was picked up later.

Non- Payment of Fees:

The Manager/Director will work with families if there is a nonpayment of fees. However, if the Manager is unable to resolve this issue, the family will be asked to leave the program until all fees are paid in full.

Statutory Holidays and Other Closures

Cornerstone Children's Centre is closed for all statutory holidays. Parents will not be charged for these days. In the event of **a SD#8 school closure due to heavy snowfall**, the Centre will also be closed. Cornerstone School Age Care will be closed during Winter Break.

Vacation

Parent/guardian must notify the Centre two weeks in advance for their vacation time. **During the school year your Child can have a break of three weeks without any charges**, over and above Spring Break and summer months. If your vacation during school year is more than 3 weeks, **you will be charged for the rest of that days off to keep the spot.**

French School Pick Up procedures and Guidelines.

1. **Pick-up Procedure:** our Cornerstone staff will be stationed at the bus stop to personally pick up your child. Staff need to acknowledge contact with the bus driver. The staff will be at the bus stop at 3:15.
2. **Cancellation Policy:** if you need to cancel your child's attendance for a particular day, please notify us before 2:30 PM by email/ phone call, or by text. Kindly include the date of cancellation when informing us. Please note that repeated failure to inform us of cancellations may result in the suspension of care.
3. **Request for Additional Day:**
 - A. If you need an extra day of care for your child, send an email to sacnelsondaycare@gmail.com with the details of the requested date.
 - B. **Confirmation:** Wait for confirmation from our team regarding the availability of the requested day. We aim to respond promptly to all requests.
 - C. **Acknowledgement:** Once you receive confirmation from us, you're all set! We'll ensure your child's spot is reserved for the requested day.
4. **Communication:** we kindly request that you refrain from leaving voice messages, as we do not check them. Instead, we encourage you to call us directly.

Pickup Procedures and Guidelines from The French School

1. **Pickup Time:**
 - Pickup time will be a 2:55 PM, except in the case of a full day or early dismissal, in which case pickups are one hour earlier 1:55pm.
2. **Designated Pickup Zone:**
 - Staff members are required to be present in the designated pickup zone, situated close to where the bus stops.
 - Upon arrival, staff members must contact the bus driver to inform them of the child's presence.

Health Matters

All the staff members will follow the universal precautions to prevent the transmission of germs/or disease.

These include:

- ✓ Washing hands with soap and water before preparing food and after using the washroom. When water is not available use hands sanitizer.
- ✓ Using bleach or approved sanitation solution to clean surfaces that have encounter bodily fluids.
- ✓ Using latex gloves when encountering bodily fluids.
- ✓ Sanitize all the tables, chairs, toys, and materials that the children have used.
- ✓ Maintaining distance between children and other staff most of the time.
- ✓ We ask parents/guardians to keep the children at home if they or a family member is ill.

When to Keep Your Child at Home

There are three important issues in determining when a child is too ill to attend a day care. This requirement is based on.

- a) Protecting other children from communicable disease
- b) Ensuring the comfort and safety of the child who is ill, and
- c) The capacity of the program to care for a sick child (we cannot spare one staff to care for one child)

Do not send your child when he/she has any of the following conditions.

Chicken Pox *Measles *Scabies *Discharge from the eye *Mumps *Strep Throat *Head Lice or Nits *Parasite *Tuberculosis *Hepatitis *Pink Eye *Vomiting *Impetigo *Rash *Whooping Cough *Ringworm *Rubella *Hand/Foot/Mouth.

The following is a list of conditions for which you are asked to keep your child at home:

- a) Difficulty in breathing – wheezing.
- b) Fever of 37.8 C (100 F) degrees or more in the previous 24hrs
- c) Infected skin or eyes, or an undiagnosed rash
- d) Diarrhea or vomiting
- e) Known or suspected communicable disease.

- f) Parents are also required to keep their child at home if the child is not well enough to take part in any of the regular programs (outdoor play) and activities.

When a Child Becomes Sick During the Day

A staff member will phone to ask you to come and pick up your child if he/she becomes ill. Your child will be made as comfortable as possible and will be closely supervised by staff. He/she may be isolated from other children to prevent the spread of any illness. If you are unavailable, we will contact the emergency contact person listed on the registration form.

Medication

Cornerstone School Age Care will not administer medication unless a consent form outlining instructions is signed by the parent/guardian, presented, and discussed with the supervisor. All the prescription drugs **MUST BE** in their original container and the expiry date clearly visible. Only medication prescribed by a doctor will be administered.

Record Keeping

The School Age Care staff will keep a record which reflects unusual incidents (good or not). The Sac logbook will include notable instances (good and/or bad) interactions between staff and/or children with other children.

Arrivals and Departures

Children registered in our program will be picked up at Hume school at the end of the school day. Parents/guardians **must** come in person to pick-up their children. The children will not be released until the parents/guardians have checked-in with the staff. Departure times will be used by the Supervisor to talk to the parents about how the day went.

- Children will not be permitted to leave the staff unless accompanied by an adult who has permission to pick-up the child.

Children will not be released to anyone under the age of 14 and/ or without written consent from his/her parent or guardian.

Signing In Process:

- Staff members must sign the child in upon pickup.
- Record the time at which the child was dropped off at the bus stop.

Responsibility During Full Days:

- Parents are responsible for dropping off their children to us during full days.

Verification Process:

- Utilize the authorized pickup list provided by the school administration to confirm the identity of the individual.

Communication:

- Maintain clear and open communication with coworkers, parents, or guardians regarding pickup procedures and any changes to the schedule.
- Notify the administration immediately of any concerns or discrepancies in pickup arrangements.

These protocols and procedures are put in place to ensure the safety and well-being of all students attending The French School. It is imperative that all staff members adhere to these guidelines strictly.

Active Play/Screen Time policy

Cornerstone School Age Care recognizes the importance of physical activity for children. The implementation of appropriate physical activity practices supports the health and development of children in care, as well as assisting in establishing positive lifestyle habits for the future. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that children in care are supported and encouraged to engage in active play and develop fundamental movement and skills.

We understand the importance of practicing fundamental movement skills with the screen, but we believe the children have that in their homes and schools. All children will have the opportunity to participate in daily physical activities that are appropriate for their age, that are fun and full of variety.

The development of any child requires a healthy lifestyle: healthy eating, adequate sleep and exercise. These are three elements that healthy adults can build in the future. When a child plays, his limbic system (also known as "emotional brain") kicks off and begins to feel pleasure and joy. This is also particularly important for the children to move freely. It helps to develop their senses, promote good posture, strength, and balance.

Daily Schedule

Our program is outdoor most of the time. Cornerstone Children's Centre will strive to provide a balance of structure and free play, of active and quiet time, and of indoor and outdoor play. We strive to maintain a balance of activities that enhance the development of each child.

Parents are responsible for providing lunch and snacks for their child/ren. We take into consideration any allergies and diet restrictions. It is therefore critical that you keep the staff informed of any changes to your child's dietary limitations.

Outdoor Play

We take all children outside to play daily. **Please pack and LABEL clothing for your child that is appropriate for the weather.** In the winter, children should have suitable warm outerwear including boots, snow pants, hat, and mittens. In the spring, summer and fall your child will need a hat and sunscreen and an extra pair of clothes (especially in winter).

Field Trip and Walks

You will be asked to give permission for your child to attend field trips outside of Nelson limit. A notice will be sent to parent/guardian prior to any planned field trip informing you of the time, destination, and any additional details.

- Before each field trip, staff will visit the location to ensure the environment is both age-appropriate and free from any safety hazards.
- Emergency cards and first aid supplies are brought along on all excursions.

PLEASE LABEL ALL YOUR CHILD'S CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR.

Lunch boxes, containers, water bottles, towels, etc. Please be aware that we are not responsible for lost or damaged items. Any items brought at this time should be clearly marked with the child's name. Guns, toys with weapons, war toys and other toys of destruction are not permitted at any time. Your child will be offered alternate ways to express feelings of aggression such as discussion, equipment plays, and activities.

APPREHENSION BY THE MINISTRY OF CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES

In the event that the Ministry should come to apprehend a child, staff members do not have the power to intervene.

Suspected Child Abuse

We are required by law to report any incidents of suspected abuse and/or neglect to the Ministry for Children and Family and the Nelson City Police.

Suspicion of Abuse/Neglect

In Cornerstone Children's Centre we strive to offer quality childcare. If at any time you have concerns about our program, please contact the Senior Supervisor of your child's program or the Director.

Appropriate Language and Behavior

As this is a community-based organization that services young children. All adults coming into the Centre must use appropriate language and behavior. Threatening behavior by a parent or visitor will necessitate notifying the police. Cornerstone does not support coercive discipline (e.g., spanking, hitting) and parents will not be permitted do so at the Centre.

Release of Child.

Children will not be released to anyone who is not listed on the child's registration form as an authorized person. You are responsible for providing written notification if there is a change in pick up arrangements. If an emergency arises during the day, and someone else must pick up your child, you are required to call the Centre, speak with a staff member and text or e-mail the information. If the person is unfamiliar to staff, you will have to provide us with the person's name, address, phone number and a physical description. The person will be required to show photo identification before staff will release the child.

Alleged Impaired Pick up.

Upon suspicion that an adult who is picking up a child from our care is under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol, or is otherwise unable to protect the child, staff members are obligated to request that the individual does not leave the premises with their child. The staff may call an alternate adult to pick up the child as recommended by the parent. If the adult insists on leaving with the child by vehicle, the staff will notify the local police and inform them of the license plate number, direction that the adult has gone, and the address of the family. The Ministry of Children and Family will also be notified if staff feels the pickup person is unable to protect the child.

Custody

If a custodial parent does not want a non-custodial parent to have access to their child at the Centre, we must have a copy of the custody papers and court orders on file. If a parent who is unauthorized, as outlined on the custody papers, arrives at the childcare facility, a staff member will ask him or her to leave and, if necessary, call the police for assistance.

EVERYDAY

THINGS TO KNOW

If your child has previously attended cornerstone, you may be familiar with the routine, but here are some important things to keep in mind...

1. Parents will be contacted around 4:00 pm daily to be inform where pick up will be.
2. If pick-up is inside Hume gym parents are required to contact us when they have arrived and must wait outside for their child.
3. Parents are no longer required to sign in or sign out their children. Drop off will be at Hume school gym unless informed otherwise.
4. If someone who is not on the emergency contact list is picking up your child, please inform the staff the day of, and provide the name and relationship of the person picking up.
5. Children should be prepared to walk to different destinations. Each child is responsible to carry their own backpack.

THINGS TO BRING

Please provide your child with the following every day:

- A big water bottle.
- Appropriate clothing for the different season (extra clothes in winter and spring)
- Indoor shoes (to leave at Hume)
- A big and healthy lunch (full days) or snacks for snack time at 3:00pm
- A hat, glove, winter jacket, boots, socks, snow pants (winter)
- Please, do not bring toys from home.

If you do not provide your child with these daily, you will be informed by the staff.

