

NOVA SCOTIA AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE DAYCARE

PO BOX 550, 43 College Rd, Truro Nova Scotia B2N 5E3 893-6501 daycare@nsac.ca



For the health and safety of our children and staff, NSAC Daycare is peanut free, smoke free, scent free and idle free!

PARENT HANDBOOK

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History of the Nova Scotia Agricultural College Daycare (NSAC Daycare)

The NSAC Daycare located at 43 College Road, Bible Hill, is owned and operated by the Nova Scotia Agricultural College and is governed by a Board of Advisors. The daycare is licensed for 33 full time spaces and accepts children ages 18 months to 5 years for full day care.

NSAC Daycare was established in 1988, when it was identified as a need on campus, to provide child care services for the students and staff of NSAC as well as employees of NSDA. Families from the surrounding communities are accommodated if space is available.

Operating with a not for profit philosophy the daycare is mandated as a cost-recovery service.

Licensing

NSAC Daycare is licensed by the Nova Scotia Department of Community Services and follows its regulations. The Day Care Regulations are available at the daycare on the parent information centre or on line at www.gov.ns.ca/just/regulations/regs/. The daycare is inspected annually by the Department of Community Services, the Department of Health and the Office of the Fire Marshall to ensure all standards are maintained.

Philosophy

NSAC Daycare is committed to providing quality affordable child care with a “learning through play” philosophy. The program offers child centered activities to encourage the development of the child, socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically. Family grouping is an important part of the philosophy and children will be with mixed age groups at the beginning and the end of the day as well as when opportunity allows throughout the day. Teacher/child ratio will be 1:6 to foster the benefits of family grouping when it occurs.

Objectives

- To provide a happy, caring environment for children where their safety and health is ensured allowing parents the opportunity to participate in the program when requested.
- To provide a developmentally and age appropriate program that meets the needs of the children individually and collectively.
- To foster a love of learning through creative expression and exploration.
- To promote a respectful and healthy attitude toward others and their environment.
- To promote physically active lifestyles through a wide range of activities/games indoors and outdoors.

Inclusion Policy

NSAC Daycare values diversity and realizes the important impact it can have on the lives of children. While recognizing the confines of the facility, NSAC Daycare is committed to providing an inclusive, developmentally appropriate program that allows for the full participation of all children/families and ensuring staff have the opportunity to work with other professionals (i.e.: Early Intervention) in order to provide individual programming when needed.

Hours of Operation

NSAC Daycare is open Monday to Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. The manager may adjust the hours and staff shifts to meet the needs of parents who are NSAC students as well as to maintain proper ratio. NSAC Daycare will be closed on the following holidays: New Years' Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, Civic Holiday (first Monday in August), Labour Day, Thanksgiving Day, Remembrance Day, Christmas Day and Boxing Day.

Weather Related and Emergency Closures

The daycare will remain open during normal operating hours and scheduled days unless inclement weather forces NSAC itself to close early or not open at all. Closures of the College are announced on local radio stations and posted on the NSAC website prior to 7 in the morning. If the College closes early parents will be contacted by telephone by daycare staff. Parents must pick their children up one hour after the college announces its' closure time. The daycare also may close due to an emergency such as a long term power outage or lack of running water. These occurrences are very unlikely and once again parents will be notified by phone as to the problem and procedure for picking up children. The daycare evacuation plan is posted beside the parent information centre above the cubbies. In the event that the daycare has to be evacuated children and staff will proceed to the Langille Athletic Centre and parents will be notified.

Arrival and Departure

When dropping your child off at the daycare please inform a staff person of your child's arrival. Also speak to a staff person when picking your child up. Arrival and departure times are carefully logged to ensure accurate records are kept in case of emergency. In order for staff to be able to contact parents it is important to notify staff if you are going to be unavailable at your usual phone number. *Please call before 9:00 if your child will not be attending daycare on any given day. The number is 893-6501.* Children will not be released into the care of someone under the age of 12 or who is not designated for pick up on the child's application form. Please make sure anyone picking your child up has the proper car seat for your child. For safety reasons children will not be released into the care of anyone appearing to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Admission Procedures

Parents interested in enrolling their child at the NSAC Daycare are required to complete and submit an application form along with a \$50.00 non-refundable registration fee. Applications can be picked up at the daycare at 43 College Rd. during regular business hours or downloaded at www.nsac.ca . Click on Campus Community and select daycare from the drop down menu. Alternatively email daycare@nsac.ca and request an application form.

NSAC students and staff of NSAC/NSDA have first priority once completed applications are received. Applications with missing information will be not considered until completed. Parents will be notified when a space for their child becomes available and orientation visits will be scheduled. Parents will receive a copy of the parent handbook, menu, daily schedule and a tour of the facility during orientation.

Fees

Daycare fees are approved by the Vice President of Administration upon the recommendation of the Daycare Manager and the NSAC Daycare Board of Advisors. Parents will be notified in writing, a minimum of thirty days prior to a fee increase OR regarding changes to payment procedures. Fees cover the days your child is registered whether they attend or not. Receipts for Income Tax purposes will be issued at the end of January for the previous year.

Methods of Payment

Payments are to be made prior to a child beginning care. Payments may be made by Debit, Visa, MasterCard or cheque. Parents may choose which payment option suits them best:

- Monthly Payment: Due the first of each month, (Daily Rate X Number of Days in Month)
- Bi-Weekly: Due the 1st. Monday of the two week cycle.
- Weekly: Due Monday morning

Collection of Payments/Suspension of Childcare

Fees are due on time and in full. Invoices will be sent to parents who are late or have fallen behind in payment. Failure to pay fees can result in suspension and withdrawal of childcare services. Accounts that are past due will be forwarded to the Financial Services office of NSAC for collection. Cheques that are returned NSF are subject to payment of bank fees.

Fund Raising

Throughout the year the daycare asks parents to participate in fund raising events. Any money raised is used to purchase toys/equipment for the children. In the spring the daycare participates in “hop a thon” which raises money for Muscular Dystrophy.

Parent Information

Information for parents is posted on the designated parent information centers. The following are posted for your interest;

- Daycare License
- Current Inspection Report
- Behaviour Guidance Policy
- A Copy Of Parent Handbook
- A copy of the Daycare Act and Regulations
- Current Menu
- The Daily Program Plan and Routine
- Names of Parent Committee Members and latest Meeting Minutes
- Notification of Funding provided by the Minister
- Any Information Required by the Minister

Parent Communication/Involvement

Parents will receive a monthly newsletter and calendar highlighting events at the daycare and information concerning programming. There is a suggestion box in the coat room and parents are welcome to provide comments/concerns/questions about the program. The daycare has a parent committee that meets twice a year to share information. The names of committee members are posted on the parent information center. Parents are encouraged to take a moment each day to talk to a staff member about their child's day to foster positive links between home and daycare. If a parent has a concern about his or her child please make arrangements to meet with the Manager and child's teacher to discuss the issue in private. NSAC Daycare has an open door policy and parents are welcome to visit at any time!

Parent Resources

In order to support parents and children NSAC Daycare is happy to provide Today's' Parent magazine for parents to borrow. This is an excellent Canadian publication with many educational and insightful articles. The daycare also has access to parent resource material from the Canadian Child Care Federation. NSAC Daycare will consult with other professionals such as Colchester-East Hants Early Intervention or Speech if required.

Progress Reports

Progress reports are done twice a year to chart the developmental progress of the children attending the daycare. Reports are available for parents to review. Teachers also compile examples of each child's art, drawing and printing in a portfolio to highlight the child's progress from September to June. Parents are given the portfolio at the end of June.

Second Step

Second step is an anti-bullying program designed for preschool children that explores emotions and techniques for dealing with strong emotions like anger. The teachers of NSAC Daycare have been trained in facilitating this program for children ages 3-5. Children within this age group will participate in this program throughout the year.

Withdrawal Notice

Parents are required to give 4 weeks written notice when withdrawing their child from daycare and their reason for doing so.

Health Policy

The health policy of NSAC Daycare is based on guidelines from the Department of Community Services and Public Health. Children who have any of the following symptoms should remain at home until they are symptom free for 24 hours, without the help of medication;

- Fever (101F/38.3C or higher)
- Rash with fever
- Difficulty breathing
- Persistent cough
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Conjunctivitis

Children with communicable diseases such as measles, flu or strep throat cannot return to the daycare without a doctor's note. **Children who are not able to participate fully in the daily program should remain at home. Children should not be given Advil, Tylenol or other such products prior to coming to daycare. While these medications can relieve symptoms they can also mask serious conditions. Children are still contagious while medicated.**

If a child becomes ill in a non-emergency way at daycare, staff will contact parents to pick the child up. In an emergency situation where immediate medical care is required staff will call 911 first and contact parents second. If parents cannot be reached emergency contacts will be called.

Prescription medication and non prescription medication that your child requires must remain in the container it came in. Medication needs to be stored in locked storage at daycare so please give them to a teacher. Parents will be asked to complete an authorization for medication form prior to their child receiving medicine. If a child spikes a high fever while at daycare staff will administer appropriate medication after consulting the parent and if the parent has signed a consent form, while waiting for the parent to pick up the child. Children's backpacks should not contain creams or medications of any type. Please administer vitamins at home and do not allow your child to bring them to daycare. As part of the Application Process parents are required to provide current immunization information for their child and indicate any health concerns. If parents have chosen not to have their child immunized they should indicate so on the application form.

Extreme Weather Safety

During the summer children are required to wear sunhats that shade their faces. Teachers will apply sunscreen as needed. On extremely hot days children will be encouraged to play in the shade and given extra water to drink. When the air temperature and humidex are above 35 degrees children will remain indoors.

During the winter children are required to dress appropriately for weather conditions. If the air temperature and or wind chill goes below -10 children will remain inside.

Rest/Quiet Time Policy

Children have a rest period each day after lunch for 1 to 2 hours depending on their age. This is a time to relax and refresh. Children are not forced to sleep nor are they forced to stay awake. A child who remains awake after a ½ hour quiet time will be given books or quiet toys to play with on their mat until everyone is ready to get up.

Please bring a blanket for your child that can be kept at daycare. The daycare provides mats and mat sheets. All bedding is laundered once a week or as required.

Some children like to bring a small soft toy to snuggle with at nap time. It should fit into their cubby and be washable as it will be washed weekly with their bedding.

Daily Requirements

Children are asked to have the following items at daycare each day. All items are to be labeled with your child's name.

- Indoor and outdoor footwear that is appropriate for the weather. Crocs and flip flops are not permitted at daycare.
- A complete change of clothing including underwear and socks.
- A blanket for quiet time. This can remain at daycare.
- Outer wear that is appropriate for the weather/season.
- Diapers if required. Please bring enough for a week or more and you will be notified when they are running out.
- Sneakers on gym day. Parents will be notified when gym days are.

Please do not wear jewelry/play jewelry to daycare.

Nutrition Policy

The daycare provides a morning snack, lunch and afternoon snack each day. Children are encouraged to try foods and will not be required to eat things they don't like. Substitutions will not be made because of food likes and dislikes. Teachers eat with the children to model positive/healthy eating habits and table manners.

Due to hectic morning routines, from time to time children may be required to bring breakfast to daycare. If your child is bringing breakfast to daycare please make sure it is healthy. Some suggestions are yogurt, fruit, cheese and whole grain or fortified breads. Please do not send cookies, doughnuts or other sugary treats.

The menu at NSAC Daycare is a four week rotational menu based on Canada's food guide. The menu is posted in the coat room entrance and will be provided to new families when they begin daycare or when changes to the menu occur. The daycare supports "seasonal and buy local" when possible. Occasionally substitutions to the menu occur due to availability of items and the changes will be noted and parents advised.

The daycare will be happy to provide recipes when requested.

Please note children's allergies/food sensitivities on their application form. If a special diet is required speak to the daycare manager so arrangements can be made. Removing foods from a child's diet can impact their health and development and should not be done without consulting a health professional.

Any food donated to the daycare must fall within the Standards for Food and Nutrition in Regulated Child Care Settings. Any baked goods must be homemade and include a list of ingredients.

Families are asked to celebrate their child's birthday at home. Cakes are a lovely treat but not all families choose to bring them to daycare and children have difficulty understanding why some children have cakes on their birthday and they do not. **NSAC DAYCARE IS A PEANUT FREE FACILITY.** Please ensure that if your child eats peanuts or peanut products before coming to daycare that their face and hands are washed before arrival.

Breast Feeding Policy

NSAC Daycare is a family friendly daycare and supports breastfeeding as healthy and positive experience for mothers and babies. Mothers are welcome to nurse their babies/children and will be given privacy to do so if desired. If a nursing mother wishes to send breast milk for her child it should be labeled with the child's name and the date and it will be stored appropriately.

Toddler Daily Log

In order to track food/liquid intake and urine/stool output as well as time spent sleeping, teachers of children still in diapers under the age of three fill out a daily log sheet. The sheets are available for parents to view and are kept on file for two months.

Behaviour Guidance

NSAC Daycare takes a multi faceted approach to behavior guidance/management. Management and staff create a positive respectful environment and model appropriate behavior. By providing a wide range of activities and toys that entertain and challenge children incidents of inappropriate behavior are greatly reduced. A healthy diet, regular routines, enough sleep and fresh air also contribute to positive learning and life experiences.

Children are encouraged to treat their peers and environment with respect, using words to solve problems. When necessary teachers will step in and redirect. Limits will be enforced consistently and fairly. Under certain circumstances physical contact may be used to guide behavior. A child may need to be removed from a frustrating situation and a calm adult touch can have a soothing effect. As a last resort a time away from the play area may be needed. Children will not be confined or isolated.

When inappropriate/disruptive behavior continues parents may be contacted to discuss solutions. Third party support may be required to help resolve issues. NSAC Daycare staff may recommend parents contact Early Intervention, speech therapists or counseling services to assess a child's needs and provide support. Children may be expelled from the daycare if their behavior is physically harmful to other children or staff.

Outdoor Time/Outings

Children will have outdoor time in the playground each day, weather permitting. Occasionally children will be taken off site for outings on the campus of NSAC, or within walking distance of the daycare. Parents will be notified of excursions off campus prior to the outing. If you do not wish to have your child participate in off campus outings please inform your child's teacher when outing notices are given. Unless the manager is told otherwise all children will take part in outings on and off campus.

Program

From September to mid-June teachers plan weekly activities on a theme based approach. Plan sheets are posted for each age group in the entrance way by the gate. Children have the opportunity each day to participate in the following areas/activities; dramatic play, constructive/creative play, science/nature exploration, art, sensory rich activities, quiet/library, music/movement, indoor gross motor and outdoor gross motor. Activities and toys/equipment are age and ability appropriate.

NSAC Daycare Early Childhood Educators

Staff of NSAC Daycare have Early Childhood Education or equivalency and are certified through the Nova Scotia Department of Community Services. They have been screened through Child Abuse and Criminal Record Checks and maintain current First Aid and CPR Level C. As part of their commitment to lifelong learning they enroll and participate in professional development opportunities that focus on the early years.

Student Teachers/Substitutes/Volunteers

All student teachers, substitutes and volunteers at NSAC Daycare have First Aid/CPR and are screened through the Child Abuse and Criminal Record checks. They are trained in the daycare's policies and procedures, including the Behaviour Guidance Policy.

Permission to be Photographed/Videotaped

From time to time children will be photographed and or videotaped for educational or promotional purposes. Parents are asked to contact the Manager or her designate if they do not wish to have their child photographed or videotaped.

Show and Tell

From September through June children have the opportunity to participate in Show and Tell once a week. Show and Tell days will be posted on the monthly calendar. Show and Tell items must be small enough to fit inside the child's cubby.