



FAIRFIELD GONZALES
COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
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Fairfield Gonzales Community Association
Five Points Preschool

Parent/Guardian Handbook

Contact Information

Preschool Manager

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Co-Executive Director: Kristina Wilcox

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Fairfield Community Place (Preschool Location)

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Early Years Coordinator

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Welcome

Welcome to Fairfield Five Points Preschool. We are a licensed early learning program for three to five year olds that follows a learning through play philosophy. We have been operating since October 2001. Our program is based in the Fairfield Community Place main building as well as having access to the fenced preschool-age play area behind the centre and making occasional use of the larger Garry Oak room.

As a licensed program we are regulated by the BC Community Care and Assisted Living Act and overseen by the Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA). Our program is licensed for up to 15 students with two Early Childhood Educator staff.

To learn more about the Fairfield Gonzales Community Association visit www.fairfieldcommunity.ca

Executive Director's Note

On behalf of the Board of Directors and Preschool management we warmly welcome your family to our Preschool program. We look forward to building healthy relationships, creating strong community and creating happy memories.

Five Points Preschool Philosophy

Our Preschool philosophy is learning thorough play. Play provides children with opportunities to investigate, develop and practice skills. We encourage the preschoolers to explore, discover, create, socialize and have fun. We support this by offering choices within a framework, facilitating problem solving and encouraging curiosity.

The emphasis in our program is on process learning. We believe it is important to promote process learning as they are still trying things out. As well, young children are interested in 'doing' rather than producing a product. We do, however, introduce some more ongoing projects, particularly creating mementos for special occasions.

Socialization is a huge part of our preschool. Learning to get along with others, cooperation and sharing as well as managing in a group setting are all skills that will play a major role when your child goes to Kindergarten and to prepare your child for the school years to follow. We methodically introduce and reinforce these fundamental interpersonal skills that will assist your child as they embark on their school experience.

“It takes a whole village to raise a child”. We actively include community in our class room including guest visitors, field trips and many program family parties to enhance the program and expand the village for our students.

We follow the Early Learning Framework put out by the Ministry of Child and Family Development (MCFD): http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/DownloadAsset?assetId=245C9B82FFF94171BB61818A53F0674A&filename=early_learning_framework.pdf

Our Educators

Our dedicated staff members possess a wide range of skills, interest and education and are required to meet the following FGCA and VIHA licensing standards.

- Appropriate certification and documentation (E.C.E license and/or assistant documentation)
- A doctor’s note indicating mental and physical wellness
- Standard First Aid and CPR C
- Criminal Record Check and 3 work specific references

Program Information and schedule

Your child must be 3 years old by December 31st of their registered year. Based on enrollment our Preschool runs from September to June:

- Five points preschool: Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9:00 to 12:00
- We follow the School District 61 school calendar; Pro-D days and holidays: No Preschool

Program Expectations

- Your child must be toilet trained
- Children are excited about preschool
- Weather appropriate clothing is required. Rain pants, boots and warm clothes in the fall and winter and hat and sunscreen in the spring.

What to bring?

- Change of Clothes Please bring a change of clothes (top, pants, underwear, and socks) in a labeled large zip lock bag when your child starts Preschool.
- Indoor Shoes: Children will need a pair of indoor shoes (i.e. runners or slip on shoes).
- Outside Wear: Unless extreme weather is a factor, we go outside every day so please dress your child appropriately for all kinds of weather. Items required throughout the year: rain and winter coat with a hood, rain and winter boots, (muddy buddies are optional but a good idea), hat and gloves.

Shared Snack and our approach to Food

Each Monday we set out a sharing basket/bin. Please send a **FRUIT or VEGETABLE** each Monday for the program week.

To compliment the fruit and vegetables, our program will provide healthy crackers as well as water. Occasionally, the crackers may be replaced by the products of our monthly baking activities including muffins, soda bread and soft pretzels.

Snack is offered to the children with shared serving plates. This is a great way for the students to stretch their food choices and experiment as well as practice some table courtesy. We take a free choice approach regarding snacks. Self directed feeding is an important step in developing emotional and healthy relationships with food as nourishment. As part of our snack routine, the children are encouraged to manage their food selection, their plate cleanup and compost any uneaten food.

Staff will provide a list of foods not permitted in program due to any serious health concerns or food allergies. Please be sure to update staff if your child's own food intake has to change.

All food allergies will be posted as required by Licensing.

For any potluck meals or special occasion parties, we ask that the list of ingredients be written out.

Food and Drink Policy

We promote healthy eating and nutritional habits. We do not allow gum, pop, chocolate or candy from home. Safe drinking water is available for all children at all times and we encourage them to drink as much as they would like. If a child has specific nutritional requirements, we will ensure that all staff at the site understands and complies with these requirements. If your child has severe nutritional requirements, please ensure that you send the extra food with your child to meet their need.

Outdoor active play

We go outside every day for approximately 60 minutes, so please dress your child appropriately for all kinds of weather (see below for details). If extreme weather is a factor, we will endeavor to be outside but time may be limited to 15 minutes and will be coupled with indoor active play.

Screen Use

- Unless there is an identified need, electronics from home are not permitted in program.
- There is no screen time made available in preschool.

Some Additional Weekly Routines

We rotate the hands on / finer motor play activities for our room which may include the rice or the cornmeal table, the water table as well the regular painting easel set up. On Mondays, our program utilizes the Kindergym indoor play area at the centre's Garry Oak Room and we have students picked up by their parents at that hall (behind our main centre attached to Sir James Douglas School) This is great practice for the children to build on their transition and group skills and a nice break in the rainy season.

Celebrations

Fairfield Five Points Preschool respects and celebrates the multi-cultural composition of our community. Please let staff know if there are special cultural celebrations that are most meaningful to your family and that could be shared with the group.

Parent involvement

During the school year, opportunities to support the program through accompaniment on field trips and extra help for special event days may arise. Parents will be assigned specific leader roles for such events. Please note, Siblings are welcome to join us but are the responsibility of the parent attending.

Communication

We use e-mail communication and will contact you with the e-mail you have provided on the registration form. Important information is sent out via e-mail so please ensure the e-mail you have provided is accessible at all times, even during holiday breaks. If this is not possible, please provide your preferred method of communication.

- We assume that you have received and read our e-mail unless it bounces back as undeliverable. If this occurs we will notify you by phone
- E-mails include: monthly calendars, billing notifications and relevant program information
- It is the parent's responsibility to: provide accurate contact information, pick-up monthly calendars, invoices, fees, tax receipts, inform themselves of out-trips, registration and Pro-D/ED days as well as to notify the FGCA if your personal contact information changes during the year.

Fairfield Gonzales Community Association Code of Conduct

As an association dedicated to enhancing the quality of life in Fairfield and Gonzales, we have developed a code of conduct by which we hope to foster positive relations among all. It is understood that all board members, staff, volunteers, participants and users adhere to the following to guide all behaviour and activities related to the FGCA:

- We will interact with respect, courtesy, objectivity, and inclusiveness
- We will work towards the good of all community members, and not for personal benefit
- We will promote collaboration, cooperation and partnership with each other and with other groups
- We will promote health, wellness and safety for the entire community

Preschool and Centre Closures

The Five Points Preschool will be closed for all Sir James Douglas professional development day's as well as winter closure and spring closure according to the School District 61 calendar. The FGCA will be closed the first week of Spring Break as well as the last week of August for facility maintenance. Other closures include but are not limited to:

New Year's Day
Good Friday
Easter Monday

Canada Day
BC Day
Labour Day

Remembrance Day
Christmas Day
Boxing Day

Preschool Fees

Care Options	Cost
3 Days/Week	\$200
Pro D Days	No Care
Drop in fee-If space allows	\$20
NOTE: Fees are averaged over the school year, although some months have fewer days, fees do not vary and discounts are not applied.	

Registration Requirements

- Children who are turning 3 by December 31st of the registration year are eligible to register in preschool.
- Each new family is required to pay a one-time administration fee of \$30.00
- Upon registration a non-refundable deposit of \$50.00 is due. This will be applied to your last month of care. Deposits are carried over year to year until your child exits program entirely.
- Completed registration packages include:
 - Registration forms
 - PAD forms
 - Immunization records
 - Child's photo
 - Custody agreement; if applicable
- Families who are returning to our program will have priority registration over external families.

Please refer to the Guide to Registration for more details.

Payment Requirements

- Fees are due on the 1st of each month and are paid by direct withdrawal.
 - Withdrawals will appear on your statement as 'Fairfield Community Association or FCA'
- A completed Pre-Authorized Debit (PAD) authorization form must be provided prior to your first day of care
 - Please note: if a VOID cheque is not attached to the PAD form and the financial information entered is incorrect, a \$10 fee will be charged to your account.
 - Those unable to pay using pre-authorization debit can speak to the Manager

Here at the FGCA we recognize that there are a number of situations that can cause financial strain, if you need to arrange alternate payment arrangements, please contact the Early Years Coordinator.

Affordable Child Care Benefit

As a licensed preschool, we are eligible to accept provincial Affordable Child Care Benefit for eligible enrolled children. The following are expectations that our program has for families utilizing the Benefit.

1. Parent/Guardians are ultimately responsible for all fees as registrants to our program.
2. Parents will be responsible for fee payments until the benefit authorization has been received by our program. Please note that the benefit application processing can take 6 to 8 weeks.
3. Parents are responsible for paying any parent portion remaining after the deduction of the benefit from the program fees.
4. Parents are responsible for renewing the benefit authorization before it expires. For more information about this program visit: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/caring-for-young-children/child-care-funding/child-care-benefit>

If you need assistance with the application process contact our Family Program Manager or the Child Care Resource and Referral Centre 250-382-7000 or MCFD at 1-888-338-6622, option 1. Please note, authorization from the MCFD (Ministry of Children and Family Development) may take several weeks to process.

Families receiving the benefit must pay the balance of their account by the 15th of the month. A separate, detailed Pre-Authorized Debit schedule will be provided once subsidy has been approved.

Late Fee Payment- Penalty Procedure

- If your payment is not received by the 1st of the month, a late fee of \$5.00 per day will be charged. If payment is not received in full by the 5th of the month your child(ren) may not return until the account is paid in full.
- Subsidy families must pay the balance of their account by the 15th of the month, after which a late fee of \$5.00 per day will be charged. If payment is not received in full by the 16th of the month your child(ren) may not return until the account is paid in full.

NSF Penalty Procedure

Should your direct debit payment or cheque be returned to our organization as NSF, we require re-payment. Charges will be applied to your account unless paying by cheque or cash is requested. Re-payment must be in the amount of the original fee as well as a \$15 NSF penalty charge. Upon the FGCA receiving notification from our financial institution regarding NSF we will send a notification to you via e-mail.

Withdrawal and Refund

Families must provide the FGCA's **Five Points Preschool Manager** with **one month's written notice, received by the 1st day of the preceding month** to de-register without penalty for care. Alternatively, you will be charged one month's fees in lieu of notice.

Absentees, Arrivals and Departures

The Preschool door will be opened at 9:00 a.m. Upon arrival parents are required to sign in their child and should advise our teachers of any significant change in pick-up routines for your child.

Preschool program ends at 12:00 and punctual pick of your child is much appreciated. If you are unavoidably delayed, please contact the Centre (250- 382-4604) so an alternative plan to release your child can be devised. A late fee will be applied if lateness is consistent

If your child will be absent from program, please phone the message line (250-382-4604) and leave a detailed message stating your name, your child's name, your child's program space and the date of absence or e-mail the Five Points Preschool manager (fivepoints@fairfieldcommunity.ca). This proactive communication really helps us to keep track of what illnesses are going around the preschool community.

Keeping your Child Safe and Healthy

Injury and accident procedures

- Should your child sustain an injury that requires medical attention, we will contact you immediately. If we are unable to reach you we will call the emergency contact person for direction.
- All injuries are documented. Minor injuries such as bumps, bruises, small scrapes or surface cuts will be tended to by staff, documented and brought to the parent's attention at pick-up time.
- Injuries requiring medical attention will be reported to the parent, Manager, Co-Executive Director (Kristina Wilcox) and VIHA licensing.
- If the injury requires immediate medical care we will call 9-1-1.

Outside of our classroom.

We carry our first aid kit with us at all times as well as the attendance sheet and the children's emergency forms. It is very important for parents to keep the emergency forms and their registration papers up to date throughout the school year. For additional safety, our playground areas are checked daily by staff as well as inspected monthly by our facility staff and routinely inspected by our Licensing Officer as part of their program review.

Out-trip Procedures

- The FGCA will ensure that parents have reasonable access to their child at all times
- Out trip information will be available in your program space (on the bulletin board) as well as sent via email prior to your child's out trip
- Please send your child prepared for the out-trip (appropriate attire and possible parental donation)
- If your child is unable or unwilling to attend the out-trip please make arrangements for alternate care
- Speak to a manager in advance to arrange pick-up from the out-trip location

Emergency Situations

FGCA staffs are trained to follow the FGCA Emergency Procedures. Procedures are posted in program spaces. Programs are equipped with cell phones and staff will attempt to contact parents/guardians during/after an emergency.

Emergency Closure and Weather Closures

In the event of an emergency (including but not limited to, unforeseen weather, lack of human resources, natural disasters, health emergencies, power failure, renovations or teachers strike) the FGCA will close. If emergency closure is necessary during operating hours we will attempt to contact you by phone to promptly pick up your child. There will be no refunds issued for emergency closures. In the event of a closure lasting more than two weeks, fee credits will be calculated and applied to your next invoice. Should the region be experiencing dangerous weather and SD61 closes, the FGCA will close also. Follow the steps below to obtain the most up to date information:

- Check the SD61 website at <http://sd61.bc.ca>
- Check the FGCA website at www.fairfieldcommunity.ca
- Call your on-site manager (refer to numbers provided at the beginning of manual)
- Check your e-mail as your on-site manager will endeavor to provide written notification

Missing Child On or Off Site

If at any point during program a child is missing we will do a 5 minute area search. After 5 minutes, we will call 911.

Authorized Pick-up

Children may only be released to persons named on the child's registration and emergency form. Authorized pick-up contacts must be responsible adults who are of the legal age of 19. Staff will ask for photo ID and a local phone number.

Unauthorized Pick-up

If you wish to have an unauthorized person pick up your child, we require advanced written authorization by completing the unauthorized pick-up section of the registration package or by sending a fax or letter. Pick up contacts must be responsible adults who are of the legal age 19. Staff will ask for photo ID and a local phone number.

Release of Care

Parents must sign their child in and out of program. Sign in must include the time and initials and must be done in pen. Your child must be signed out by a responsible adult from the authorized pick-up list. At the managers' discretion the FGCA may facilitate play-dates for children; however, our staff will not provide contact information for children or call on behalf of children unless permission from all guardians is given.

Late Pick-up

If your child remains at the centre after preschool after closing (12:00pm) and we have not heard from you, we will take the following steps:

1. We will call you
2. We will call the emergency contact and authorized pick-up persons
3. If we are unable to reach a contact within half an hour, we will call the Ministry of Children and Family Development Emergency (MCFD)
4. The MCFD will take the child into their custody until a parent is located

5. A note will be left at the centre stating where your child may be picked up

Staff will be required to treat every late pick up as if something serious may have happened. Please call ahead if you find yourself delayed. In the event of late pick-up you are required to pay the staff in attendance \$25 per quarter hour upon arrival. Staff onsite are not authorized to waive the fee. Three late pickups will result in dismissal from the program.

Alleged Impaired Pick-up

The FGCA must take reasonable steps to prevent any person unable to provide care from gaining access to a child. If a staff member believes the child to be at risk, they will offer to call a taxi, relative, or friend to pick up the person and child. As required by law, the FGCA staff may call Child Protection Services and/or the police in the event that a child is taken off premises by an allegedly impaired person.

Custody

We require, with registration, all legal documentation regarding custody and custody orders. The FGCA cannot withhold a child from a parent and will not intervene in custody issues unless current court ordered documents have been provided. In the case that we have a copy of a custody order that is not being abided by we will contact all concerned parties. This may include phoning the police and/or The Ministry of Children and Family Development.

Please speak with the manager if you have specific questions relating to your situation.

FGCA Custody Arrangement Document

We require written paperwork indicating the agreement plan outlined by separated or split families. Both parents/guardians are required to fill out the documentation and paperwork to ensure that information is shared. If you have **joint custody** of your child, we expect payments, pick-up persons, and penalty fees to be provided from the parent who is listed first on the registration form; split payment information must be provided at the time of registration. If you have **sole custody** of your child we expect payments, pick up persons, and penalty fees to be your sole responsibility. In the event that fees are accrued on your day of registered pick up you are responsible for paying fees before the child can attend your next registered day.

Discharge

The FGCA reserves the right to discharge based on:

- Inability of the child or family to follow FGCA expectations and policies
- Inability of the program to meet the needs of the child or family
- Three late pick-ups
- Late payments, non-payments or NSF fees incurred and unpaid
- Unwillingness to meet with the educators or management regarding the care of your child(ren)

In the case that your child is discharged from the program we will provide a pro-rated reimbursement with sufficient notice.

Conflict Resolution

The FGCA believes that a successful Preschool program intrinsically relies on the cooperation and cohesiveness of children, their families, the staff, management, the community and various integral outside resources. In the event of a conflict, the FGCA takes a problem solving and family-centered approach. We value open communication, mediation, and the FGCA encourages parents to discuss any concerns regarding their child and their child's experience in our programs. Managers have an open door policy and will address a parent's/guardian's concerns in a respectful environment. Whenever possible please make an appointment with the manager to assist in discussing the matter in a timely fashion.

In the event that an issue is unresolved between the manager and parent please make an appointment with the Executive Director. If, after meeting all of the above, concerns have not been remedied, parents may contact the Board of Directors.

Alleged Child Abuse

We are required by law to call the MCFD if we suspect any form of child abuse or if a child discloses information to a staff member. The FGCA staff members are not able to discuss details of legal investigations with families.

Medication and Administering Medication

- Parents must fill out a permission to administer medication form as directed by the manager
- Medication will be given to the child in the amount and at the time specified by the care plan
- We will ensure that a child's medication is not accessible to any child, except for children who requires access to their own medication (i.e. Epi-pens/insulin)
- Our staff will assist/supervise and document the administration of a child's medication

Care Plan

If your child requires extra support, or has special medical or behavioural needs, we require you to identify this to staff and assist in the creation of a care plan outlining instructions for specialized care. This will be created by the caregiver, parent, and possibly outside resources and will be updated yearly. Your manager may request a care plan and will guide you through the creation of a care plan.

If your child is identified as requiring one to one assistance to participate in the classroom, we will support your pursuit of supported childcare funding to cover the cost of additional staffing.

Illness and Communicable Disease

When your child is 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 considerations when deciding if a child is too ill to attend a program.

1. The protection of 14 other children and staff 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.

Children with the following symptoms/illnesses will not be able to participate in program:

1. Unable to participate in normal activities
2. Gastro-intestinal problems (ie. vomiting/diarrhea) will be excluded for 24 hours
3. A generalized rash
4. Acute cold symptoms accompanied with a green or brown runny noses
6. A fever (38°C or higher) may return to preschool after 24 hours when the fever has dissipated and no medication is needed to control fever (i.e. Tylenol)
7. A communicable disease

It is the parents' responsibility to inform the caregiver if the child has contracted a communicable disease (chicken pox, impetigo, scabies, etc). This will enable us to alert others as to the possible health risk. Your child will not be permitted to attend program during this time.

As a licensed program, we are required to report if a medically diagnosed communicable disease has been identified in the Preschool. We will ensure that all enrolled families will be notified in such a scenario while protecting the privacy of the child and impacted family as much as feasible in a small program.

When a child returns to the program after having a communicable disease the FGCA reserves the right to ask for a 'physician's note' stating that the child is well and able to return. Please respect the health of other children and staff in our facility and honour our policy.

Head Lice

If your child contracts head lice, please inform the childcare providers immediately. As a large childcare provider, with multiple childcare spaces, it is important that we control the spread of lice; therefore, we ask that you do not send your child(ren) back to program until they have been lice free for a minimum of 24hrs and proper treatment has been given. This will also ensure we are able to disinfect all affected areas in a timely manner. For more information please visit Health Link BC at:

<http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthfiles/hfile06.stm>

Sunscreen Policy

When necessary please drop your child off with sunscreen already applied. An e-mail will be sent to families informing them of this necessity. The FGCA will not supply sunscreen; families must provide their child sunscreen. We ask that if your child(ren) has allergies to sunscreen to provide a reasonable safety plan to ensure that your child(ren) will not be at risk of sunburn or sunstroke. This plan must be agreeable to the child care facility.

Injury and Accident

- Should your child sustain an injury that requires medical attention, we will contact you immediately. If we are unable to reach you we will call the emergency contact person for direction
- All injuries are documented. Minor injuries such as bumps, bruises, small scrapes or surface cuts etc., will be tended to by staff, documented, and brought to the parent's attention at pick-up time
- Injuries requiring medical attention will be reported to the parent, Manager, Executive Director and VIHA licensing

- If the injury requires immediate medical care, and we are unable to immediately reach you, we will call 911 or transport the child to a medical facility. You will be responsible for all fees associated with emergency care.

Guidance and Discipline

The FGCA will ensure that behavioural guidance is age-appropriate, applies logical consequences and will take into consideration the cultural and individual needs of the child. The FGCA views children as individuals deserving of respect. Our staff support and encourage children to express their feelings, make positive choices and work towards solving their own problems. Our guidance policy is based on the below:

1. Role Modeling
2. Discipline is based on safety, respect and cooperation.
3. A child is not allowed to hurt themselves or others.
4. Children will be given clear, simple and consistent limits regarding appropriate behaviour.
5. Choices will be offered whenever possible
6. Verbal direction and re-direction will be the main means of guidance and discipline.

If it is necessary for the child to have time away from the group, the child will be supervised. Under no circumstances will physical, emotional or verbal punishments be used. The FGCA does not tolerate inappropriate behaviour such as, but not limited to: rude and disrespectful behaviour towards staff, offensive and coarse language, bullying behaviour, verbal and physical aggression or abuse, emotional abuse, malicious behaviour, teasing, cliques, peer pressure, physical discrimination, inappropriate discussion and touching, sexual abuse, theft, unauthorized absence or departure from program, disrespect of others' belongings and FGCA property. Religious, racist or socio-economic discrimination will not be permitted.

Behaviour Management

If a child is having difficulty co-operating in a program the following steps will be taken:

1. Encourage the child to make a positive choice.
2. Using age appropriate language to explain the importance of appropriate behaviour and re-direct the child
3. If child is still non-compliant, offer the choice to (a) follow the expectation or (b) have time away until child is ready to problem solve.
4. If undesirable behaviour continues, the manager and educators will discuss and problem solve with the child.
5. If manager deems necessary, a phone call to parent/guardian will be made. The parent/guardian may be asked to pick-up the child immediately.
6. A meeting with manager will be scheduled to discuss concerns and solutions.
7. If the above steps are unsuccessful, a meeting with the Executive Director will be scheduled and a care plan will be discussed.

All of our staff members are trained to document notable behaviour. The FGCA reserves the right to inform parents that alternate childcare arrangements will need to be made if we feel our safety and behaviour expectations are not being met.

We warmly welcome you to the FGCA and hope you and your family make long lasting connections.

