

SNC'C'AMALA?TN

Okanagan Indian Band **Early Childhood Education Centre**

12420 Westside Road
Vernon, BC
V1T 7Z3

(250) 545-3800 phone
(250) 545-4553 fax

PARENT HANDBOOK

OUR PHILOSOPHY

At Snc'c'mala?tn Early Childhood Education Centre we believe:

- ✓ In the individual worth and value of every child, and that each child is unique with abilities that are different from those of other children.
- ✓ That only as a First Nations controlled facility could it be possible to provide a happy, healthy, safe and stimulating environment for children which fosters their physical, intellectual, emotional, social, creative and very necessary cultural development.
- ✓ All areas are related to and dependent upon one another and are of equal importance to the child's development.
- ✓ That the group setting must meet the individual needs of each child within the context of the group, allowing them to expand and enrich their overall development, through play and discovery.
- ✓ That the group care / school setting is a valuable family support system, allowing parents / guardians to pursue their own interests with peace of mind for their child's welfare.

It is critical that the centre staff and parents/guardians work together as partners in meeting the needs of the children.

Why our Philosophy is Important





The program is planned and carried out based on knowledge of what children can do at each stage of development. Children are learning new skills and developing special interests as they take on growth tasks at each stage. They have their own timetable, their own interests, strengths and needs. Our program is based on what is appropriate for the age group involved and what is individually appropriate for each child. It recognizes that no two children develop on the same schedule or in the same sequence and it strives to provide opportunities for each child as they are ready for them. The program recognizes the value of play. Through play, children learn about the world around them and develop a love of learning.

The information that follows offers you the answers to a number of questions families have as they participate in our programs.

- **This book is for the Parents / Guardians for their information.**
- **Please keep this book for reference.**

Getting Started

Adjusting to a new childcare or school experience can be stressful for parents and children. Here are some suggestions to help you get started at the Snc'c'amala?tn Early Childhood Education Centre:

-  Plan to make as few as possible other lifestyle changes while your child is adjusting to childcare or school. **This is not the time to introduce new food or a new bed.**
-  Schedule a visit with your child before the first day.
-  Talk about the centre at home. Even very young children will understand that you like the place and the people and you think he/she will too.
-  Work out your own feelings before your child begins. **Remember both positive and negative feelings will be transmitted to your child.**

Orientation

Orientation is planned to provide you with the information you require to feel secure in your choice as a parent and to ensure that our centre staff have the information they need to work with your child. Please plan one hour at the centre to meet with the Manager and/or Head Start Coordinator and Room Supervisor. At this time, you will learn about the centre and our policies and may ask any questions that you may have about program requirements. Your child will visit their class and may wish to come to see you periodically.

At orientation, the first day that your child will attend will be planned as well as a schedule for attendance. If your child is entering the Head Start Program, the Coordinator will advise you as to the mornings that are available for your child to attend.

Some of our programs have a required gradual entry period for the children. A gradual entry is recommended for children entering any program so that they have time to adjust to the new setting and staff.

First Day

Be prepared to stay with your child to get him/her settled into the group. When you are ready to leave, say good-bye, then go without hesitating. The staff will let you know how your child has managed that day. You are welcome to phone throughout the day to see how your child is doing.

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Day to Day Information

Clothing

Since children spend their day at the centre actively involved, washable play clothes are appropriate. A complete change of clothing must be left at the centre to ensure your child will be comfortable if their clothing becomes soiled. We go outside during all weather conditions, so outdoor wear is necessary. Please try to consider clothing that is easy for your child to dress, undress and toilet themselves. Many buttons and snaps can be challenging for children. Overall straps can sometimes fall into the toilet.

Children will also need to bring a pair of inside shoes/slippers to be worn in the centre, if parents choose these shoes can be left at the centre. Velcro closures are preferred over laces for shoes. *All clothing and shoes should be labeled with the child's name.*

Infants/ Toddlers

It is required that you please bring in a supply of diapers for your child/children so that they are always on hand. You may need to leave a couple of changes of clothes at the centre in the event that your child soaks or soils more than one outfit. Please make sure that children are dressed appropriately for the weather with proper clothing for outdoor play.

Toilet Training

We understand that children develop at different rates. Children who are entering the Head Start Program or 3 to 5 year old daycare who are not yet toilet trained will be assisted with toileting needs by staff, however, it is our preference that children are toilet trained when they start the program. We ask that parents cooperate and work with us in toilet training their child. Generally, we expect that the children come to the centre in underwear and have a supply on hand along with extra clothing. Diapers are awkward for toilet training and make it difficult for children to understand when they are wet or soiled. Underwear are easier to pull up and down when getting to the toilet in a hurry. Children often can be toilet trained quickly when they see other children using the toilet and we really praise them for their efforts. Please let us know if your child will need assistance with toileting.

Meals and Snacks

The centre will provide two snacks and lunch each day for all children who attend. Parents are asked to supply bottles and formula daily for infants that are still on formula. The centre will supply milk and sippy cups for older infants and toddlers.

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We provide a nutritious lunch and snacks for the children. We ask that non-nutritious snacks *not* be brought for your children from home such as pop, chips, donuts, candy, etc. It is not necessary to bring food or drink from home unless your child has very specific dietary needs or restrictions. Please consult with your child's Room Supervisor or Teacher as to what is acceptable to bring if you wish to celebrate your child's birthday at the centre.

Child Schedule Contracts and Absences

Daycare is available on a first come, first served basis by date of application and according to Waiting List Policy. Upon registration, it is required that parents complete a *Child Schedule Contract* with the Room Supervisor. The days that you request in your contract are reserved for your child.

Please contact us if your child is unable to attend, due to illness or any other reason. **Unfortunately, due to fixed daily operating costs, you will be charged for scheduled days even if your child is unable to attend.** You are expected to arrive and depart at the pre-arranged times that you have indicated on your contract. It is important that you indicate accurate times on your contract, as we schedule staff and their hours according to what you have told us. Please ask to change your contract if your pick-up and drop-off times change. We are required to maintain provincially legislated staff/child ratios at all times. If you are going on an extended vacation, you will have to decide if you wish to give up your space while you are away. If you are planning to be away for a long period of time, you may speak to the Manager to discuss if withdrawing your child will likely result in the loss of your space. The centre generally has a waiting list.

We understand that you may occasionally be late due to unforeseen circumstances such as weather. If you are going to be late, please phone us as soon as possible to let us know, or contact a person on your pick-up list to come and get your child.

WAITING LIST POLICY AND PROCEDURES

At times when any of the programs are full, children may be placed on a waiting list.

Snc'c'amala?tn serves the needs of Okanagan Indian Band members and their children first, followed by:

1. Other First Nations with a status number
2. Any other child

Note: For daycare spaces, priority will be given to parents who are working or attending school full time.

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Separate waiting lists are maintained for each program. When spaces become available, they are offered to parents on a first come, first served basis by date of application and according to the above criteria.

Although OKIB Band Members and First Nations children will be given priority upon entry, a non Band Member or child without a status number will *not* be bumped out of the program after having started in the program.

Children who require full time services will be give priority over part-time. If the program is full, part-time children may be given a space if they can be matched with another child to make up one full-time space (for example, Child A attends on Monday, Wednesday and Friday and Child B attends on Tuesday and Thursday).

If current families require a change in their timetable, they will be given first opportunity to revise their schedule as space permits. Requests for full-time families to reduce their days to part-time will only be granted if the remaining can be matched with someone on the waiting list.

Fees must be prepaid at the beginning of the month or a subsidy must be authorized in order to retain a space in the program. If fees are unpaid or late, the child will be dismissed from the program and the space will be offered to the next child on the waiting list.

When a space becomes available, the parent will be contacted. To hold the space, a deposit of two weeks fees must be paid that will be applied to the first month's fees.

If the centre is unable to make contact with the parent after three days, the space will be offered to the next child on the waiting list.

It is the parent's responsibility to keep the centre updated as to any change of address, phone number or any other pertinent information while on the waiting list.

Upon acceptance of a part-time or full-time space, parents must agree that they are responsible for full payment of all days, whether their child attends or not, if they wish to retain the space on a permanent basis.

***Drop-in daycare may be permitted at the discretion of supervising staff, depending on the age and needs of child and availability of space and staffing.**

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Drop-In Daycare

From time to time, spaces may be available for drop-in daycare. Please call with as much advance notice as possible and ask to speak to the Room Supervisor. Drop-in daycare must be paid for in advance or before leaving your child that day. Children must be fully registered with all the required information on file if they are left for drop-in daycare. *We do not recommend leaving babies under six months of age for drop-in daycare.*

Closures

The daycare and Head Start Program are closed for statutory holidays and for a period of time every year between Christmas and New Years. If daycare is needed for these closures, we ask that parents make other arrangements. In addition, the daycare and Head Start Program are closed for the same PD days (six or seven) as the school programs throughout the year. PD days give staff opportunities for professional development so that we can provide quality services to your children.

The Preschool and Kindergarten classes follow the same calendar as School District # 22, and are closed for PD days, spring break and two weeks at Christmas. Statutory holiday closures also apply.

Occasionally the entire centre may close for community funeral services, staff development, OKIB office closures and other unforeseen emergencies such as power outages.

Changes

It is important to let the Manager and Room Supervisor or Kindergarten Teacher know of any major changes in your life which may affect your child. It is also important to notify the centre about a permanent change in drop-off or pick-up arrangements.

Bringing Things From Home

Often children feel comfortable bringing a favourite toy or blanket from home when they begin our program or at other times. There are risks in bringing the child's favourite things to the centre as in this active busy situation, things can be misplaced or broken. If children bring things from home, they may be asked to keep them in their cubby. Generally, you will not need to bring toys or food to the centre. You will be informed of any show and tell activities that may take place in your child's room.

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Our Child Guidance Policy

From time to time, children may have challenging behaviours at home or school. Our Child Guidance Policy is intended to foster desired behaviour rather than focus on less desirable behaviour and is as follows:

RE-DIRECTION

Children are guided into an acceptable activity when they are engaged in an unacceptable activity.

LOGICAL AND NATURAL CONSEQUENCES

Children are made aware of the results of their actions.

LIMIT SETTING

Boundaries are established and stated for particular situations.

MODELLING

Children are shown positive methods of interacting.

CHOICES

Appropriate choices are given and children are encouraged to choose for themselves.

SETTING UP AN APPROPRIATE ENVIRONMENT

The centre is set up very carefully to eliminate many potential problems. If our observations indicate a number of children are using a space or piece of equipment poorly, we will rearrange the area.

POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT

Positive reinforcement and encouragement will be used rather than negative. Some negative behaviour may be ignored with emphasis put on appropriate behaviour.

Prohibited practices are to be reported to the centre Manager and will be reported to child care licensing. Prohibited practices state that the licensee shall ensure that no child enrolled in a facility is, while under the care or supervision of the licensee is:

Subjected to shoving, hitting, shaking, spanking or any other form of corporal punishment,

Subjected to harsh, belittling or degrading treatment, whether verbal, emotional or physical, that would humiliate the child or undermine the child's self respect,

As a form of punishment, confined, physically restrained or kept, without adult supervision, apart from other children, and

As a form of punishment, deprived of meals, snacks, rest or necessary use of a toilet.

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The licensee shall also ensure that no child enrolled in a facility is, while under the care or supervision of the licensee, subjected to emotional, physical or sexual abuse or to physical or emotional neglect.

How Parents Are Involved

You may be periodically invited into the centre to discuss your child's progress, needs or concerns. For Kindergarten children, report cards come out three times in December, March and June. Parent/teacher interviews will be arranged at this time.

There are specific requirements for parent involvement for those who have children attending the Head Start Program.

Drop-in visits are welcome if you are able to fit them into your work schedule. The centre has an open door policy for parents.

From time to time, we may ask for your help in some of the following ways:

- ☺ Joining us for a trip
- ☺ Assisting with a special event

The centre holds get togethers and family events for special occasions throughout the year. We will notify you of these events and welcome you to attend. Graduation ceremonies are held in June for some programs.

PARENT ACCESS TO CHILDREN AND CUSTODY

The centre cannot deny a parent access to their child unless a custody or court order is in place. Copies of any legal documents limiting or denying a non-custodial parent access must be kept in the child's file at the centre. Otherwise, both the mother and father will be permitted to pick up their child and sign consent forms.

Visiting rights of non-custodial parents may *not* be exercised at the centre.

Other Important Things You May Want to Know

Daily Communication

If you are on a tight schedule or a staff member is unavailable to discuss something with you at the pick-up or drop-off time you may call the centre and tell us. Generally, issues concerning children must be discussed away from the children. If you feel a brief meeting would be helpful, please arrange a time with the Room Supervisor or the Manager.

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Where to Find On-going Information

The parent bulletin board is available to help keep you informed and special information will be posted in the front lobby. The Okanagan Indian Band monthly newspaper, the Senk'l'ip News, contains information for you to read from the centre.

Check your child's cubby daily for notices and information. If your child uses the van or school bus, please check their bag/backpacks daily. *It is important that you read all notices sent home.*

When Children Have Difficulty

Most children adjust well to a carefully planned group experience, however, there are times when the group experience is not appropriate. This may be due to a number of possibilities such as the child may be too young, there may be family difficulties that are unsettling for the child or the child may not be ready. The centre staff make observations on all children. If a child is not adjusting well, these observations will be discussed with parents and strategies will be planned to help the child. If the child is not responding, parents will be informed and other options will be decided upon. The centre has the right to request that families leave if issues are not resolved.

Child Abuse

As a licensed childcare facility, personnel at the centre will follow provincial child abuse reporting procedures. Physical punishment is prohibited at the centre.

Non-Discrimination

The Snc'c'amala?tn Early Childhood Education Centre accepts all children age 3 months to 10 years, regardless of race, religion, colour, national origin, sex or family marital status.

Funding arrangements for some programs may require that children have an INAC Certificate of Indian Status number and on-reserve address on file for registration and eligibility.

Children with special needs must be screened prior to entry to ensure the centre can meet their needs. Such children will be accepted on a trial basis with a review by staff and parents to determine on-going attendance.

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Health Care

SICK CHILDREN

If a child attending the Centre begins displaying any of the symptoms listed as “Symptoms of ill Health”, he/or she will be isolated from the other children and the parent/or emergency contact will be called by the Teacher. Sick children must be picked up as soon as possible.

Please phone us if your child is ill and will not be attending daycare or school. We ask that you explain the symptoms or illness to the staff person taking the message in order to assist us in monitoring the health of the other children.

Symptoms of ill Health

If a child’s illness or behaviour prevents them from participating or being comfortable in normal program activities; or if staff cannot provide the care required, children will be considered too ill to attend the day care.

Parents are required to keep their child home if they display any of the following symptoms:

- Fever (38 degrees or higher, especially if temperature is higher or persistent)
- Diarrhea/vomiting (2 or 3 times in 3 to 4 hours)
- Communicable disease (other than mild upper respiratory tract infection)
- Very congested cough or cold
- Red or runny eyes or ears
- Lethargy, irritability; drowsy with other symptoms and/or persistent pain
- Cough (frequent bouts - 3 to 5 times/ hour, especially if choking or vomiting)
- Breathing difficulty - breathing faster than 40 breaths per minute
- A suspicious rash or weeping sores

Children can attend with mild symptoms such as a runny nose or slight cough as long as they appear to be comfortable and their behaviour allows them to participate in the day-to-day activities.

A receiving staff member, who notices any of these symptoms when a child arrives, will ask that the child be taken home or to a doctor for a note confirming that the child is healthy and not infectious.

The centre keeps the Okanagan Indian Band Health Department informed of any contagious illnesses or possible outbreaks. The centre may consult the Health Department for advice regarding child illnesses or health concerns.

Allergies

If your child has allergies of any kind, please advise the program staff. All allergies must be documented on the appropriate registration form.

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Head Lice

Head lice are prevalent at certain times of the year partly due to the nature of young children's play and their close physical contact with each other. Head lice do not carry disease and are not caused by uncleanliness or poor personal hygiene. However, they are a nuisance and should be treated immediately to prevent spreading them to other children and their families.

Parents are responsible to check their child's hair regularly and apply treatment for any cases of head lice. Children will be permitted to return to the centre once treatment has taken place and *all nits or lice are removed*. They will also need a signed form from the OKIB Health Department to ensure that proper and thorough treatment has occurred. Notices will be sent home to all children in the room if there are cases of head lice. The centre and OKIB Health Department have more information available upon request.

MEDICATION

Administration

Only prescribed medication will be administered at the centre. Room Supervisors are placed in charge of all drugs and medication. All medication is dealt with by that person or a person designated by that person. Medication is administered only if parents have given WRITTEN authorization with a WRITTEN schedule of times and dosages that the medication/drug is to be administered. (Medication Form)

Drugs must be in their original pharmacy container, clearly labeled with:

- Name of Child
- Name of drug
- Dosage of medication
- Date of purchase
- Instructions for storage and administration

The staff administering medication initials a medication form as it is administered.

All medication no longer needed is to be taken home.

***Medication should be administered at home whenever possible!**

Storage

Medication and drugs will be stored in a locked medicine container: medication requiring refrigeration will be kept in a locked container in the refrigerator.

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Discretion of the Manager

The centre, at the discretion of the Manager, may refuse to administer medications or procedures (e.g. insulin or other injections, oxygen, suppositories) for which the staff does not have the expertise or confidence to administer. The OKIB Health Department may be consulted for an opinion.

Rest Time

A part of our health program for the children is a rest time for children who attend daycare. Younger babies are allowed to sleep according to their personal schedule, and older children have a set naptime in the afternoon.

The parent handbook has been designed to answer many of the questions parents have both as their child begins care and as an ongoing reference. If you require additional information, we will be pleased to provide it.

For further information please feel free to contact the Manager of Snc'c'amala?tn, the Okanagan Indian Band Early Childhood Education Centre.

(250) 545-3800

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ENROLLMENT AGREEMENT

REGISTRATION

Children must be fully registered prior to starting any programs. All registration forms must be complete with emergency contacts and phone numbers, pick-up persons, immunization records, proof of age, status number (when applicable), BC Care Card personal health number and all other required information.

Before a new child starts in any program, a parent must meet with the Manager, or designate, to review program policies and so that we can learn more about your child. The Room Supervisor or Teacher must also have had an opportunity to meet you and your child.

You will be advised if the program that you are registering for is full at the time and placed on a waiting list. Infant/Toddler Daycare, 3-5 Year Old Daycare, Head Start and Preschool program numbers are limited by licensing. The Kindergarten class is capped at 20 students with no Teaching Assistant and 22 if a Teaching Assistant is funded.

UPDATE OF RECORDS

We rely on parents to keep us informed of:

- current address and telephone numbers
- authorized parties for pick-up
- emergency contacts
- any changes to custody or child access

WITHDRAWAL

Please provide us with one month's written notice prior to withdrawing your child from any program.

LATE PICK-UP

Parents will be given a fifteen-minute grace period past their scheduled pick-up time. We understand that you may occasionally be late due to unforeseen circumstances such as weather. If you are going to be late, please phone us as soon as possible to let us know, or contact a person on your pick-up list to come and get your child. It is imperative that you have alternate pick-up persons, such as family, friends or neighbours, available to pick your child up from daycare.

Please adjust your drop-off and pick-up times with the Room Supervisor if they change. **Recurring lateness will be reported to the centre Manager and you will be asked to come in for a meeting to address the problem.** Disregard for the hours of care may result in loss of service.

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In the event of a child not being picked up by closing time and we have not been notified, we call the parent telephone numbers provided. If the parents cannot be located, we will contact the emergency contact numbers provided. If parents or emergency contacts do not respond within a reasonable period of time, the centre Manager will request that the *Okanagan Indian Band Social Development Department* assist or the *Ministry for Children and Family Services* for non-band members.

EMERGENCIES

In the event of an emergency that does not cause damage to the centre, it will remain open until parents arrive to pick up their children.

If the centre is damaged, **children will be evacuated to:**

The **Public Works Department** located just south of the centre on Westside Road.

If there is a neighborhood evacuation, **the children will be evacuated to:**

The **Head of the Lake Hall** located on Head of the Lake Road.

PARKING

Please use the designated parking area to park your vehicle while dropping off your child (ren). Drop-off is permitted at the front door of the centre. If you will be at the centre for more than ten minutes you are to park in the parking lot. Please respect that the school bus and Head Start van need to safely utilize the drop off area at 9:00 am, noon and 2:00 pm.

CLOTHING

Each child requires a complete change of clothing to be left at the centre. Infants may need more than one. Children need to have a pair of indoor shoes, preferably without laces.

SMOKING

The centre and playgrounds are designated non-smoking areas.

ABSENTEEISM

In the events of a child being absent due to an illness or otherwise, I understand that I am still responsible for full payment.

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FEES

- Fees are to be paid in advance for the month.
- Cheques should be made out to OKIB.
- Cash is accepted for payment of fees. As we do not keep cash on the premises, we request that you have the proper change.
- A series of post-dated cheques are acceptable.
- Payment can be made at the centre or Band Office. The Band Office has *Interac* Direct Payment available.
- For OKIB employees, payroll deductions can be arranged.
- Drop-in daycare must be paid for in advance or before leaving your child that day.
- If you are applying for a provincial child care subsidy and wish to start daycare or preschool before we receive approval of the subsidy, you may only do so if you pay in advance. You will be reimbursed for any amounts covered by subsidy once we receive written authorization from the province.
- The Manager must authorize any other arrangements for payment of daycare or school fees.
- Services will be discontinued when fees are unpaid. Unfortunately, a space may not be immediately available for your child/children once arrears are paid.

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ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Program hours are as follows:

Infant/Toddler Daycare	7:30 am – 5:30 pm
3 – 5 year old Daycare	7:30 am – 5:30 pm
Head Start	9:00 am – noon
Preschool	9:00 am – noon
Kindergarten	9:00 am – 2:00 pm

Children may not be dropped off early and are to be picked up promptly. If you arrive before the program start time, you are expected to remain with your child. Children who arrive more than fifteen minutes early for Head Start, Preschool or Kindergarten or are picked up more than fifteen minutes after the programs end will be sent to daycare and charged the half-day fee.

All children need to be brought inside the centre. **Please make sure that a Teacher sees that you are dropping off your child so that they are not left unattended after you leave.** If they are attending daycare or the Head Start Program, they must be signed in and out of the room by their parent or authorized designate. Sign-in sheets are located near the room entrances.

When dropping off your child, please make take the time to help them remove and hang outdoor clothing. Infants are to be removed from car seats and left in the care of a staff person. Car seats are to be placed in the designated area or taken back to your vehicle.

If another person is authorized to pick up your child, they may be asked for photo identification for security reasons.

Children will not be released to individuals who appear to be intoxicated.

SCHOOL BUS AND HEAD START VAN

School bus guidelines are available for Preschool and Kindergarten children who take the bus.

For those children who ride the van or bus, be sure to notify us if your child will not be using our transportation for arrival or departure that day.

From time to time, in unforeseen circumstances, the school bus or van may not be available due to breakdowns or the Driver illness. You will be phoned to arrange other transportation for your child on these occasions. We apologize for this inconvenience.

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SNC'C'AMALA?TN

Okanagan Indian Band Early Childhood Education Centre Parent Handbook and Enrollment Agreement

I hereby understand and do agree to abide to the Enrollment Agreement and the Parent Handbook.

Parent or Guardian's Signature

Date

Please return this page to Snc'c'amala?tn as soon as possible. We are sincerely interested in working with you to best meet the needs of your child. If you have questions concerning any of the policies or contents of the Parent Handbook, please contact:

Lorraine Ladan, Manager
545-3800

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