



School Age Programs

This handbook outlines the guidelines and policies for our School Age programs. You will find everything you need to know about our operations, daily routines, policies, and procedures, contact information and need-to-know basics for our facility.

Our cupboards are full of games, books, craft supplies and more so that imaginations can run wild with fun, play, friends, and organized activities throughout each day! The children will also spend lots of time playing in the gym and outdoors when weather permits. Please review our handbook if you have any questions or concerns about our program, educators, schedule, or operations.

CENTRE PHONE: 902-658-2560/902-388-6250
CENTRE HOURS: School Dismissal - 5:30, PD days, Summer and March break camps
CENTRE DIRECTOR: Neal Viger
CENTRE EMAIL: schoolage@merrypopins-pe.ca
AREA MANAGER & CONTACT: Jolene Howatt – 902-658-2560



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WELCOME TO MERRY POP-INS

Dear Parents & Guardians, Welcome to our Family!

Our goal at MERRY POP-INS is to ensure that each child feels comfortable and secure while they embark on their school age program journey. Some children will be coming to us for the very first time, others will be regulars who attend each year. We ensure that every single child feels welcomed and supported no matter where they come from, what their interests are or their age. We are excited to support your children in their learning, play and growth as we care for them during after school hours, on PD days and during summer camp.

Merry Pop-Ins Childcare Centre is an incorporated business licensed by the Prince Edward Island Child Care Facilities Board in the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development: License #L4495 at Englewood. Our centre is registered as an approved Early Years Centre under the Provincial Early Learning Initiative, through the Government of PEI.

Each year, MERRY POP-INS reviews and revises the guidelines and policies outlined in this handbook to ensure our childcare standards continue to meet or exceed the requirements set up by our licensing bodies. Should our policies change, we will provide you with reasonable notice of modifications that will impact you and your child.

Our team at MERRY POP-INS endeavors to achieve the highest quality care for your child. Please feel free to contact your Centre Director on any matter regarding your child or the Centre. If you would like further information about us, please do not hesitate to contact us at 902-388-6250/658-2560 or schoolage@merrypopins-pe.ca

We look forward to sharing your child's early years with you and your family.

Sincerely,

Helen Green and Neal Viger
Owners
MERRY POP-INS.

Introduction

Mission Statement

“Children learn through play!”

This is the statement that defines us. It is what we believe and why we do what we do. It is the foundation of what we build our curriculum on. You will see it on this handbook, all the material we send home, and on a plaque at the entrance to the centre. It took two years, many meetings, and several incarnations to get it down to these four simple words.

Our learning environment is play-based, which supports our children in discovering new concepts, uncover hidden mysteries and imagine new possibilities, all while allowing them to learn at their own pace.

We understand the impact quality education can have on young children and are strongly committed to fulfilling a high level of excellence within our Centres. The core of that excellence begins with our educators who are trained and qualified to provide a superior level of instruction and teaching. It requires our staff members to interact in positive, meaningful ways with your children and provides countless methods and opportunities to do so.

Purpose

The School Age Programs are designed to meet the developmental needs of school age children. We provide experiences that enrich and enhance each child’s cognitive, language, social, emotional, physical, and creative development. Within the program each child has the opportunity to create, explore the environment, learn problem solving and personal interaction skills, and learn new concepts through first-hand experiences. Children develop a positive self-concept through a balance of self-and teacher facilitated activities. Opportunities for solitary play as well as group activities are provided. Staff members serve as positive role models and provide care that is supportive, nurturing, warm and responsive to each child’s individual needs.

Philosophy

The philosophy of the program is to provide a warm, supportive, and safe environment for those children needing care after the school day, during school PD days and breaks, and summer camp as well as for families looking for socialization opportunities for their children. The staff creates a stimulating environment that includes a variety of learning experiences both indoors and outdoors to enhance your child’s social, emotional, physical, and intellectual development.

Operating Hours

The School Age Program operates Monday through Friday with the following hours:

- After School: School Dismissal (2:45 p.m.) until 5:30 p.m.
- Summer Camp, March Break and PD Days: 7:30 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. at **Englewood**.

Holidays

The Centre is open year-round with the exception of the following holidays:

Statutory Holidays	Non-Statutory Holidays
1. New Year's Day	1. Easter Monday
2. Islander Day	2. Victory Day
3. Good Friday	3. Thanksgiving
4. Canada Day	4. Boxing Day
5. Labour Day	5. Civic holiday in August (Gold Cup) we are open
6. Truth and Reconciliation Day	
7. Remembrance Day	
8. Christmas Day	

Important to note: Although the children will not be in attendance, regular fees must be paid for these days.

Christmas Closure*

The program will be **closed each year over the Christmas Holidays from 1:00pm December 24th** until we **re-open on the first weekday after January 1st**. You will be charged for the statutory holidays of Christmas Day and New Year's Day, but not for the additional days that the centre will not be open.

Closures for Professional Development Days

The school-age program will operate on PD days from Englewood School.

Storm Closure Policy

The after-school program will not run if school is cancelled or dismissed early.

Registration and Withdrawal

Parents will be required to complete a registration form, and a non-refundable registration fee of \$35.00 per child or \$45.00 per family to be paid on registration day. *Children will need to be re-registered each year in order to maintain their spot.* No spot is guaranteed until the form is completed, and the fee is paid. Upon registration, the first two weeks of fees are also due to hold your child's spot.

If your child is being covered by the Childcare subsidy program, the registration fee is not included and is to be paid by the parent(s)/guardian(s). As well, any parent shares stated by the Childcare subsidy office and fee differences are to be paid by the parent(s)/guardian(s).

Cancellation of Space

One months' notice of cancellation of a reserved space is required in order to receive a refund of any payments made to hold space. **The registration fee is non-refundable and excluded from this policy.** Failure to give one months' notice will result in ineligibility for a refund.

Cancelling or Changing March Break & Summer Camp Weeks

All Break programs and Summer Camp require a non-refundable \$5.00 per day deposit to be paid before the program begins. This will be collected with the regular Pre-Authorized Debit. All program weeks begin on Monday and run until Friday unless there are statutory holidays. Parents must give at least two weeks' notice to cancel or change a week. For example, if you wish to cancel or change a week you must do so on the Monday (or earlier) two weeks before.

We must maintain strict Staff: Child ratios as legislated by the provincial government therefore, we must plan staff work shifts several weeks ahead of time. If proper notice is not given, we cannot refund your fees for that week.

Reporting Absences

If your child is going to be absent on a day that they are registered for, we ask that you make every effort possible to let the staff know. You can do this by email at schoolage@merrypopins-pe.ca or by phone call or text at (902) 388-6250. All messages will be checked after 2:30pm during the school year and at 7:30am during March break, summer camp and PD days. This prevents confusion at the end of the day and ensures that no child accidentally goes home on the bus to an empty house. We appreciate your cooperation in this area.

Programs Available

All programs are offered according to the age/grade range of your child. Please see below our classifications of age groups and their specific daily requirements.

School-Age: 5 – 12 years old

- A. After school
- B. Professional Development days – At Englewood school
- C. March Break Camp- At Englewood school
- D. Summer Camp- At Englewood school

Please note:

- Parents provide snack for after school; *please have your child's snack prepared and packed before they arrive at school in the morning.*
- Parents provide 2 snacks and a lunch for all full day programs (March Break, PD Day, etc.)

Payment of Services Rendered

The following terms outline Merry Pop-In's Childcare Centre School Age guidelines and policies in relation to service fees and payments:

- Fees are payable a minimum of **two weeks** in advance of the service being provided.
- Payment is required by **pre-authorized debits**. All parents will be required to fill out a pre-authorized payment form prior to acceptance to our program.
- Payment is required for regularly scheduled days that a child misses.
- Payment is also required for holidays, storm closures, and professional development days (if your child attends).
 - *Please contact us if you may need adjustment or considerations for other payment methods.*

We are unable to reduce the cost of tuition for the days your child is absent. Due to the child/staff ratio which must be adhered to, we must have staff present for each day your child is registered. Payments will be debited bi-weekly for a two-week period of childcare. You will be provided a schedule of the dates of withdrawal upon registration and in January of each year after that.

NSF Charges:

A \$20.00 fee will be charged on any pre-authorized payments returned NSF.

Receipts:

Yearly receipts will be given for income tax purposes by the end of February, and it is the responsibility of the parent to retain all receipts.

Late Payment:

A seven (7) day grace period shall be allowed, following which the account shall be considered delinquent and the centre has the right to terminate care without notice if immediate arrangements are not made. At this point Merry Pop-Ins will use whatever means necessary and allowable by law to collect the outstanding fees. Should the collection of fees proceed to Small Claims Court, the parents will be responsible for all legal and collection fees as per the Agreement for Child Care Contract.

Daily Fees

Daily fees are still applied for closures and holidays.

Full time: (5 days per week): **\$15.00**

- After School Only (school dismissal time - 5:30 p.m.)

Part Time: (2-4 days per week): **\$16.00**

- After School Only (school dismissal time - 5:30 p.m.)

PD days: **\$35.00**

Summer Camp and March Break Fees: **\$35.00**

- Full time (5 days)

Parent Visitations

The program has an Open-Door Policy, which means that parents are welcome to visit or contact the staff with questions and concerns at any time.

Picking up Children

No child will be released to anyone who is not specified on the child's registration form unless we have notice in person or by telephone in advance of the pickup. This is a security measure for all involved.

Please remember to sign your child out when you pick them up.

Custody or Restraining Orders

In the event of custody issues or restraining orders the centre must have a copy of the appropriate pages of the official document in your child's file. When legal custody or restraints are not officially in place, or the centre does not have a copy of the documentation, the centre will adhere to the regular release protocol of the child – to persons on the registration form only, unless authorization has been given.

Late Pick-up

The program closes at 5:30 p.m. (5:00 p.m. for full days and camp days). A late fee of \$ 1.00 per minute will be charged for late pick-up. Please respect the staff's personal time as they are not paid after 5:30. The late fee will be automatically added to your next month invoice by the Sandbox system and will be paid to the staff member.

Field Trips

Throughout the summer trips are made to special places of interest. Parents will be asked to sign and return a permission slip giving authorization for their child to participate. Parents are always welcome to accompany us. If for any reason you do not wish your child to participate in one of our field trips, you will need to make other care arrangements for the time we will be absent from the school. All field trips will be age appropriate, well planned, and supervised. Transportation will be by private vehicles.

Child Guidance Policy

Our goal in guiding children's behaviour is to help each child to develop self-discipline, self-control, and self-confidence, in a loving caring way, while remaining within a socially acceptable framework.

Our staff and children will work together to create a warm, happy, and relaxed child-oriented environment with only necessary restrictions and guidelines.

Rules and expectations will reflect the belief to "be kind to yourself, be kind to others, and be kind to the environment". They are appropriate for the children's development level, clearly set out in advance, and reinforced in a positive, sensitive way.

The children will be given the opportunity to take responsibility, make decisions, solve their own conflicts, and within reasonable limits to experience the natural consequences of their own actions.

Guidance Procedures

- **Role Modelling**: Demonstration of appropriate ways of interacting (i.e.: use of manners, etc.)
- **Positive Reinforcement**: Showing genuine approval when children are engaged in an appropriate activity.
- **Re-direction**: Guiding a child into acceptable options when engaged in an unacceptable activity.
- **Natural and Logical Consequences**: Attempting to make the child aware of the results of his/her own actions.
- **Limit Setting**: Boundaries are developed by the teacher for the children as a group and for the individual children according to each situation.
- **Offering Choices**: Appropriate choices are outlined and children are encouraged to make decisions for themselves.
- **Anticipating Trouble**: Planning and preparing the environment.
- **Ignoring**: Some inappropriate behaviour can be ignored with emphasis given to appropriate behaviour.
- **Problem Solving**: Discussion between staff and children of options to solve conflicts.

***If an inappropriate behaviour continues after use of the above methods, the child will be removed from the group to sit out for a period of time. When the child is ready to discuss his or her actions, the problem will be solved in a positive manner. The amount of time spent on the chair will be based upon 1 minute per year of age, or when the child is prepared to talk, whichever comes first.

***If a situation arises where a child is consistently acting out against him/herself, peers, or staff, it may become necessary to dismiss the child from the program. Every attempt will be made to work with the parent(s) / guardian(s) and the child to correct this behaviour before such action is taken. The safety of all the children is our main priority and necessary steps will be taken to ensure that every child is safe at all times.

Health Care

Immunizations and Illness

Although the program tries to be as accommodating as possible, children with obvious symptoms of illness should be kept at home and be seen by a doctor before returning to the program. This is especially the case throughout the on-going COVID-19 situation. It is important that your child stays home when feeling ill with any of the symptoms listed below:

Children experiencing the following symptoms should be kept at home, and in the event a child develops any of these symptoms throughout the day they will be returned home.

- A fever over 101 °F (38.3 °C)
- Severe cough
- Diarrhea, vomiting or upset stomach.
- Unusual or unexplained loss of appetite
- Fatigue or headache.
- Any unexplained discharge or drainage from the eyes, ears, nose, or open sores

Medications and Prescriptions

Children on medications will need to stay home for 24 hours after the first dosage of medicine in order to allow the medications to take effect. **Example:** *If the child visits the doctor on Monday afternoon and receives a prescription, then the child must remain home until Wednesday.*

When a child is on a medication that only needs to be administered at home, the Centre needs to be notified in writing what the medication is and when it is being administered in order for staff to watch for side effects and allergic reactions.

Prescription and non-prescription drugs may be administered by staff only when:

1. Written authorization is given, including dosage and time drug is to be given. Written authorization must be given BEFORE the medication can be administered. **Exception: Tylenol, Ibuprofen, etc. If your child becomes ill during their present hours at MPI, a parent can give verbal permission over the phone for the staff to give their child medication. A form will have to be signed at pick-up**.
2. The medication is in the original pharmacy container, clearly labelled with the child's name, the name of the drug, the dosage, and the instructions for the storage and administration of the drug.

Over the counter drugs: only the dosage written on the bottle can be administered to the child for his or her age bracket. If you are told by a physician to administer a higher dosage to your child, the Centre will need to have a written note from the physician in order to do so. **Example:** *when an over-the-counter drug's label reads under two years of age only as recommended by a physician.*

Parents are also asked to make sure all medications are given directly to a staff member and not to be left in the child's reach, which includes their lockers and kit bags.

Sunscreen

We will apply sunscreen after school when needed. During the summer please sunscreen your child at home before arriving. We will reapply after lunch and as needed. If your child needs special sunscreen due to allergies, you must provide a labelled bottle to the Centre.

Clothing

Children should wear appropriate, comfortable play clothes so that they may participate in all aspects of the program. Each child will also require having one pair of sneakers to be left at the school at all times for indoor use, and a second set to be worn outdoors.

Children should wear clothing suitable for current weather conditions since the program includes outdoor activities all year round. Accordingly, there should be a sun hat, shorts, sneakers, raincoat and splash pants among the child's belongings all summer, and a snowsuit, mittens, hat and boots in the winter. When children do not have the proper supplies at the school, parents will receive a call at work to bring them in.

All clothing and footwear should be labelled with the child's full name. All unlabelled clothes will be deposited in the lost and found box. Parents should make a point of checking the box regularly. Any personal items brought to the school should also be labelled with your child's name.

Personal Electronic Devices

Personal electronic devices such as iPods, tablets, game boys, Nintendo DS, etc. can be brought to the school age program. Children will be allowed to use their devices for 30 minutes a day at a time approved by the school age supervisor. The games/videos they are watching must be age appropriate for all children attending the program. If a child is found to be watching or playing something inappropriate, they will be asked to turn it off and put the device away for the rest of the day and parents will be notified. If a child is found to not be respecting the rules or time limit set, they will be asked to not bring any personal electronic devices to the program.

Special Activities:

Every day after school the children can sit and take time for an after-school snack (please remember to send a special snack for after-school and let your child know what it is so they know to save it). After snack time, we jump right into “free play.”

On March Break, PD, & Summer Camp Days there is always a unique theme, and the activities for the day are related to the theme. On these days, children will need 2 snacks and a lunch as they are full day events.

Staff Roles and Titles

The following outlines our staff structure and titles to help you get familiar with who will be organizing our after-school facility.

A. Centre Director

This is a senior level management position within an Early Childhood Centre. The incumbent will be required to: be a graduate of a recognized University or College Early Childhood (or related) program; be a certified Early Childhood Educator with at least three – five years of experience working within a licensed Centre; have demonstrated experience in program management, human resources management, budgetary planning, and fiscal management, and be comfortable and skilled in external communication, program promotion and advocacy.

B. Centre Assistant Director

This is a senior level position within an Early Childhood Centre. The incumbent will assist the Centre Director in the day-to-day operation of the Centre. The incumbent will be required to be a graduate of a recognized University or College Early Childhood (or related) program; be a certified Early Childhood Educator with at least one – three years of experience working within a licensed Centre; and have demonstrated experience and skills in program and staff supervision.

C. Early Childhood Educator

This is a front-line teaching/childcare position within an Early Childhood Centre. The incumbent will be required to be a graduate of a recognized University or College Early Childhood (or related) program; and be a certified Early Childhood Educator.

D. School Age Educator

This is a front-line teaching/childcare position for school age children in grades K to 6. They must have at least one 30 hour college or university course in humanities such as sociology or psychology.

E. Early Childhood Educator Assistant

The Assistant assists ECE's plans and organizes activities for infants and pre-school children. Their role is to support other staff with assigned activities, provide support to children, and assist in maintaining a clean and safe environment for the children.

F. Special Needs Assistant (Inclusion Support Assistant)

The Special Needs Assistant (inclusion support assistant) supports the early learning planning and programming with an emphasis on helping children with complex needs. The purpose of this position is to establish an inclusive early learning environment that stimulates the emotional, social, physical, cognitive, communication, and creative growth of children with specified individualized needs.

Contacting Staff for Babysitting Services

If you would like to inquire about a staff member babysitting your child, **we encourage you to contact the Centre's Director through phone or email.** We are in full support of our staff assisting you outside of work hours for babysitting activities. However, it is important that we have up-to-date records on who has been contacted and for what purpose.

This policy is important to maintain the security and safety for our staff members as they, as well as you and your child, are our top priority. Please refrain from approaching a staff member directly to inquire about their personal information (such as cell phone number or email). We appreciate and recognize that this is a positive and encouraging act to show our staff get along greatly with your children. However, their safety will be a priority to maintain throughout operations at all times.

When contacting the Director, please reference the staff member you would like to contact so that they can review and confirm with this staff member that they are comfortable with and aware of the inquiry.

MERRY POP-INS CHILDCARE CENTRE INC.

Agreement For Child Care Contract

I, _____, HEREBY ACKNOWLEDGE THAT I HAVE READ THE PARENT HANDBOOK FOR **MERRY POP-INS CHILDCARE CENTRE** AND UNDERSTAND AND AGREE TO ABIDE BY THE POLICIES AS STATED IN THE HANDBOOK. I ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT FAILURE TO DO SO MAY RESULT IN TERMINATION OF CARE.

I ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT ANY LEGAL FEES INCURRED BY MERRY POP-INS CHILDCARE CENTRE INC. ASSOCIATED WITH THE ACQUISITION OF UNPAID FEES WILL BE MY RESPONSIBILITY.

Signed (on behalf of all parents and/or guardians as listed on the Centre Registration Form:

Date

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Date

Signature of Director

THIS AGREEMENT IS TO BE REMOVED FROM THE SCHOOL AGE PARENT HANDBOOK AND RETURNED TO THE DIRECTOR WHEN THE CHILD HAS BEEN ADMITTED TO THE PROGRAM AND THE AGREEMENT HAS BEEN SIGNED, DATED AND WITNESSED

THIS AGREEMENT WILL BE KEPT IN THE CHILD'S FILE AT ALL TIMES



Important Documents and Forms

EMERGENCY MEDICAL ATTENTION FORM

I, _____, give permission to the staff of Merry Pop-Ins Childcare Centre to give, if required, first aid treatment to my child, _____. The staff also has my permission to send or transport my child to the hospital at my expense if the situation requires it. I hereby give permission to the supervisor or designated staff person to act on my behalf in obtaining and/or authorizing medical treatment for my child if they are not able to reach me. I understand that any treatment would be on the advice of a qualified medical doctor and that I will be notified as soon as possible.

Date

Signature of Parent or Guardian



CONSENT FOR PICTURE TAKING FORM

I, _____, hereby give permission to the staff of Merry Pop-Ins Childcare Centre Inc. to take pictures or videos of my child, _____ to be displayed within the Centre, or by other media sources, and to retain for historic purposes. Photographs will be shared with all parents in your child's group in weekly power point presentations.

Date

Signature of Parent or Guardian

CONSENT FOR ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION FORM

I, _____, hereby give permission for staff at Merry Pop-ins Childcare Centre to administer medication that is prescribed or recommended in writing by a physician to my child _____. I have also explained to a staff member how to administer the medication and the appropriate dose of the medication. I have also provided the centre with the written instructions on how to administer the medication, the correct dosage and information regarding signs of an allergic reaction.

Date

Signature of Parent or Guardian



TRANSPORTATION AUTHORIZATION FORM

I, _____, hereby give permission to the staff of Merry Pop-Ins Childcare Centre Inc. to take my child, _____, on an outing off the premises either by foot or any other means of transportation (car, bus etc.).

I will not hold the Centre or the employees liable for any accident that may occur to my child while in the Centre or off the premises on an outing.

Date

Signature of Parent or Guardian

ALLERGY INFORMATION FORM

If your child had any identified allergies, please specify these below, along with the allergy's severity, any signs of a reaction and any medication or response that should occur following exposure to the allergen. You may be required to provide more detailed information for your child's file so that the staff are properly informed and prepared to manage your child's allergies.

Allergen	Severity	Signs of a reaction	Medication or response required