

PARENT HANDBOOK

Dear Parents,

Welcome! This Parent Handbook will give you a complete outline of daycare operations for Munchkins.

Philosophy:

Munchkins aims to provide a secure and safe learning environment that encourages self expression (care for self) and group responsibility (care for others). It offers an arena for your children to discover and express their personal potential through exploration and experimentation. It is important to us that you feel good about bringing your children to a safe and nourishing environment. It is our privilege to assure you that every child experiences these basic rights.

Program:

Our programs vary to fit the needs of you and your child. We provide high quality full or part-time childcare for children aged 1 year through 6 years. Breakfast, lunch, morning and evening snacks are prepared in accordance with health food guidelines and are served to the children "family style". Activities are scheduled but we often allow time for child initiated activities to encourage curiosity and wonderment of life.

Curriculum:

Our activities are posted on the Weekly Activity Sheet in the arrival area. They provide a good balanced of group and free play, and consist of learning activities that will help your child develop his/her emotional, physical, intellectual and social skills.

Hours of Care:

8:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday to Friday except declared holidays. (listed below)

Holidays (2013)

MakarSankranti	January 14
Good Friday	March 29
Ugadi	April 11
Munchkins Day	August 1
Independence Day	August 15
Varamahalakshmi	August 16
GaneshaChaturthi	September 9
Gandhi Jayanti	October 2
MahalayaAmavasya	October 4
VijayaDashami	October 14
Karnataka Rajyotsava	November 1
KanakadasaJayanthi	November 20

Munchkins will remain closed between 25th December and 1st January every year.

Admission and Enrolment Procedures:

Interview Procedures: We accept families into care only after conducting a complete interview. We wish to ensure that both parties feel comfortable and confident that the arrangements will work.

Registration Package: All parents MUST complete and sign the following forms found in their Registration Package BEFORE a child will be admitted into care:

- Registration Form
- Emergency Medical Emergency Information Form
- Permission Slips
- Child Development Form
- Child Care Contract

Fees:

	Full Day	Half Day
Day Care: (1-6 yrs)	Rs.5000/- per month	Rs.3000/- per month
Advance Fee:	Parents are required to pay a deposit of 2 months fees in advance at the time their child is accepted into care (refundable).	
Registration:	Parents are required to pay a one-time registration amount of Rs.5000/- (non-refundable)	
Termination of Care:	Parents are required to provide one month notice for termination of care. Failure to do so will result in withholding the advance fee.	
Fee Changes:	Parents will receive one month notice of any upcoming fee changes.	

Contract For Services:

Parents MUST sign the Agreement for Child Care before their child will be accepted into care.

Trial Period:

To ensure everyone is happy with the child care arrangements provided for your child, a two-week trial period exists prior to the finalization of care. At the end of the two week trial period the parents and the caregiver will have a discussion meeting at which time either party may terminate the care without notice.

Arrival & Departure:

Parents or a Guardian must accompany their child upon arrival and sign his/her child into care using the Sign-In Form located in the arrival area. Picture identity and other proof of identification must be available for reference on all days.

Parents with infants are required to fill in or have prepared their Infant Daily Information Form so that appropriate care is provided according to the child's needs for the day.

Parents of toddlers and preschoolers can use their Family Envelope to leave notes if they do not have time to discuss their child's well-being. Pens and paper will be available in the arrival area.

Parents are required to sign their child out upon departure from the daycare.

Releasing Your Child:

Your child will only be released from care to those persons listed on your Registration Form. If someone other than the designated persons is picking up your child, we must receive advanced notice or your child WILL NOT be released. Notification will consist of the person's full name, address, telephone number, relationship to the child and other pertinent information that will help us identify the person. Once we have been notified that another designated person will be picking up your child, we will require picture ID and other proof of identification from that person BEFORE releasing your child. This is a security measure for all involved.

Parents will be notified immediately if someone not on the list comes to pick up their child. Please take the time to talk with us about any custody issues relating to your child.

Please Note: We will not release a child to a parent or Guardian who comes to the daycare clearly under the influence of alcohol, unless there is a designated driver. That driver must accompany the parent to the door so that we can ensure the child's safety prior to releasing him/her.

Likewise we will not release a child to a designated pick-up person or to a parent when appropriate child seating is not available in the transporting vehicle. Under both instances we have a legal obligation to call the police if a child leaves despite our best intentions at this time. Should this happen we will be forced to terminate the care.

Parent Involvement

At Munchkins we operate under an Open Door Policy. Parents are welcome to visit the home at any time and in any location where their child will be receiving care. However, we ask that parents respect nap times so that the children are not disturbed.

Parents who wish to take an active part in their child's care are more than welcome to do so. Whether it is chaperoning on field trips or offering suggestions for crafts, snacks, reading, math, science, your input is invaluable. It also shows your child you want to be part of their child care world...and not just drop them off and pick them up.

To let parents know what is happening at the daycare we post weekly menus, a weekly activity chart, and information of all sorts on the bulletin board.

Health & Sick Child Policies:

Please go over this section very carefully. Because children get sick without warning, parents are well advised to have a backup child care plan in place.

For the health of all the children in the daycare we have the right to refuse to take a sick child into care and to determine when a child is too ill to remain in care. Please DO NOT bring your child to care if he/she has the following symptoms:

Fever over 100 F degrees taken orally
Nausea, vomiting and diarrhea
Eye infections, i.e. conjunctivitis (pink eye)
Rash with a fever
Sore throat

Head lice
Yellow skin or eyes
Severe cold and/or cough
Rapid or laboured breathing
Ear infection

Contagious illness such measles, chicken pox, mumps, etc.

Parents **MUST** notify the daycare immediately if their child becomes infected with a contagious disease so that the other parents can be notified.

A child presenting any of the symptoms noted above while in care will be isolated for the protection of the other children and the parents or emergency contact person will be notified to pick up the child immediately. Your child will be kept as comfortable as possible until you arrive.

A child with a fever **MUST** be fever free for 24 hours before he/she will be accepted back into care. Children with mild illnesses will be welcome back as long as they are able to participate in our daily activities.

Administering Medication

Medication will only be administered to your child under the following circumstances:

- All medication is in the original container with your child's name, proper instructions, Doctor's name and telephone number.
- Medication is accompanied by instructions with regards to dosage, times to administer the dose, and signs of allergic reactions.
- Parents complete and sign the Permission to Administer Medication Form and a Medication Administer Form. This form will be used to document the times, dosage and any allergic reactions signs. A separate form must be filled out for each medication your child requires.
- Parents take the time to go over the information with us so that the instructions are clearly understood.

Emergencies:

Medical: In the event of an emergency, parents or the designated emergency contact person will be contacted immediately unless the injury/illness proves to be life threatening at which time first call priority will be to the hospital or doctor. In order to secure emergency medical care for your child, parents **MUST** complete and sign all medical emergency permission forms.

Minor scratches, cuts, and so on will be treated with general first aid practices of cleansing the wound with soap and water and bandaging. Parents will be notified of these injuries immediately upon their arrival to pick their child up and will be given an Accident/Injury Report.

Fire: The children at Munchkins will practice monthly fire drills. We will try to arrange these drills from different parts of the house so we will know exactly what to do should a fire occur. The children will be taught to evacuate the building immediately and proceed to the end of the road and wait there.

Child Guidance:

Three simple rules apply at our daycare:

You must not hurt yourself.

You must not hurt others.

You must not hurt things.

When behavioural problems occur at the daycare, the following methods are used to teach the children appropriate behaviour:

Redirect: Children most often squabble over toys and possessions. When this happens we talk to the children to explain why such behaviour is not acceptable and offer suggestions for other toys or activities that will redirect the child's attention and generally solve the problem.

Time Out: If a child is causing a significant disturbance and not responding to the redirection, we will remove the child from the immediate area and have him/her take a brief time out to calm down. We will talk to the child to explain why the behaviour is not appropriate, offer suggestions, and then leave him/her alone for just a minute or two. The child will then be welcomed back into the activity.

Privilege Removal: When children are hurting things such as toys, using the equipment in an unsafe manner or fighting over toys, etc., the privilege to use the equipment/toy will be taken away from the child, at which time he/she will be redirected to another activity.

Parental Support: Should behavioural problems exist with a child who is not responding to the above forms of behaviour management, we will enlist the help and support of the parents. A child learns best when the guidance is consistent both at home and at the daycare.

Removal From Care: In extreme circumstances if a child is not responding to the guidance above and is disruptive or dangerous to the daycare and the other children, we will regretfully have to ask that the child be removed from our care.

Meals & Snacks:

Vegetarian meals and snacks provided by the Munchkins are based on the guidelines given by Dr. Uma Y. (Health Counsellor and an Alumni of National Gourmet Institute in NYC), an expert in child nutrition. Breakfast, lunch and nutritious snacks in the morning and the afternoon are provided for your child.

A weekly menu is posted in the arrival area for your review. Please let us know if there is something on the menu that your child does not like so other provisions (within reason) can be made.

Special Diets: Parents are responsible for meals and snacks for children on special diets.

Junk Food: With the exception of birthdays and special occasions, junk food will not be served. Parents are asked NOT to send candy, sweets, gum, and potato chips, or other unhealthy foods with their child.

Birthdays: We will make necessary arrangements to celebrate your child's birthday and we ask parents to inform us about their intention of organising a birthday party in advance. Please DO NOT send gifts, sweets or chocolates for distribution at the daycare.

Naps and Rest Periods:

It is a long day for children who attend daycare. Nap and rest time at the daycare is from 1:00pm until 3:00pm (approximately). All children under four must nap and will be provided a comfortable sleeping area. Older children must have a rest period during this time and will be supplied with movies, reading materials and quiet activities.

We understand that younger children may require more than one nap time during the day. Since we have separate sleeping rooms, we will ensure your child gets his/her required nap time.

Transportation and Field Trips:

Field Trips: From time to time the children will go on field trips. Parents will be given prior notice of these trips so they can ensure their child has the appropriate clothing and/or supplies for the day. Notices will be posted in the arrival area and a copy will be placed in each parent's envelope.

Field Trip Permission forms MUST be completed, signed, dated and returned one day prior to the trip. Children whose form is not returned WILL NOT take part in the outing and, unless we can make special arrangements for the care of the child, parents will be responsible for finding alternate care at this time.

Admission fees for some outings are the responsibility of the parent.

Transportation: Should a child require transportation to and from the neighbourhood school, parents must complete and sign and date Transportation Permission Form. If the school is within walking distance we will walk, otherwise we will use the daycare van. On bad weather days your child will be transported using the daycare van.

Parents who have children in extra-curricular activities outside of the daycare and require their child to be transported will need to make special arrangements if the transportation times conflict with important activities at the daycare. Please take the time to talk with us about this matter.

Out-of-Home Activities: Many of our outdoor activities include walks to the local park, grocery store, library, etc. and may not always be pre-planned. When possible, parents will be notified at drop-off of any outdoor excursions planned for the day. Our mode of transportation for these outings will generally be by foot using strollers as needed. On occasion we will use the daycare van. By signing the general Transportation Permission Form in the Registration Package, parents acknowledge and authorize this activity.

Supplies & Equipment:

Daycare Supplied: Munchkins will provide all the necessary general equipment, toys and learning materials for the proper and safe care of your child. Meals and snacks will be provided unless special diets are required or in the case of infant nourishment such as formula, infant foods, etc. Diapers WILL NOT be supplied.

Other items supplied by the daycare include:

- Blankets, Bedsheets, Pillow
- Soft / Cuddly toys
- Bath and hand towels, Table Napkins

Parent Supplied: Parents are responsible to ensure their child has a change of clothing with them each day or that can be left at the daycare. For infants, that means supplying a stack of diapers at the beginning of the week. We will let you know when your supply is low and expect to have these replenished immediately.

Items Not Welcome: To keep peace in daycare we ask that parents not send toys or other goodies with their children unless it is cleared by us first, with the exception of Show & Tell times and as long as your child understands he/she will have to share his possessions. Items such as guns, knives, swords, or other weapon type apparatus or toys containing these items are NOT permitted at the daycare under any circumstances. The daycare is not responsible for broken or damaged possessions.

Toilet Training:

Toilet training requires a combined effort on the part of the parents and caregiver. Please talk with us about your views on toilet training when your child is ready for that step. We would like to note here that until your child is fully trained and able to announce that he or she has to use the bathroom, sleeps through naps without wetting or dirtying themselves; diapers, pull-up pants, or undies with plastic pants will be used. We also ask that you ensure your child has an adequate supply of clean clothing to get through the daily training phase. This should consist of three complete outfits including socks.

Termination of Care:

Parents are required to provide one month notice for termination of care after the two-week trial period has expired. Failure to do so will result in losing any advance fee made equal to the amount of notice not provided.

Munchkins will give parents one month notice of termination of care except under the following circumstances at which time we reserve the right to terminate all care without notice:

- Failure to abide by the policies in this handbook.
- Failure to abide by the terms set out in the child care contract.
- Failure to make payments on time or not paying for care at all.
- Failure to repeatedly not pick up your child at the agreed upon time.
- Failure to complete all required forms in the Registration Package.
- Inability of the parents and provider to communicate effectively.
- Inability of the child to adjust to the child care being provided after a reasonable amount of time.
- Provider's inability to meet the needs of the child after exhaustive efforts to do so.
- Child's behaviour is disruptive to the rest of the children in the daycare.