

Parent Handbook

Before and After School Program

Updated December 2024



MUNICIPALITY OF

South Bruce

Recreation Department

MUNICIPALITY OF SOUTH BRUCE

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Program Fees

Before Care - \$11.50 per day After Care - \$12.00 per day

Before & After Care - \$23.00 per day

Late Fees- \$5.00 for every 5 minutes

Subsidy

Child care fee assistance is available for all programs as they are registered through Grey- Bruce County. Please contact the County office in which you reside to inquire about the child care subsidy.

For more information regarding Child Care Fee Subsidy, please visit [Bruce County's website](#).

Bruce County Social Services (519-881-0312) may be able to help if parents require financial assistance.

Program Statement

How Does Learning Happen?

South Bruce Before and After Care program view each child as competent, capable, curious and rich in potential. Each child's learning and development will be supported with planned positive learning environments. This document is a tool for developing the programs and services. Programs incorporate opportunities for indoor and outdoor play. We provide healthy snacks at both the before and after school programs. All snacks are planned and prepared according to Canada's Food Guide to promote health and nutrition.

Developing relationships, spending time with children in their play and discovery is important. Staff are aware of children's curiosity and wonder. Indicators of this include allowing self-regulation (choices) for things like snacks and meals, creative opportunities, play styles and emotional expression. Opportunities to express all emotions and feelings in a safe, nurturing environment are not only allowed but encouraged. Children will be allowed to explore materials, toys and environments in meaningful ways to them. Intervention will happen if there is a danger to themselves, others or destruction of equipment.

Play based learning is the foundation for lifelong learning, including ensuring safety, health, nutrition and well-being. Our program will foster children's exploration, play and inquiry, by providing child-initiated and adult-supported experiences. Staff will reflect

the style of learning which follows children's interests, allows problem solving and explorations. This includes reflection, review and observations. As co-learners we can puzzle as to why children do certain things and provide opportunities for advancing their ideas. Individual portfolios will be kept for children. Finding opportunities to extend interests in a way that is meaningful to the children can be kept as a project documentation. This is building and encouraging engagement from parents and other agencies. Understanding child development includes building in rich language opportunities, cognitive and scientific understanding. Social skill building is vital in a child's successful learning environment. Learning through play staff support children's natural curiosity and exuberance lead by providing knowledgeable, responsive early childhood professionals.

Creative opportunities are offered daily. Learning about art and creation together is part of our co-learning environment. Clay, painting of all kinds, sketching, building of sculptures, using materials in unique ways, self-portraits are all common art experiences. Materials can include a wide variety of drawing tools, a range of scissors, tape, glue, paints, collage supplies, books related to art, papers of all kinds and sizes. Encouraging exploration of materials and supplies is ongoing!

South Bruce program develops partnerships with families and are committed to ongoing communication and engagement with them and their communities. Grey-Bruce County works ongoing with our program to ensure funding and parent subsidy needs have been met.

Communication with families is a big priority in the South Bruce Program. All parents enjoy, need and want to hear about their child's activities; this is part of our relationship building and collaboration with families. It demonstrates our involvement with their child and allows them to feel a part of their child's day.

Staff will take a few minutes at pick-up or drop-off times to share the positive activities during the program. This also promotes the educational experiences we have achieved throughout their time with us. Questions regarding children will be answered by staff or they will find out answers. Families are the focus of our Centre and as much as possible we want their needs or requests to be met. Strong communications with parents build confidence and trust in our programs.

Our programs respect diversity, equality and inclusion as important for optimal development and learning. Confidentiality is required and expected. This includes respecting parents right to privacy regarding their children's attendance at our program; privacy regarding children's behavior, family situations and confidentiality regarding co-workers.

Communication between staff is essential. If schedules or routines need adjusting staff will discuss these issues with their co-workers and problem solve (problem solving is a good example for the children). We encourage building a strong team that includes supporting one another. Conversations about plans, ideas and concerns regarding the children (reflect, review, do, reflect review, do, etc.) happen regularly. Teams are encouraged to support each other when they notice a positive learning situation that just occurred, use the language in How Does Learning Happen with one another. Asking questions? Wondering why they did something?

Continuous Professional Learning is valued and encouraged for all staff at the South Bruce Program (both trained and untrained staff). It is expected that all staff will participate in the High Five Principal of Healthy Child Development guidelines. All staff are encouraged and supported to participate in local and advertised staff training opportunities. Staff are expected to attend all scheduled staff meetings as posted.

Contraventions of our Program Statement:

- The Manager would bring the concern regarding the implementation of the program statement to the attention of the staff member, volunteer or student.
- A meeting with regard to the concern would take place. Discussion would ensure that the program statement policies are clearly understood.
- A record of the meeting will be kept and signed by the parties involved. It then becomes a permanent part of the person's file and a copy would be placed in their file.
- Goals would be set to assist the person in following the Program Implementation Policy.
- A follow up schedule may be set to ensure appropriate expectations are maintained. Other team members may be consulted for input or clarification.

Staff may be suspended or terminated with consultation of upper management.

Parental Issues and Concerns

Our program values your opinion and ideas. If for any reason you have a concern, question or issues we suggest you follow the following:

- Talk to your child's Educator. If this does not resolve the issue then move to step two.
- Please put your request or concern in writing on our parent information sheets. The staff will respond in writing on the form within 2 business days. Staff will have their response reviewed first by the Recreation Programmer.

- If your concern or request has not been addressed by the staff usually responsible for your child or you continue to have concerns please put your concern/issue in writing attention to the manager of the program. It will be addressed within 2 business days in writing to you.
- The Recreation and Facilities Manager will address the concern and provide you a written record of how it was addressed, to who it was addressed and the plan for a better outcome
- Investigations of issues and concerns will be fair, impartial and respectful to parties involved.
- Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of the parents/guardians, child, staff, students and volunteers, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons (e.g. to the Ministry of Education, law enforcement authorities or a Children's Aid Society)

Confidentiality

All information contained in a child's records is considered privileged and confidential. The information required on records such as name, address, telephone number, immunization records, alternate pick-ups etc. will be kept confidential. Consents must be signed that authorize the release of information to other agencies and persons (as specified by the family); otherwise the family has the right to privacy that is fully recognized and protected.

Approaches for Staff

You will hear staff guiding the children using positive words and breaking this into small manageable tasks. When children appear done with items or equipment staff, students and volunteers will assist them in tidying them up. Students and volunteers are important in our program. Staff will assist them in following all program statement ideas. Staff will ensure they are not left alone with the children.

Attractive provocations will be provided regularly. There may be beautifully arranged art opportunities including a wide variety of materials and mediums. You might see a book and some items or objects from that book out to encourage more engagement. Blocks may have some new props or items included to build on a child's idea. A new item may be set up with some of our other items to see what the children will create or do with them. Staff will ensure they are providing variety and methods of provocation to encourage science, reading, building, exploring and creating. Creativity will be encouraged and supported by all. Children can be creative with their use of the toys.

Where and how they play with them will allow creative choice. Art and messy play will be allowed so they can explore materials in a wide variety of ways. Art activities will allow free exploration of materials.

To encourage and allow self-regulation you will hear staff offering choices, providing opportunities for independent serving of snacks, and encouraging independent play and dressing. You will observe staff letting children decide what they want on their plates and if they want to finish or try something new. You will hear staff encouraging and guiding dressing using positive words and assisting when children require it. If a child seems tired or upset you will see staff sit with them and try to find a solution that will help the child feel better. Some examples might be they want to rest or nap, play in a different spot or just have some cuddle time with the teacher, volunteer or student.

You will notice that staff do not leave children unattended or ignored. They are always available and responsive to the children. This means children will not be left in areas where staff cannot visually see them. To encourage independence and self-regulation staff will work hard at keeping transitions from one area to another smooth and seamless with little waiting and a calm environment. This will include smaller groups and staggered entries and exits whenever possible. Staff will maintain ratios. Staff will count at all times ensuring all children in their care are always present with them. They will ensure when they are leaving a room, leaving the building or re-entering the building and room that they read each child's name on their registration sheet and ensure they are physically with them.

Staff, students and volunteers will build relationships with the children. You will notice them having conversations with the children, joining the children in their play, providing comfort when they are sad and helping them with strategies for calming down and resolving issues. Children will be encouraged to express all types of feelings. Children will notice that they are important and respected by how we talk to them. We use encouraging words; we label feelings and show understanding when they are feeling overwhelmed or grumpy. Staff, students and volunteers are reminded that we always talk calmly and quietly to children. We always go directly to the children and get down at their level. We talk directly to them and problem solve with them if there is an issue. If children are feeling frustrated or expressing big body needs staff will assist them in finding appropriate ways through talking and problem solving. Staff may do this by encouraging a quiet conversation away from the issue. They may then assist the child in reentering the group situation.

Families will be greeted and information will be shared positively. Families are encouraged to leave written instructions to ensure staff understand their and their child's needs. Parents who have an issue are encouraged to place it in writing. They may

then follow further complaint procedures if it has not been corrected. Notes will be left for parents to help regarding wet or dirty clothes, if we need supplies or have a concern.

The outdoor environment is an important part of our daily activities. Staff will ensure they are providing opportunities for exploration and risk taking. They will add in props and equipment to assist children in building their physical skills and learning to play both independently and co-operatively. Staff will position themselves on the playground so that all children are visible at all times.

Staff are not permitted to use prohibited practices

- Corporal punishment of the child
- Locking in exits of the building or room for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the program's emergency management policies and procedures (i.e. lockdown)
- Use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth
- Depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use
- Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will

Staff to Participant Ratios

We are fortunate to offer a program staffed trained in High Five. The child to staff ratios is as follows:

- One Educator for every 13 School Age Children (JK/SK age)
- One Educator for every 15 School Age Children (6-12 years)

Student and Volunteers

Students and volunteers in our programs do not have unsupervised access to children in our programs. All volunteers and students review and sign off on all policy and procedures in relation to working with the children in our programs. Students and Volunteers will be monitored at all times.

Enrollment

Application forms for our Before and After School Program may be picked up at the Municipal Administration Office located at 21 Gordon Street East, Teeswater or online at

the Municipality of South Bruce website. www.southbruce.ca. School ages children up to 12 years old are eligible to enroll. At times, due to full enrollment, children may need to be placed on a waiting list in order to secure a space, when it becomes available. Spaces are prioritized by enrollment needs (full time, number of children etc).

The family will receive an email to confirm we have received the application. It is important for you to keep your contact information up to date with us.

Once your child is enrolled in the Before and After School Program, you will receive a confirmation via email. The days your child is registered for will remain reserved for them until you notify us that care is no longer needed. This means that your child's registration will automatically continue into the following school year unless we are informed otherwise. Please see End of Care for more information on notification periods for ending care.

South Bruce Waitlist Policy

The Before and After School Program will maintain a wait list if necessary. All persons who inquire will be asked to complete our registration forms and return it by fax (519-392-6266) , email (recreation@southbruce.ca) or in person to the manager or their designate.

Children are placed on the waiting list in sequence, based on the date and time that the waiting list application is received by the Municipality of South Bruce. Determining where your child(ren) is on a waiting list is subject to a number of considerations including but not limited to:

- Ages of the children on the waiting list

Exceptions that could affect the order in which admissions are offered are:

- Children requiring full time care (5 days per week)
- Siblings currently registered in the program
- Children living within the school boundaries of Hillcrest Central School and Sacred Heart in Teeswater.

The Municipality of South Bruce has the right to manage enrollment which may result in the Municipality not being able to accommodate your childcare needs for the next school year. Priority will be given to children currently registered and attending the Before and After School Program. In situations where capacity is limited and expansion

of space is unavailable, the Municipality of South Bruce will provide families with written notice.

The Program will try to provide the best information on when a space may be available, but this information may not be possible.

Spaces can become available if a child unenrolls.

Anyone whose account is in arrears may lose their space.

Parents will not be required to pay for their child's name to be on the waitlist.

Ending Care

If you will be leaving the program, we require two weeks written notice. You are billed for this period.

Changes for appointments and occasional days off are not permitted and are still billed.

Hours of Operation

The Before and After School Program only operate from September to June, to coincide with the school year. In December, *all* programs are closed during the two-week Christmas break. 6:30am to 8:50 am and immediately following school until 6pm Monday through Friday. Parents will be advised well in advance of any changes.

Occasionally, the program will be closed for staff Professional Development.

Arrival and Departure

It is necessary for parents to deliver their child (morning program) and collect him/her at the end of the day. Children from the Hilcrest Public school will be bussed to and from Sacred Heart School for the Before and After School Program.

If parents want to prevent certain persons from gaining access to their child, the staff must be told who these people are. If a Court Order is in place which limits access to your child, please provide a copy to be placed in your child's file. In such cases and subject to the above precautions, it is required that parents provide a list of people who may be permitted to escort their child on occasion. Space is provided on the application form for this information. In the case of separated or divorced parents, where either one or the other has legal visiting rights, these rights may not be exercised on the premises.

Please inform the Staff in the morning or call during the day, to confirm any change in your normal pick-up arrangement.

Emergencies / Accidents

In case of an accident or illness the program will:

1. Provide first aid and obtain medical assistance if applicable
2. Document the incident in writing (a copy is given to the parents and a copy is put in the files)
3. Notify the parents if appropriate
4. Please keep all emergency information up to date for our files.

Attendance

Children registered in the programs are expected to attend as scheduled. If your child is going to be absent on one of his/her regularly booked days, it is important to inform the instructor in advance. If your child is sick and will not be attending, please call as soon as possible.

Payment Policies

Reserved Spaces

Payment for your child care services is based on your reserved days.

Payments and Illness (Sick Days)

You are required to pay for your child's space when they are ill. If you are a parent receiving fee assistance please be aware user fees apply to all days with no reduction in the rate set by the County.

Parents must notify the program instructor when their child is going to be absent. If your child is ill, the best place for them is at home. We will notify you, and ask that your child be picked up early if they exhibit any of the following indicators of ill health;

- A sudden fever over 100 degrees F.
- Vomiting repeatedly
- Two bouts of diarrhea
- Unusual rash/spots
- Discharge from the eyes

Centre Closures

South Bruce Before and After School Care Program is closed annually over the Christmas period and will follow the school break schedule. You are not billed during this Christmas Shut Down and PA Days.

Program is closed to observe the following statutory holidays:

Family Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Victoria Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Break (2 weeks)

Payment Procedures

When you enroll in the children's programs you will be expected to pay in advance of your child care. Payments are due the first day you attend. Payment must cover a two-week period.

Cheques or cash are accepted. Postdated bi monthly cheques are encouraged if this is helpful for families. Cash, debit, cheque or e-transfer payments are accepted. If paying by cheque, please place your cheque in a marked envelope and drop off at the South Bruce Administration Office or use the drop box. Educators can not accept any form of payment. At the end of the year, a Statement of Account will be given to parents that outlines all payments made for the Before and After School Program. If you wish to receive a receipt after each payment, please contact the Municipal Office. Payments are encouraged in the morning to allow for proper processing.

Subsidy is available to families who feel they are unable to afford the full fee. Please see one of the staff, if you wish to apply for full or partial subsidy. Subsidy applications are completed by Grey-Bruce County.

Accounts not kept current will receive a written notice. Child Care may be terminated at any time if an account is past due. Accounts in arrears will be forwarded to the Municipality of South Bruce for collection.

Payment during Inclement Weather

If your child was scheduled to attend the South Bruce Before and After School Care Program and they are officially open, you are billed for the scheduled day. If the Program officially closes, you will not be billed.

Official closes happen when the **schools are closed** due to unforeseen circumstances such as inclement weather.

Pick-up Times

Any change from your normal pick-up schedule must be pre-arranged with the staff. Staff is scheduled according to the number of children at any given time, therefore coming earlier or staying later may compromise the child/staff ratio. Child/staff ratios are regulated by the Child Care and Early Learning Act and it is extremely important that we maintain them at all times. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated in adhering to your scheduled hours, for all children's safety.

Staff will not release your child to any person other than those listed on your application. If there are any changes to your child's pick-up, it is expected that you will notify the staff in advance.

If there is an occasion where you are unable to pick-up before the building closes, it would be expected that you would make arrangements for someone else to pick your child up, and phone program instructor to notify them of this.

Late Policy

The South Bruce Before and After School Care Program close at 6:00 pm. Parents who pick up after this time are officially late. Late fees will apply.

The late fee schedule is \$5.00 for every five minutes that the staff is kept in the program after closing.

You will be asked to sign a late form and late fee will be added to your monthly bill. Parents who are subsidized are responsible for this fee it is not covered by subsidy. We thank you for using our services and ask that you consider this policy when arranging your child's pick up.

Clothing

Clothes which are comfortable, easy to get on and off and are washable are most suitable for the children to wear. Indoor shoes or slippers must be worn. Please send a pair of indoor shoes that can stay at the Before and After School Program.

Children play outside both summer and winter, so please send appropriate clothing. In the winter this would include: snow pants, hats, mitts and warm boots. Boots should be large enough to slide on and off easily. Do not use mitts with strings, as they can be

dangerous on the school yard. We also ask that children do not bring scarves, as they can get caught in equipment, please send neck warmers instead.

In the spring, please send rubber boots and splash pants for your child. All clothing and personal belongings should be clearly labeled. Be sure to send an extra complete change of clothing.

Allergies

We are a peanut/nut free environment where peanuts and peanut/nut products are not used or allowed in the building. Please do not bring any snacks or beverages into the room. If your child has peanuts or peanut butter at home, please change his/her clothing and make sure his/her hands and face are thoroughly washed before arriving at the program. On occasion we have children enrolled, who have life threatening allergies to these products. Your adherence to this policy is essential.

Administration of Medication and Children's Safety:

- If any staff of the South Bruce Before and After Care Program has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is or may be in need of protection, the staff must promptly report the suspicion and the information upon which it is based, to a Children's Aid Society.
- Before being admitted, each child, unless there is a stated medical reason, should be immunized against Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus, Polio, Measles, Mumps and Rubella.
- The program will require a photocopy of your child's yellow immunization card. Immunization Records are checked by our local Health Unit.
- If prescriptions are to be administered in the programs, parents must sign a medication consent form that is available from the program instructor. Over the counter medications are not encouraged. Please find medications that can be administered at home and have long lasting coverage. All medicines must be in their original container, with your child's name clearly labeled on it. In the event that the medicine form is not clearly filled out, giving specific instructions and signed, the medicine will not be given. Specific instructions must include either a specific time or specific symptom to be addressed ('as needed' is not specific enough). All medications are to be given directly to the instructor who will place them in a locked box. Refrigerated medicines will be kept in a locked container in the fridge. Please ask a staff to retrieve your medications at pick up time.
- Children arriving at the program with undiagnosed eye infections or rashes; fevers or flu-like symptoms, including diarrhea will not be permitted to stay in the program that day, until they have been examined by a doctor. Following flu-like

symptoms, a child must be symptom free for a period of 48 hours before returning to the program, to ensure that they are no longer contagious. Please consider other children's health as an important factor!

Contacts

Amanda Watson, Recreation Programmer 519-392-6623 or recreation@southbruce.ca

Shawnette Crouse, Recreation and Facilities Manager 519-392-6623 or scrouse@southbruce.ca

Leanne Martin, Chief Administration Officer / Clerk 519-392-6623 or lmartin@southbruce.ca