

## **Vancouver Society of Children's Centres**

### **Our Services**

VSOCC's child care programs are licensed by Community Care Facilities Licensing, and operate under the Provincial Community Care and Assisted Living Act and the Child Care Licensing Regulations. These programs provide education and care for children from ages 3 months to 12 years of age.

### **Our Philosophy & Guiding Principles**

At VSOCC, commitment to quality and excellence is a core value. The following principles, based on the B.C. Early Learning Framework, guide our decisions to create rich learning experiences and environments for children and their families:

- Each child is unique, and is capable and competent.
- Families are the primary caregivers of children and have the most important role in promoting their children's well-being, learning and development.
- Consistent, respectful, responsive and nurturing relationships are essential to building trust and attachment, and to the well-being and learning of children.
- Play-based learning is vital to children's lifelong health, and development.
- The physical environment shapes children's learning and well-being. VSOCC facilities are intentionally designed to support children and families.
- We strive to be inclusive, culturally sensitive and anti-biased.
- Sustainable practices and care for the environment are emphasized and promoted.
- Quality – commitment to continuous improvement and best practices.

### **Importance of Families**

At VSOCC, we recognize and value families as primary caregivers and the best sources of knowledge about your children. We respect diverse family structures, cultures and parenting styles. The engagement of families in meaningful ways in their child's care and learning experiences is critical to high quality child care. VSOCC supports and promotes the concept of families as partners with staff members and actively works to have families engaged in programs.

Family members (including extended family) are welcome and encouraged to spend time in our programs. Speak to staff about opportunities to:

- Read books with children.
- Participate in program activities such as baking, planting, art activities, special events, field trips and more.
- Share something about your family traditions, culture, celebrations, and/or adventures.
- Share your skills and talents with children and staff – artistic, musical, building, gardening, physical activity (yoga, dance), something creative!
- Share something about your work or organize a visit to your workplace if appropriate.
- Help with fundraising events, work party activities or special activities at the centre.

## Our Curriculum

VSOCC provides an **emergent, play-based approach** to curriculum and incorporates the 4 core areas of early learning from the B.C. Ministry of Education’s **Early Learning Framework**:

Well-being and Belonging

Exploration and Creativity

Language and Literacies

Social responsibility and Diversity

Our emergent approach to curriculum is based on the premise that children learn best when the materials and activities offered are based on their interests, strengths, needs, and experiences. During play, educators intentionally observe and listen to children to identify meaningful topics to explore further in our programs. Once an interest is identified, educators plan small group experiences and discussions to inspire and extend children’s learning. Our physical environments continually adapt to reflect the interests the children are exploring.

This cycle of observation, reflection and program planning continues through the year with no timeline or boundaries. To make this cycle of learning visible, the educators and children collaborate on “**documentation**” which is displayed in programs and may include: photographs, displayed projects, artistic endeavors, words, stories and reflections.

## Our Programs

Program Type	Staff:Child Ratios
Under 3 Programs —Infant & Toddler	1:4
3-5 Programs	1:8
Preschool & Junior Kindergarten Programs	1:10
School Age Program (Kindergarten—Grade 1)	1:12
School Age Program (Grade 2-7)	1:15

### Under 3 & Toddler Programs

Under 3 Programs for infants and toddlers capture and extend the magical moments of learning that happen every day. We focus on:

- Building trusting relationships
- Sensory-motor experiences
- Integrating the development of key self-help skills
- Language advancement
- Basic social skills that encourage the development of early cooperative play skills and emotional regulation

Under 3 Programs have a sequenced routine to ensure the children can feel a high sense of security and familiarity, but the day-to-day activities are flexible and open-ended including a balance of indoor and outdoor time. The schedule for infants is based on individual needs for sleep, feeding and diapering and gradually becomes more consistent within the group over time as the children age.

### Programs for 3-5 Year Olds

Our programs for children ages 3-5 engage children in a wide variety of opportunities, experiences and activities with a focus on:

- Learning more about themselves, their peers, and their community
- Building confidence and practicing self-help skills
- Developing skills for managing emotions, creative thinking and decision making
- Sharing, kindness and cooperation
- Play, dialogue, problem-solving, creative expression, scientific inquiry and small group collaboration

### School Age Programs

As children grow older, there are increased opportunities to develop essential life skills that help them take initiative and responsibility for themselves, as they prepare to be more independent in their homes and community.

Our School Age Care Programs encourage and nurture children to develop the characteristics and skills to:

- Take age-appropriate risks, demonstrating independence, critical thinking, and resilience
- Choose their activities and level of involvement
- Exercise leadership and care for others
- Reflect on and appreciate their abilities, contributions, and effects on others and their environment

## Routines & Activities

### Daily Routine

As routines are important for young children to encourage a sense of familiarity, trust and security, full day VSOCC programs for children 5 and under have the following general structure:

Morning	Afternoon
<p><b>Gradual Arrival and Open Exploration</b> Variety of play activity choices, materials and emergent projects.</p> <p><b>Small Group Experiences, including:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Open Snack: children eat snack when they are hungry</li> <li>· Outdoor Activities and Active Play</li> <li>· Small Group Activities</li> </ul> <p><b>Group Gathering</b> Variety of group activities including songs, books, dance and music. In addition, it's a time for the children to gather and talk about their day and what interests they want to explore further.</p> <p><b>Lunch</b></p>	<p><b>Sleep, Rest, Quiet Time</b></p> <p><b>Small Group Experiences</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Open Snack</li> <li>· Outdoor Activities and Active Play</li> <li>· Small Group Activities</li> </ul>

*The schedule and times are flexible to best meet children's interests and development.*

*Open Exploration* can include:

- Sensory exploration (sand, water, play-dough)
- Fine motor activities (puzzles, board games and other manipulative toys)
- Gross motor activities (blocks, active play activities, climbing, jumping)
- Dramatic Play including dress-up, role playing and pretend play
- Books and stories

*Small Group Activities* can include:

- Emergent Projects and Activities
- Science, cooking, gardening and nature
- Language Arts and pre-literacy experiences (storytelling, reading, writing, matching, sequencing, patterns)
- Creative and artistic expression (open-ended explorations using various mediums, drawing, painting, collage, construction)
- Music, creative expression, dance and movement
- Health, wellness and self-help (family style meals, social awareness, toileting and dressing).

*Outdoor Activities* can include:

- Walks in neighbourhood
- Community explorations including visit to local parks
- Gross motor games & activities including gardening, art, science and dramatic play

*Active Play* means:

As per Child Care Licencing Regulations, VSOCC ensures that all our programs create daily opportunities for active play and the development of fundamental movement skills (for example, crawling, balancing, running, jumping) indoors and outdoors. On a daily basis, full time child care programs must ensure a minimum of 60 minutes of *outdoor* active play per day; preschool programs, 30 minutes; half-day Jr. K programs, 40 minutes.

### **Community Engagement**

A high quality child care program offers children, families and staff a sense of community and connectivity, and creates circles of support.

VSOCC works in partnership with other organizations, professionals and individuals in our community to support parents and families. Sharing information on child development, community resources and events, and, ensuring opportunities for family connection and parenting education are key aspects of all VSOCC services.