

Parent Handbook

Learning Ladder is pleased to provide parents living in the surrounding neighbourhood a safe place for their children during the busy work week. Our commitment to offer quality childcare is our first priority. Our philosophy is embodied in the commitment to create an environment that meets the needs of and promotes the physical, social, emotional and cognitive development of the child using creativity and developmentally age appropriate practices.

Learning Ladder is a natural extension of a family-oriented atmosphere and was founded to create a positive environment for growth and social interaction. We teach each child in a consistent and loving manner with emphasis on respect, responsibility, tolerance, kindness and cooperation.

Please review our procedures and policies prior to enrollment. If you have questions, please feel free to ask or call our Director.

Thank you for selecting Learning Ladder as your child's early learning facility. We look forward to rendering quality care for your child.

Staff

Our teachers are experienced and dedicated professionals who respect, value and accept all children as individuals. Our teachers are strongly committed to establishing positive personal relationships with your child, by listening and adapting to their responses, differing needs, interests, styles and abilities. Throughout the day, teachers are instrumental in encouraging your child to explore, create, inquire, and develop self-confidence.

All teachers work together as a team to give your child stability and a sense of security. Low teacher to child ratios in all ages are maintained to always ensure the safety of the children.

Security Sign In & Sign Out

Providing a secure and safe environment for your child is a priority at Learning Ladder. Parents are encouraged to come into the centre with their child when arriving in the morning and escort him/her back to their classroom.

A sign in/sign out sheet for each child will be available to track your child's arrival and departure from the centre. In the event that one parent has custody and certain visitation rights have been established, additional information will be required. The custodial parent must provide in writing, any specific instructions that should be followed.

A personal code word will be necessary in order to release your child to someone other than yourself. Learning Ladder must be notified in advance if another person will be picking up your child. Anyone with permission to do so will be required to know the code word and must provide proper picture identification to remove the child from the facility.

Internet Monitoring

With numerous video cameras installed throughout Learning Ladder, you can watch your child from any computer with an internet connection. Using state of the art video and camera technology, while providing parents with the highest quality viewing experience, you will be able to keep up with your child's daily activities and schedule, monitor their development progress, and see their interaction with other children....all online.

Once your child is enrolled at Learning Ladder, you will need to apply for your login username(s) and password(s). It is your responsibility to maintain exclusive control and use of your username(s) and password(s), and protect it from inadvertent disclosure to others. Once enrolled, your camera username(s) and password(s) will be activated. You can access the online streaming video cameras by logging in via our website at www.learningladderecdc.com.

Adjusting

Although the first day of daycare can be exciting for your child, it can also be a time of anxiety for both the child and the parent. We encourage you to call throughout the day to check on your child.

New situations and environments affect each child differently. Sometimes the first few days seem wonderful because everything is new and exciting. Once the week progresses, it is common for the child to become anxious since they realize that this is going to be a new routine. Most children adjust fully within 2-3 weeks. To support your child in the best manner, it is important that you are enthusiastic, encouraging and patient.

Parent/Teacher Relations/Conferences & Visits

Parents are invited to visit Learning Ladder at anytime. Visiting your child during their busy day gives you a chance to see your child and participate in an activity with them.

If a parent wants to schedule a private conference with the teacher, the director should be contacted to schedule a mutually convenient time.

Communication Bulletin Boards

The bulletin boards are a communication vehicle that Learning Ladder uses to relay important messages concerning changes in school policies, curriculum and upcoming events. Be sure to read it when you have an opportunity.

Dress Code

All children are required to wear a uniform shirt, which is available for purchase. Sneakers are the safest and most comfortable footwear for active, playful children. Open toe and open back shoes are not permitted.

Parents are asked to provide a change of clothing and a blanket for their child at naptime. Blankets are to be taken home each Friday to be washed. Please be sure to have your child's name on all of his/her belongings. Every child has their own assigned cubby to store their belongings.

Note: Infants and children who are being toilet-trained should have 2 or 3 sets of extra clothes due to the increased chance of soiling their original attire.

Special Safety Note: Fingernails must be trimmed!

Behaviour Guidance

During the early childhood years, children are learning to be in charge of themselves and their environment. When clear, consistent and age-appropriate limits are present, children learn to become responsible for themselves. When inappropriate behaviour does occur, it is important that they understand it is unacceptable. We discuss with them what they should do instead. To assist the children in the development of self-discipline and mutual respect, the following ground rules are incorporated and encouraged daily:

1. Respect for Self

- The child has the right to play along or with others.
- The child has the right to choose to use activities which interest him/her.
- The child has the right to make mistakes without adult intervention.
- The child has the right to request and receive adult assistance when needed.
- The child has the right to feel sad, angry, happy, and to express these emotions appropriately.

2. Respect for Others

- The child must respect the rights of others.
- Children must conduct themselves in a way that does not disturb the work or activities of others.

3. Respect for the Environment

- Everything has its place and must be returned to its place after use so it is ready for the next child to use it.
- The child is free to use any of the materials on the shelves as long as they are used with respect, as they belong to everyone.

Discipline

Clear limits for what behaviour is allowed and not allowed, as well as the use of nonviolent methods of upbringing, creates non-aggressive, harmonious, and independent children. Learning Ladder's discipline policy is a firm and loving one. Our policy is consistent with the age and the needs of the individual child. Corporal punishment and humiliation is never allowed at Learning Ladder by anyone.

Positive guidance techniques such as redirection, praise, role modeling, time-outs, and reasonable rules are used. Time-outs last no longer than 1 minute for each year of the child's age and on occasion we may find it necessary to have a quiet, private talk with a child.

Communication between the school and parent is very important. If a situation arises in the home that might affect your child's behaviour, please notify the teacher or director so that we can work with you to address the situation.

Parental Code of Conduct

Learning Ladder provides an open, welcoming and safe environment. We believe that all parents play a crucial and valuable role in the effective operation of the centre and in enriching the children's program. We acknowledge that without parents' support, participation and contribution, Learning Ladder could not operate.

Learning Ladder needs to ensure all parents adhere to clear guidelines regarding appropriate interaction and communication with one another, teachers, and with children at the centre.

General guidelines for interactions:

- Safety: Comply with all policies and procedures of the centre.
- Ethical conduct: Always act in the best interests of children, their families and users of the centre.
- Support: Interact with others in a cooperative and positive manner.
- Communication: Use courteous and acceptable verbal and nonverbal language. Refrain from the use of profane, insulting, harassing, aggressive or otherwise offensive language and behaviour.
- Respect: Value the rights, religious beliefs and practices of individuals. Refrain from actions and behaviour that constitute harassment or discrimination.
- Confidentiality: Respect the confidential nature of information gained, or behaviour observed, whilst present at the centre, in relation to other children, adults and parents.

Health Required Forms

The Ministry of Health requires that all children attending daycare must have up to date immunizations, and a doctor's statement of good health. Please be reminded that the above forms must be submitted prior to enrollment.

Medication

To ensure that any medication prescribed by your child's doctor is administered properly, Learning Ladder has implemented the following guidelines:

- Medications must be age-appropriate or will not be given.
- Parents must verify the amount, any possible reactions, and other critical information/instructions pertaining to the medication and tell your child's teacher.
- A medication form must be completed and given to the office along with the labeled prescription. Any medications left for us to administer MUST have your child's name clearly written on it.
- Children's Panadol and/or Benadryl will only be given after the parent has completed the release form located in your enrollment packet. Panadol and/or Benadryl will only be administered to keep your child comfortable until you arrive. Children with a fever of 100.8 degrees or higher ARE NOT permitted to stay in the facility.
- ALL medications must be kept out of the reach of the children at all times. Never mix medications with any food or drinks in your child's lunch.

Illness

Any child displaying symptoms such as fever, vomiting or diarrhea WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AT LEARNING LADDER. By bringing your sick child into contact with the other children, it contributes to the spread of the illness. Please be considerate of other working parents and their children.

Note: If your child gets a contagious disease, such as chicken pox, pink eye, strep throat, etc., please notify us immediately. Your cooperation in this matter will help to promote a healthy environment for all of our children.

In the instance that your child becomes ill during the day, Learning Ladder will contact you immediately. YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS TO PICK UP YOUR CHILD AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. YOU MUST pick up your child within one (1) hour of being notified. Your child must be symptom-free for 24 hours prior to returning to school. This means that your child may not return at all before 24 hours even if they are symptom free.

If your child's doctor has placed any physical activity restrictions on your child as a result of an illness, please be sure to inform us so we can accommodate his instructions.

Rest Time

Children in the Infant and Toddler programs will be provided with a crib to sleep in. Children in the Twos, Threes, Fours and Fives program are provided with a clean, comfortable floor mat to nap upon. The assigned mats are cleaned and dried after each use. Since some children sometimes need security items such as a special blanket, small stuffed animal, etc., these are allowed. Please clearly label each item.

Meals & Nutrition

Learning Ladder provides morning and afternoon snacks, but each child needs to bring their own lunch. Lunches can be refrigerated and warmed in the microwave. Your child's name and his teacher's name should be labeled on the inside and outside of his/her lunch box. Parents of infants must provide their child's nutritional program of bottles, formula, and strained foods.

Toys/Jewelry From Home

Learning Ladder asks that parents do not allow their children to bring toys or other items from home. However, children are allowed to bring a book or "special" item that corresponds to the theme for that week. Please make sure they are clearly labeled with your child's name and advise your teacher.

Jewelry can be a safety hazard so we ask that jewelry not be worn by the children. We cannot be responsible for lost or broken items.

Birthdays

Children may have a birthday celebration in their classroom. Parents may bring small treats, such as cupcakes or cookies. Please do not bring any favor bags containing small items that could be dangerous to the children such as hard candies, balloons and little toys that can break easily.

Hours & Early/Late Fees

Learning Ladder is open Monday through Friday. We are open from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. for the Infants, Toddler and Two's programs, and from 8:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. for the Threes, Fours, and Fives programs. A thirty (30) minute grace period is permitted for parents who desire to drop off their children outside of the operational hours, for the particular program in which their child is enrolled (i.e. an Infant may be dropped off at 7:30 a.m., or picked up at 5:30 p.m., at no additional charge). Any child dropped off earlier than thirty (30) minutes prior to the beginning of the program, or picked up more than thirty (30) minutes after the end of the program, will have a late fee assessed at \$150.00 for every five (5) minutes. Late fees must be paid in full before the child is permitted back to daycare.

Holidays & School Closings

Learning Ladder is closed on the following ten (10) holidays, which include: New Year's Day, Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Labour Day, Emancipation Day, Independence Day, National Heroes' Day, Christmas Day, and Boxing Day.

Tuition and Registration Fees

An annual registration fee of \$2000.00 is due at the time of enrollment. For new enrollments, tuition is due one week prior to start date. Once enrolled, tuition is payable monthly and due on the first of the month. If the first of the month falls on a Saturday or Sunday, tuition is due on the last Friday before the first of the month. After five (5) days of non-payment, there will be a 20% charge for all late payments. After two weeks of non-payment, the child will be dismissed from the program, and only permitted re-enrollment upon approval from the Director. Any checks returned by the bank will have a \$450.00 charge assessed. Two consecutive returned checks will revoke check writing privileges. It will remain our goal to provide the best in care for our children and at the same time balance the responsibility to the business side of our daycare. This enables us to ensure great programs, continually upgrade and replace equipment, maintain ongoing training of our staff and maintain our facility.

Withdrawal From School

Parents are required to formally withdraw their children from Learning Ladder. Parents must provide a minimum of two (2) weeks notice, and speak with the director. Tuition will be charged until the child is properly withdrawn from the program.

Vacation & Sick Time

Children are permitted to take two weeks' vacation during the year (two weeks together or one week separate from the other). The year begins from your start date, not the calendar year. Vacation or sick time runs Monday-Friday in the same week.

Vacation time can also be used if your child is sick. Any additional time required for a vacation or sickness will require a reservation fee (half the monthly tuition), in order to maintain your child's enrollment. For each month that your child is absent due to excess vacation and/or sickness, and you wish to maintain your child's enrollment, a reservation fee will be required.

Weather Emergencies

In the event of a weather emergency such as a hurricane, Learning Ladder will follow the Ministry of Education's recommendation concerning the closing of all schools in the parish. As soon as that decision has been made and broadcasted over the local radio and television stations, all parents or their emergency contact person must come and get their children as soon as possible. No credits will be given for such circumstances.

Note: Learning Ladder can only complete its emergency preparations after your children have been taken home.