



Child care for essential services workers during the COVID-19 pandemic - Frequently Asked Questions

Q: My work is considered an essential service, but my child was not accepted under this program. Why?

At this time, the District's child care is prioritized for Tier 1 essential services providers as defined by the provincial government. This includes health care providers, police, fire fighters and other first responders.

Q: What are the District child care hours?

The District's child care programs are open from 7:30am to 6:00pm, Monday to Friday. Child care staffing will be allocated over two shifts: 7:30am to 1:00pm and 12:30pm to 6:00pm.

Q: Where are District child care services located?

At this time, three elementary schools are designated to provide child care: Lord Nelson Elementary, Lord Roberts Annex and Elsie Roy Elementary.

Q: Do I get a choice of the child care location?

No, the District will place students based on their residential address.

Q: Is this child care program similar to the other child care operators suggested by the Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre, except that it is free of charge?

Similar to the City of Vancouver's Emergency Temporary Child Care for essential services workers, the District's programs are available to children of Tier 1 essential services workers who are also current VSB students (aged 5 to 12 years). There is no fee for this service during the pandemic.

Q: Will my children be taught while at the program?

No, there is no educational component or in-class instruction provided under the District's program.

Q: We are planning to keep our children home some of the days we are able. Does the program allow for flexibility?

Yes, at this point the program allows for flexible attendance.

Q. How many children are permitted onsite on a given day? And what ages are permitted together?

Currently, there is a maximum of two groupings of five children per supervisor. The District's plan is to keep children in groups with their peers of the same or similar age.

Q: How many kids are there going to be in the school?

The District plans to limit the number of children to a maximum of 100 per school site.

Q: What is staff to child ratio?

Presently, the District program has a maximum of five children to a supervisor.

Q: What is the background and/qualifications of the child care staff?

Child care staff are District employees with qualifications in the areas of early childhood education, special education assistance and youth workers.

Q: Have the staff all been cleared through criminal record checks?

Yes. The people working in the District's child care program are District staff, all of whom are required to have a criminal record check prior to working with children.

Q: Are staff paid or volunteers?

Child care staff are District employees and will receive their regular wage and benefits.

Q: Will it be a consistent staff member every day?

Although every attempt will be made to have consistency in staff assignments, this may vary. However, the staff to child ratio will be maintained.

Q: My child has autism and has a full time School and Student Support Assistant (SSA) at school and one funded at before/after school care. Will this be provided?

Yes, students with special needs will receive extra support.

Q: What will the children be doing during the day? Are parents to pack books, activities, etc.?

Parents are asked to pack a water bottle, lunch and a snack, as well as appropriate clothing for some outdoor time or gym time. Parents are also reminded to pack medication prescribed by a doctor or medications required for allergic reactions.

Q: My child has been assigned work by their teacher. Will there be time for them to complete it at child care?

Staff will facilitate opportunities for children to work on their learning from home assignments provided by their teachers. Children can bring their materials with them.

Q: Will the children and staff be following health and safety protocols like physical distancing?

Yes. All protocols and child care guidelines outlined by the Provincial Health Officer will be followed.

Q: Where in the school will the program take place? Are parents allowed to view the space?

Respecting health and safety measures, the child care program space is limited to children and staff only. Children will be assigned to age-appropriate classrooms. With coordination, groups will transition to other areas such as the gym or outdoor space.

Q: What is the sign-in/sign-out protocol?

Signage is posted to the exterior of the building to help you locate the door to drop off children. Our staff will greet children and parents at the door. Each day, a health check will be completed before children enter the building.

Q: Do we need to agree to a certain number of days/hours per week? Or is it drop-in?

Although there is flexibility under the District's program to account for the needs of essential services workers, we ask parents to notify us in advance. This will help us to schedule staff and determine grouping in advance.

Q: Will I lose my spot if my child doesn't start until next week?

No, at this point the program allows for flexibility in attendance.

Q: Will there be first aid at the site?

Yes, standard first aid procedures will be followed.

Q: Will siblings have the same staff member/be placed in a group together?

Not necessarily. Children will be grouped by age.

Q: What about child care options for essential workers who have a toddler or a 5-year-old who has not yet started kindergarten?

Essential services workers with children who are not currently enrolled in a District school can contact West Coast Child Care Resource Centre at www.wstcoast.org for information and to request a referral to another child care provider under the City of Vancouver's Emergency Temporary Child Care program.

Q: I have some more questions, who do I contact to get more information?

Please send your questions about the District's child care via email to rentals@vsb.bc.ca.