



2439 Recreation Road, Shawnigan Lake, BC V0R 2W2 ~ (250) 743-7711 ~ [www.serenitycovechildcare.com](http://www.serenitycovechildcare.com)

## **PARENT INFORMATION**

Located on a lovely property beside a field with farm animals and across from 16-acre Old Mill Park, Serenity Cove Children's Centre offers a full-day early learning program for children ages 30 months to school-age. Kind and thoughtful guidance, outdoor play and Nature exploration, artistic activities, natural materials, an introduction to French, creative and imaginative play, a seasonal and emergent curriculum, and low child-to-staff ratios are emphasized. The program is inspired by Waldorf and Reggio education and facilitated by licensed early childhood educators Ocean Kneeland and Kathy Sager.

### **PROGRAM**

Each day, we strive to create a gentle rhythm for the children—taking care to encourage active learning and play, and to provide opportunities for rest and rejuvenation (during meals, story times and afternoon rest).

For the children to explore with, we offer high-quality materials such as wooden blocks and puzzles, colourful scarves and dress-up clothes, soft playdough, books with attractive pictures and rich vocabulary, multicultural dolls, cars, trucks and trains, educational toys, authentic musical instruments and a variety of art materials.

To facilitate and enhance learning, we incorporate multiple languages into daily songs and activities, use provocation displays, modelling, and ask appropriate questions.

Outside activities include daily nature walks, sand and water play, trips to the neighbouring park and playground, and visits to notable places in the community (post office, recreation centre, bakery, barbershop, credit union). We spend lots of time outside!

### **STAFF**

*Ocean Kneeland*

Ocean has worked as an Early Childhood Educator in a variety of early learning settings, including: preschools, infant/toddler and 3 to 5-year-old group centres as well as her own family-based programs. She has worked as a Consultant for Victoria Child Care Resource and Referral and continues to offer professional development workshops through local and regional CCRR

programs. She is a certified Family Child Care Instructor, Mother Goose Instructor, and a former Lifeguard and Swimming Instructor Trainer. She is a parent of four children: daughter Zoe (11), stepson Dylan (11), daughter Hannah (3), and son Theo (2). She is fluent in both French and Spanish, and enjoys bringing both languages into daily songs and activities. She draws inspiration from Waldorf education, pedagogical narration (borrowed from Reggio, Italy), Mother Nature, and her own mother (Dorita).

Ocean manages Serenity Cove Children's Centre and facilitates the multi-age program (downstairs).

### *Kathy Sager*

Kathy discovered her passion for working with young children while living on Cortes Island from 2006 to 2008. There she worked with several families in the community on a regular basis, caring for their young ones in group settings as well as one-on-one. Since then, she has acquired a certificate in Early Childhood Education and worked in different settings, including: Roseberry Preschool (based on the Reggio method), Quadra Children's Centre (full-day care based on the Reggio method), and the Comox Valley Aboriginal Head Start Program, in Courtenay. In addition, she has guided music programs for preschool age children through the Comox Valley Recreation Centre. She loves to play music and dance with children. Singing or playing guitar, hand drums and saxophone are ways she often expresses herself musically. She is a certified Yoga Instructor and has experience guiding short yoga sessions in preschool/daycare settings. Telling stories through puppets and felt boards is something she enjoys, as well as baking and creating nutritious foods with children. Kathy believes in allowing children's interests to guide the focus and projects in early learning programs.

Kathy facilitates the preschooler program (upstairs) at Serenity Cove Children's Centre.

## **DAILY SCHEDULE**

The daycare is open Monday through Friday, from 8:00 a.m. (7:30a.m. by request) to 5:30 p.m. The following time frames are flexible, in order to be responsive to the children's daily needs and interests.

8:00 a.m. - 9:15 a.m.	Settling in, free play
9:15 a.m.	Circle
9:30 a.m.	Healthy snack
10:00a.m. – 11:45 a.m.	Nature walk, outdoor play
12:00 p.m.	Lunch
1:00 p.m. – 1:45 p.m.	Afternoon rest/nap
2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Baking or art activities/nap (for those who need it)
3:30 p.m.	Healthy snack, finger plays and games

4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. Outdoor play, feed animals and tidy-up

Please note: It is important for us to spend time with family after working hours. We ask parents, therefore, to respect the times of opening and closing by arriving within the hours of operation.

## **HOLIDAYS**

The daycare is closed: BC statutory holidays  
March/School Break (1 week)  
August/Summer Break (first 2 weeks)  
December/Christmas Break (last 2 weeks)

Please note that fees are pro-rated for all holidays.

## **FEES**

Full-time (5 days per week):	\$850 per month
Part-time (less than 5 days per week):	\$170 per month (1 day/wk)
	\$340 per month (2 days/wk)
	\$510 per month (3 days/wk)
	\$680 per month (4 days/wk)

Fees are payable to “Serenity Cove Children’s Centre” on or before the first day of each month.

## **Child Care Subsidy**

To ensure that child care is more affordable for all families, the government of BC provides funding to offset the cost of child care. For children enrolled in a licensed child care program, subsidy is generally around \$550-635 per month for full-time care for families with an annual income of \$38,000 or less. With the addition of the Universal Child Care Benefit of \$100 per month, this means that child care fees may be \$150 or less per month. Families with greater incomes may be eligible for partial subsidy. For more information about subsidy, please contact the Ministry of Children and Families @ 1-888-338-6622 or check its website:

[www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/application.htm](http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/application.htm)

## **VISITS**

Prior to beginning child care, we encourage all families to arrange one to three visits with your child, in order for you both to become familiar with us, the other children, and the environment. This is also a good opportunity for you, as a parent, to assess whether the child care arrangement is a good fit.

## **MEALS**

Please send a healthy lunch and two snacks for your child every day. A “healthy lunch/snack” includes whole grains (wheat, rye, corn, oats, millet, spelt, etc.), fruits *and* vegetables, and protein (nuts, seeds, soy, meat, dairy, etc.). Please do not send sweets and avoid highly packaged and processed foods.

We serve water at each meal and make homemade cookies, bread or muffins with the children approximately once a week.

## **CLOTHING**

Comfortable play clothes (ones that can get dirty) are ideal. Each day, please send slippers, an extra set of clothes, snow or rain gear (pants/jacket or rain suit and boots, a hat and mittens), diapers and wipes (if applicable), and a blanket for your child. When items require washing at home, we will leave them by your child’s coat hook.

## **GUIDANCE**

Children inevitably test boundaries, to see what is acceptable and unacceptable with a certain person and in a certain place. Our approach in responding to children when they test boundaries is to use positive child guidance; that is, not to punish, but to offer options and natural or logical consequences. When a child behaves inappropriately, we redirect him/her and offer alternative options. For example, if a toddler is throwing sand in the sand box, we would say something like “We don’t throw sand. Sand can hurt people’s eyes.” If the toddler continues to throw the sand, we would say something like “Throwing sand is not okay. You need to drop it or play with something else.” If necessary, we would help him/her find something else to do.

## **PROBATIONARY PERIOD AND NOTICE TO TERMINATE CARE**

It is important for you, your child, us and the other children in our care to feel good about the child care arrangement. Sometimes, there is a lack of compatibility or fit. For this reason, a three-week probationary period follows the start date, during which time you or we may decide to end the child care arrangement without giving official notice. This three-week period is the equivalent of 15 days of care in total. After this probationary period, should you wish to terminate the child care arrangement, we require one month’s notice, in writing, so that we have time to fill the child care space. Similarly, if we need to end the child care arrangement, we will provide you with at least one month’s written notice.

## **IN OUR ABSENCE**

Should one of us need to be absent from time to time, we will hire a kind and competent educator who has completed first aid, a doctor’s note of approval, references and a criminal record check. We will endeavour to have the care provider meet with the children and families prior to the absence.

## **ILLNESS/PREVENTION**

If your child is sick (with a fever, untreated rash, frequent coughing, diarrhoea, etc), he or she must stay at home. This policy, set by Vancouver Island Health Authority, is in place to protect other children from getting sick.

To reduce the spread of germs, we model and help with hand-washing throughout the day and maintain a clean space – by washing commonly-used surfaces and toys, vacuuming and mopping floors regularly.

## **CLEAN AIR AND WATER**

When we moved here, we hired a company to “ozonate” our home – a process that kills mold, mildew and dust spores. We wanted the indoor air to be fresh and clean for breathing – and we do our best to maintain high-quality air by using natural cleaning products, forced-air heat, and proper ventilation.

Our water supply comes from the lake and, depending on the time of year, contains various degrees of contaminants. When we moved in, we also had a four-part purification system installed to ensure that all water in the house is clean and free of iron, manganese, tannins, bacteria and pesticide residues.

## **COMMUNICATION**

It is important to talk about issues as they arise. If you feel upset or are concerned about something related to child care, please express them to one of us, either verbally or in writing. If there isn't enough time or private space to talk at the beginning or end of the day, you are welcome to give us a call or send an email in the evening. We value resolving differences in responsible and constructive ways and will do our best to reach a mutually-satisfying resolution.

## **YOUR GROWING CHILD**

To share with you what your child has been up to at daycare, we will occasionally take photos and videos (with your permission) and make written notes. We will also endeavour to maintain a personal communication journal for parents on days that allow. This is also a good way for parents to let us know of any special requests, concerns, ideas, etc.

## **TOYS FROM HOME**

To prevent loss of, damage to or conflict surrounding toys from home, please leave them at home or in your car. The children can bring one special item (a snuggly) for nap time. They can also bring show and tell items from time to time.

## **TELEVISION AND MOVIES**

As children thrive on opportunities to use and cultivate their imagination, we do not use television or movies at the daycare.

## **DIAPERS AND BOTTLES**

If your child wears diapers and/or uses a bottle, please leave enough of them by the change table and/or in the fridge (with your child's name on them).

## **OUTINGS**

Whenever we go on outings, we take a first-aid kit and cell phone. If we plan to use our vehicle for a field trip, we will request that you sign a permission form; alternatively, we will ensure that a staff member remains behind if you do not wish your child to participate in an outing.

## **PARENTAL INPUT**

We learn about each child as we share our days together and, accordingly, use interests to develop the daily program of activities. As *you* become aware of new and emerging interests in your child and if you have ideas about how he/she may like to explore them, please share that information with us! You know your child better than anyone and we are happy to receive your ongoing input and participation regarding his/her development at daycare.