



ROCKY MOUNTAIN JUSTB4 PROGRAM

PARENT HANDBOOK

2023-24



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Acknowledgment of Territory

We acknowledge that we are privileged and grateful to live, work, learn and play on the traditional and unceded territory of the Ktunaxa and Secwépemc people and the chosen home of the Métis and other Indigenous peoples.

Mission

We collaborate in the pursuit of each student's success to become knowledgeable, caring, contributing, resilient members of a global community.

Overview of Program

Welcome to the Rocky Mountain JUSTB4 Program!

Rocky Mountain JUSTB4 is a licensed preschool childcare program specifically designed to support children the year before they enter Kindergarten. This preschool program supports children in developing positive attitudes and beliefs about learning and is guided by the Ministry of Education's Early Learning Framework.

The program is 2 hours each day and is based on the Living Inquiries of the Ministry of Education's Early Learning Framework. The four Living Inquiries are:

- Well-being and belonging
- Engagement with others, materials, and the world
- Communication and literacies
- Identities, social responsibility, and diversity

The program provides a positive and nurturing early learning experience while supporting children as they continue to learn, grow and transition to Kindergarten. The Rocky Mountain JUSTB4 Program follows BC's Early Learning Framework and focuses on five areas of healthy child development:

- Social
- Emotional
- Physical
- Creative
- Intellectual

We value:

- Positive relationships between educators and children
- Meaningful interaction between educators and parents
- Quality relationships between staff and families
- Responsiveness to family needs
- Communication between staff and families

Program staff will keep you informed of your child's progress, accomplishments, likes, dislikes, difficulties, and behavioral challenges. They will also identify any concerns regarding your child's development, their safety and/or the safety of their classmates.

Our Influences and Approach

Our approach to curriculum is emergent, play-based and focuses on children's natural inquiries. Our preschool program is guided by the [BC Early Learning Framework](#) where the "Image of the Child is upheld in the belief that children are strong, capable in their uniqueness and full of potential." -BC Early Learning Framework, 2019.

Our aim is to support positive and responsive interactions. Building relationships are at the core of everything we do. We focus on strengths, respecting individual needs and meeting children where they are at in their development. Families know their child best and through regular interactions they provide us with invaluable insight. Sharing any information with our staff that may impact their time while in our care helps us to understand and support your child. By working together, and valuing the ideas of children, we build communities that honor our youngest citizens.

Rocky Mountain JUSTB4 Program General Information

The JUSTB4 program runs Monday to Friday afternoons from 1:00 to 3:00pm in the Strong Start Room located in the lower level of the Kimberley Early Learning Center (Blarchmont), 1850 Warren Ave, Kimberley.

The JUSTB4 Program is staffed with a licensed Early Childhood Educator (ECE) and an additional Early Childhood Educator Assistant (ECEA) to provide care for up to 20 children. JUSTB4 operates on the [School District calendar](#) which means the Program is closed for all statutory holidays, school holidays, and Professional Development Days. The Program will begin on September 11, 2023 and will conclude on June 27, 2024. The Program is covered by School District No. 6 liability insurance.

Our Routine

Children feel confident and secure when they know what to expect and have consistency to their days. We keep our daily routines consistent to ease transitions and to keep our days running as smoothly as possible. Our daily routines are planned to ensure that there is a balance between individual, small group, and large group activities. There is a balance in child-directed and educator-initiated activities incorporating both indoor and outdoor experiences. Educators are mindful to remain flexible to meet the needs of the children. Our daily schedule is subject to change for this reason.

Daily Schedule:

1:00-1:45 WELCOME TO CLASS/ WASH HANDS/EXPLORATION CENTRES

1:45-1:55 CLEAN UP

1:55-2:10 CIRCLE/STORYTIME/BOOK TIME/PUZZLE TIME

2:10-2:25 WASH HANDS AND SNACK

2:25-2:55 OUTDOOR TIME

2:55-3:00 MEET PARENTS/GUARDIANS AT THE OUTDOOR PLAY AREA FOR PICK UP

Planning

Educators and children act as researchers who work alongside each other, learning something new every day. Time is given to the educator to plan, document, study and reflect on all the learning happening inside the classroom and in the outdoor environment. Parents may see documentation displayed in the classroom. During our first few weeks together, the educator will focus on establishing routines as well as getting to know the children.

The JUSTB4 Manager will send home a monthly newsletter via email to keep families informed on what is happening in the Program and any upcoming activities/events.

Policies and Procedures

Admission & Enrolment

Registration and enrollment information can be found the Rocky Mountain School District6 website at <https://www.sd6.bc.ca/early-learning/justb4>

Rocky Mountain JUSTB4 Program will offer an inclusive early childhood experience for children who are turning four years of age by December 31st of the enrollment year and will be attending Kindergarten at Marysville Elementary School or Lindsay Park Elementary School the following school year.

Enrollment cannot be guaranteed or confirmed until all required forms and documents are received as well as a non-refundable registration fee of \$30.00. JUSTB4 will maintain an active waitlist and as spaces become available, they are offered to the next child on the list with a completed registration package.

Fees & Refunds

All families are required to pay a one-time \$30.00 non-refundable registration fee. Monthly fees from September to June are pro-rated for the year based on the number of days in session; therefore, the monthly fee remains consistent regardless of school closures such as professional development days, winter break, and spring break. Fees are due during the first week of the month of service and families have the option of paying fees electronically with a major credit card or by direct debit. Parents can also pay fees by cheque but there will be \$45.00 processing fee for any NSF cheques. **Refunds will not be issued due to illness or other absences during days the JUSTB4 Program is in session.**

JUSTB4 participates in the Child Care Fee Reduction Incentive (CCFRI) for all families which reduces monthly fees by \$95.00/month. Families may also qualify for the Affordable Child Care Benefit (ACCB) offered by the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD). Families must apply for the ACCB PRIOR to starting the JUSTB4 Program in September and those families who qualify for the ACCB are required to pay the remainder of the fees not covered by MCFD. Families accessing the ACCB are responsible for continuing with the ACCB renewal process.

Breakdown of Monthly Fees

Monthly Fees BEFORE CCFRI	CCFRI Reduction For All Children Per Month	Monthly Fees per Child	Breakdown of Cost per Day
\$300	\$95	\$205	\$11.45

*****Monthly fees MAY be further reduced if families qualify and apply for the Affordable Child Care Benefit before September.***

Outstanding Fees

If fees are not paid during the first week of the month, the following will occur:

- One week late – informal reminder.
- Two weeks late – a phone call will be made to discuss payment.
- Three weeks late – a letter will be provided and a copy will remain in your child's file.
- Four weeks late – mandatory withdrawal from the JUSTB4 program.

Withdrawal from JUSTB4

If you choose to withdraw your child from the JUSTB4 Program, you must provide at least one month's written notice to the JUSTB4 Manager by the first day of the month PRIOR to withdrawal. **There will be no refunds of fees without at least one month's written notice.**

Staffing Procedures

The JUSTB4 Program will be staffed with a BC Certified Early Childhood Educator (ECE) and a BC Certified Early Childhood Educator Assistant (ECEA). Our casual on-call staff may also include Responsible Adults (RA). All staff are required to have a Criminal Record Check on file and at least one staff member with a current First Aid Certificate will always be present in the Program. If a staff member is unable to attend work, a suitable replacement will be called in to cover in accordance with licensing regulations. We will make every effort to keep the JUSTB4 Program open, however if we are unable to find replacement staff that are qualified to teach the Program, JUSTB4 will be closed and parents/caregivers will be notified.

All Volunteers/Practicum Students/Support Workers that are in JUSTB4 will have Criminal Record Checks done prior to entering the room. Volunteers and Practicum Students are not considered part of our licensing ratio and therefore will not be left alone with the children. All Volunteers and Practicum Students are expected to adhere to policies and procedures of the Program.

Snacks/Nutrition Policy

Nutrition education in the early years can prove instrumental in influencing the development of healthy eating habits and social learning experiences.

Research shows us that when children learn where their food comes from, how it is grown, have hands-on experiences, and use their senses to understand it, they are more likely to taste new food items and accept them as part of their diet, building a foundation for lifelong healthy choices.

Parents/Guardians are responsible for providing nutritious snacks for their children. Please refer to Canada's Food Guide for snack ideas. Children will be encouraged to serve themselves, with assistance from the ECE and ECEA as needed. For the health and safety of all children, this Program is nut free. Notices will be sent home with children and posted at the JUSTB4 Program's entrance to notify parents of any other snack restrictions. Please send a reusable water bottle with your child's name on it.

We are a juice-and candy-free environment.

OUR GUIDANCE STRATEGIES

We believe in providing a safe, secure, respectful, and nurturing environment where each child feels free to express thoughts and emotions. Children are encouraged to develop deep and meaningful

relationships with their peers and JUSTB4 staff. By providing opportunities for social interaction and discussion, children learn to understand and deal with their own feelings, and to respect the feelings of others.

With respectful guidance from JUSTB4 staff, children gain independence, self-confidence, self-control and a sense of personal and social responsibility. Our goal is to provide a safe and healthy learning environment in which each child can feel secure.

Families can expect JUSTB4 staff to:

- Model appropriate, respectful behavior at all times.
- Promote the development of positive social skills including self-esteem and self-control.
- Encourage children to understand and follow simple rules.
- Supervise children at all times.

In addition, JUSTB4 staff will employ the following in the guidance of children:

1. EXPECTATIONS - Clear, consistent, and simple rules help children learn and understand what is expected of them. Our staff create positive boundaries that encourage children to focus their attention on what to do, rather than what not to do.
2. TRANSITIONS - Cues and warnings signal to the child that there will be a change in their activity or routine. This provides children with an opportunity to anticipate, prepare, and adjust to the change.
3. ACKNOWLEDGING FEELINGS - By acknowledging children's feelings, we help them to feel understood and supported in their environment. Acknowledging their feelings prior to stating a limit helps to elicit a positive response.
4. CHOICES - To promote self-regulation and independence, we offer age and developmentally appropriate choices for each child.

Personal Items

We ask that children do not bring toys from home to the program for the purpose of regular play. It can be distressing for children when asked to share them and distracting and/or disappointing for other children who may not be allowed to play with them. Children may be asked to bring something from home for show and tell days or as part of the learning to enable these opportunities.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be informed ahead of time about these occasions.

Clothing & Footwear

Dressing for the Weather = Dressing for Play!

Play can be Messy!

Play is an important part of the JUSTB4 Program and the work of children can be messy. While your child is here, we can guarantee you they will get messy. From exploring outside, using art and sensory materials in the classroom, learning how to serve and feed themselves snacks - childhood is a messy and fun learning experience!

If you are concerned about an article of clothing getting dirty and/or getting stained here, please do not send it.

Active play is important in the growth and development of the child's gross motor skills and helps to promote healthy living. Educators will ensure that each child has the opportunity for 30 mins of active play during each class. If the weather is too cold or hot for staff to safely take the children outdoors, staff will provide adequate gross motor time indoors. Active play can and will be a combination of outside play along with scheduled gym times.

Please bring an extra set of clothes to leave at the school, labelled and in a Ziploc bag, as well as an appropriate pair of inside shoes for play (i.e. running shoes) with non-marking soles. Children must wear inside shoes at all times in case of an emergency and the need to suddenly leave the building. Please dress your child for play in appropriate indoor and outdoor clothing according to the weather (including splash or snow pants, boots, coat, etc.). Our Program will go outside during all seasons, weather permitting. Please label all items of clothing and footwear brought to the preschool. If you need assistance in outfitting your child, please let the JUSTB4 staff know so we can support your needs.

Health and Hygiene Policies

Illness Policy

We do our best to limit the spread of communicable illness at JUSTB4. While we are sensitive to the stress that illness may cause for families, we are not licensed to care for children when they are sick. For that reason, we ask that you keep your child at home and notify staff within the first 24 hours if your child has:

- been exposed to or has a communicable disease (i.e., strep throat, chicken pox, measles, Pneumonia, or any undiagnosed rash).
- a fever over 38°C (100°F).
- severe coughing or sore throat causing difficulty in swallowing.
- diarrhea or is vomiting.
- little or no energy to actively participate in Program activities, including outdoor play.
- contracted a contagious condition such as head lice, skin infection, or pink eye.
- any infectious discharge or drainage from eyes, ears, thick green/yellow runny nose, or open sores.
- any injury causing pain or discomfort.

It is recommended that children are kept home until they are symptom free for at least 48 hours without medication. **If a child has been sent home from the Program with a fever, vomiting or diarrhea they will not be permitted back until 24 hours after the last episode of the illness.**

More information about child illnesses can be found at:

<https://www.interiorhealth.ca/health-and-wellness/infant-child-and-youth-health/school-health/school-health-care>

<https://sneezesdiseases.com>

Please make sure you notify JUSTB4 staff as soon as you become aware of symptoms and if your child will be absent that day. If your child becomes ill at JUSTB4, staff will quickly assess the situation and a

parent/caregiver will be notified as soon as possible. You may be asked to pick up your child within a timely manner of the phone call. If you cannot be reached, your emergency contact will be called.

The staff will notify Community Care Licensing when it is aware of a child enrolled that has a reportable communicable disease. You can read the list of reportable incidents in Schedule H of the Child Care Licensing Regulation.

Toileting & Washroom Access

When children arrive, parents/guardians will have an opportunity to take their child to use the washrooms located in the hallway near the Strong Start/JUSTB4 classroom. Handwashing is encouraged after toileting and preschool children must be independent in toileting needs. In the event of a toileting accident or emergency, either the ECE or the ECEA/RA will assist a child in going to the bathroom.

Cleaning and Sanitizing

Cleaning products used are approved by Community Care Licensing agency and School District 6. All sanitizing and cleaning of the room, toys, materials and equipment will be done prior to and at the end of every day the Program runs. Protocols for cleaning follow Health and Safety Guidelines for cleaning and disinfecting in accordance with the Ministry of Education and the Provincial Health Officer.

Safety Policies

Emergencies - Fire Drills/Lockdown

Monthly fire drills and lockdown practices will be carried out randomly throughout the year. JUSTB4 staff will inform the parents and/or caregivers the day before a practice drill so that they may prepare their child for the disruption to their regular routine. In the event of an emergency evacuation, the educator will lead the class out of the building to a designated meeting place. Your child's teacher will have student contact information with them in the event that parents need to be contacted. If an emergency is occurring, please do not come to the JUSTB4 Program unless requested to do so.

It's important to speak to the JUSTB4 staff to ensure that you are aware of the Program's emergency plan and designated meeting place. There is a muster point located outside the learning center next to the field. In the event of emergencies requiring relocation, McKim School is the muster area for emergency evacuations (689 Rotary Drive).

Emergency Plan

Should your child be seriously injured or become very ill, the JUSTB4 educator or School District staff will:

- Call an ambulance
- Call the parent/guardian
- Take the child's emergency card to the hospital
- Accompany the child to the hospital
- Meet the parent/guardian at the hospital

Care and Supervision

Rocky Mountain JUSTB4 Program educators believe that focusing on the safety, well-being and development of the children in our Program is critical.

Supervision Strategies and Procedures

Staff will:

- provide continuous supervision of the children in our care and will account for all children at all times.
- have their cell phone, emergency student cards, and first aid kit available at all times.
- maintain a safe physical environment by doing daily checks of both inside and outside play areas as well equipment.
- take into account the location of play equipment and furniture to allow staff to maintain a clear line of sight to all children at all times.
- be aware of student numbers by having access to attendance lists.
- do headcounts throughout the day, as well as before and after transitions, during regular play activities and before leaving for field trips.
- clearly set up boundaries with the children when going outside. Staff will position themselves so they can see the play space, moving as required and doing head counts frequently.
- require signed permission forms before walking off school grounds and signed permission forms will be brought on these field trips.
- know where the medication lock box, first aid kit, and emergency numbers are kept.

Program Responsibilities:

- Provide a quality program for learning that develops curiosity, creativity, and imagination.
- Treat children and families with respect and fairness.
- Guide children in developing skills for lifelong learning.
- Ensure the safety and wellbeing of each child.
- Participate in and know all Child Care Licensing Regulations for Fire Drills, Earthquake Drills, Evacuation and Lockdown procedures. These are posted in the StrongStart classroom.
- Have monthly fire drill practices and record these in the JUSTB4 Logbook.
- Have a sign in/out sheet for daily arrival and departure.
- Notify parents or guardians immediately if their child becomes sick or injured.

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities:

- Provide accurate and up-to-date information on registration forms.
- Pay monthly Program fees on time.
- Meet the early childhood educator during intake to have a welcoming conversation and share information about your child.
- Introduce yourself and other family members who have permission to drop off or pick up your child.
- Be respectful of the school staff and the environment.
- Inform educators if your child will be absent or late.

- Inform educators of changes at home that may affect your child's mood or behavior.
- Ensure your child has weather appropriate clothing.
- Ensure your child has a health snack each day.
- Ensure your child has a labelled reusable water bottle and indoor shoes.
- Bring in extra clothes (t-shirt, pants, underwear) labelled in a Ziploc bag.

Drop Off:

The JUSTB4 Program begins daily at 1:00. An authorized adult (as per the registration form) may drop children off 5 minutes before the start of the Program. Please do not drop off your child before 12:55. The Adult dropping off will be asked to complete the sign in form by adding their name and the time of drop off.

Pick Up:

Children will only be released to an authorized adult (as per the registration form). The adult picking up will be asked to sign out the child (name and time of pick up on provided form). Pick up time is at 3 pm, please be punctual when picking up your child. If children are not picked up at the specified time as outlined in this handbook, the Parents/Guardians will be called. If staff cannot get in contact with the Parents/Guardians, the alternate and/or emergency contact(s) will be called. The Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) will be notified anytime a child is not picked up within 30 minutes of the end of the Program if there has not been any contact from a Parent/Guardian or emergency contact to explain the nature of the delay and to confirm a pickup plan for their child.

Safe Release Policy

According to Child Care Licensing Regulations, if the authorized pick-up person arrives at the Program and appears to be impaired, or unfit to drive or safely transport your child, the JUSTB4 staff will request an alternate authorized person is contacted to pick up the child. If no alternate can be reached and the authorized pick-up person insists on taking the child, JUSTB4 staff will release the child and immediately contact the RCMP. The incident will also be filed with the Ministry of Children & Family Development.

As a safety measure, we ask that parents/guardians provide names of up to four people authorized to pick up your child on the JUSTB4 Program registration form. As a safety procedure, if an unfamiliar adult is picking up your child, JUSTB4 staff will ask the authorized adult for identification. If the individual is not on the registration form as authorized for pick-up, your child will remain in the Program until an authorized person arrives. In an emergency, parents can contact JUSTB4 staff and add another person to the list.

Family Crisis/Changes

If there are any changes in the family such as separation, death, divorce, illness, extended absences, or any change in routine that may affect your child, (ie., bedtime routines) please advise the JUSTB4 staff so they can be prepared and supportive of your child.

Confidentiality

Rocky Mountain JUSTB4 program will ensure that any information or records regarding your family are kept confidential. The only unauthorized release of information or records would be for a legal matter that is requested through a court order or to comply with Child Care Licensing Regulations.

As educators employed by School District No. 6, JUSTB4 staff are legally obligated to report any suspicion of child neglect and/or abuse to the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD).

JUSTB4 Program Requirements to Report Suspected Abuse or Neglect:

- JUSTB4 staff are legally obligated to report any suspected abuse, abuse that a child discloses, or that a third party discloses.
- It is not the responsibility of the JUSTB4 staff to investigate or question the circumstances of the suspected abuse.
- JUSTB4 staff are required to inform the Director of Early Learning and Child Care of the suspicions or of the subsequent report to MCFD as per School District No. 6 Policy.
- JUSTB4 staff will keep information confidential, except to the required authorities.
- It is the responsibility of the Ministry of Children and Family Development to investigate any report and to inform all those involved of their investigation.
- The source of any reports made will not be disclosed.

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities:

- If parents live separately, the JUSTB4 Program expects that the information provided by the enrolling parent is accurate. Without a custody agreement or court order on file, JUSTB4 staff cannot deny access to the non-enrolling parent.
- If a custody or court order exists, please provide a copy of the order to be placed in the child's file.
- It is the responsibility of the primary parent/guardian to provide up-to-date and accurate information concerning legal guardianship of the child.

Parents/Guardians are welcome to visit the JUSTB4 Program classroom at any time during the hours of operation, unless prohibited by custody court order. JUSTB4 staff will need a copy of applicable custody court orders on file in order to comply. Parents/Guardians wishing to visit/volunteer on a regular basis will be required to complete a Criminal Record Check through the RCMP. Criminal Record Check forms and instructions are available from the JUSTB4 Manager. There is no charge for this service.

Technology Use

Rocky Mountain JUSTB4 Program does not encourage screen time unless it is teacher led for educational purposes. Technology will on occasion be used to enhance learning experiences or to document learning through photos or videos which may be taken using cameras, phones, or tablets.

Media Release

A key component of our Program is documenting. This includes taking photos of what we do, our learning processes and discoveries. We use documentation to support the children, share elements of

the program with their families, and for professional purposes. If used in an online format, photos will be shared with families on a secure site that only they have access to viewing.

Parents will be asked to read and sign a Media Release and photography permission form. If they do not agree, those children will not have their images captured for documentation purposes. Please note that Child Care Licensing Regulations require that we take a photograph of each individual child in the Program for identification purposes pertaining to safety and security and regardless of parent permission.

Contact Information

For information on registration and any other JUSTB4 inquiries please contact the Rocky Mountain JUSTB4 Early Childhood Educator and Manager, Liz Dowling.

Email: liz.dowling@sd6.bc.ca

Cell Phone: 250-432-5443

Additional JUSTB4 Staffing Contact Information

JUSTB4 Early Childhood Educator Assistant – Tiffany Chintu

Email: tiffany.chintu@sd6.bc.ca

Director of Instruction, Early Learning and Child Care – Crystal MacLeod

Email: crystal.macleod@sd6.bc.ca