

Hundred Acre Wood



Parent Handbook 2024

(A guide to inform you more about our ECD Centre)

We would like to thank you for choosing our daycare and welcome you and your child to 100 Acre Wood ECD Centre.

Our address:

59 – 61 Forest Drive, Pinelands, 7405

Telephone number: 061 369 0124

We hope this handbook answers your questions and gives you information necessary to feel comfortable and confident in allowing us to care for your child.

This ECD Centre has been in existence for 19 years which operates under a principal – Shelley Ann Schram. Mrs. Schram is assisted by manager, Maxseen McCarthy. Both Mrs. Schram and Ms. McCarthy are trained teachers with years of experience teaching.

Maxseen McCarthy is a qualified B-ED foundation (UNISA) stage teacher and Shelley Schram has her PGCE in Early Childhood Development from UNISA.

100 Acre Wood ECD Centre is a licensed establishment with the Department of Social Development and the Cape Town City Council. Registration number: 15/5/13/2/2 C 8140.

Philosophy

We believe that Childcare is an extension of the Family Unit. Each family is important, and we aim to support parents in the care and upbringing of their children in a happy and homely atmosphere.

We will provide a safe and nurtured environment in which to encourage, stimulate and develop individual growth.

We believe that children should: -

- Always feel safe, happy and comfortable
- Have opportunities to seek challenges as part of their exploration within a safe environment
- Be given the opportunity to experience a programme aimed at developing the child – physically, emotionally, imaginatively, socially and intellectually
- Have opportunities to express their feelings
- Have opportunities to be involved in activities that develop a positive self-concept and confidence in themselves
- Be able to grow in independence and respect the rights of others.
- Develop an appreciation of the wider community through involvement of community, home and our ECD Centre.

- Be encouraged to be involved in the care of the environment
- Be taught to be loving, caring and to respect individual differences

100 Acre Wood ECD Centre achieves this philosophy by: -

- Recognizing that each child is an individual
- Providing a Quality Developmental Programme within the context that learning and play should be fun
- Employing caring, appropriately Qualified and Experienced staff who can meet the varying needs of children
- Providing facilities of a high standard located within a healthy environment
- Ensuring that Parents have the opportunity to discuss their children's needs with Staff
- Providing children with nutritional and inviting meals

Classes

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|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Class 1: | 18 month – 2 years old |
| Class 2 and Class 5: | 2 – 3-year-old |
| Class 3: | 12 – 18-month-old |
| Class 4 and Class 10: | 3 – 4-year-old |
| Class 6 and 7: | 4 – 5-year-old |

Program

As we continuously strive to improve your child's experience at the daycare, we have introduced our GROW programme in all of the classes. We implemented this programme in March 2014 and the results have been fantastic.

The GROW programme is a theme-based curriculum tailored specifically to each of your child's everyday experiences. It is a curriculum that is widely used for the foundation years and provides a structured learning approach throughout all the classes. The GROW programme has clearly defined milestones that we encourage all of our children to reach throughout the year.

While this curriculum allows our children to develop naturally, it also provides a very balanced foundation. It allows your child to enjoy the various fun activities throughout the day.

Through play, children learn what no one can teach them. They are able to develop skills such as independence, resourcefulness, curiosity, creativity and responsibility. Play is a child's work!

Our daycare provides age- appropriate areas for dramatic play, arts and crafts, science and nature and discovery, sensory exploration and block play, shelf toys, puzzles, fine motor and books. Our gross motor activities and outdoor play provide opportunities for running and jumping and the development of gross motor skills.

During free play the children can choose their own activities according to their interests. Special field trips and community visitors will be offered. The daily schedule is available for your viewing in each of the classes.

Creative projects are filed in their file. This file gets sent home at the end of the year. We do however send 'masterpieces' home regularly with your child. Please watch for these. Take it home to enjoy with them. They are very proud to share.

Staff

Our staff are trained, qualified teachers accredited in the Early Childhood Education Course with all possessing a Level 4 accreditation and some studying further towards their Level 5. We also have a qualified GRADE R teacher. All staff are First Aid and CPR Certified. Our daycare supports staff training and development as an opportunity for improving current work performance, providing enrichment, and preparing individuals to meet future organizational needs.

Our staff are trained to deal with any difficulty that may develop during the day. They will help your child explore the world through various activities. They will also help your child learn acceptable behaviour in an atmosphere of warmth and caring. Please feel free to approach the staff with any questions or concerns you may have.

You will also find the Owner/Principal, Shelley Schram and manager, Maxseen McCarthy, ensuring the smooth running of the daycare. The principal is there to assist and advise staff as well as to help the parents with any questions or concerns.

Emotional Development and Child Guidance

Child guidance is maintained through careful, active supervision, setting clear limits and giving age appropriate explanations. Teachers approach discipline in a positive manner, using praise and attention to encourage desirable behaviours. Teachers treat each child as a unique individual and are fair, firm and consistent. We encourage children to accept the consequences of their behaviour and we engage in problem solving alternatives where age appropriate. Methods used include:

1. REDIRECTION: guiding a child into acceptable options
2. LOGICAL AND NATURAL CONSEQUENCES: making the child aware of the results of their actions
3. LIMIT SETTING: teachers develop boundaries for the children, either as a group or individually according to the situation
4. MODELING: demonstrating appropriate ways to the children
5. PROVIDING CHOICES: teachers outline appropriate choices and children are encouraged to make decisions for themselves
6. ANTICIPATING: teachers plan and prepare the environment in such a manner to avoid conflict

7. **IGNORING:** some inappropriate behavior can be ignored and more attention paid to appropriate behavior
8. **REFLECTION TIME:** a child may be removed from a situation that is distressing them for a short period of time

Health and Safety

As part of the enrollment process, all children must be up to date with their required immunizations prior to starting. Updates must be given to the principle as immunizations are completed and yearly as required.

To maintain a good standard of health, a Daily Health Check is completed upon each child's arrival at the daycare. Children showing signs of a communicable disease such as pink eye, vomiting, 2 or more bouts of diarrhea, fever, undiagnosed rash/skin disease, must be kept at home until diagnosed by a physician. Should a child become ill during the day he/she will be supervised away from the other children and the principal will use their discretion in deciding if the parent should be contacted and if the child is sent home. Should the child need to be sent home it is the parent's responsibility to pick up their child or to make arrangements for them to be picked up. Our daycare is not equipped to attend to the needs of a sick child.

Please notify the daycare if your child has been exposed to any communicable disease whether or not they are showing any symptoms. A sign will be posted to report any communicable disease to the parents.

Accidents and young children seem to go together. Children often fall and always seem to have bumps and scrapes. If your child gets hurt at the daycare a written report will be completed and shown to you for you to sign in acknowledgment and this will then be placed in your child's file. If there is a serious accident that results in the need for medical attention, the daycare will contact you and arrangements will be made for you to pick up your child or meet the staff at the emergency facility. If you cannot be reached, we will contact your emergency contact.

Vincent Pallotti Hospital is a 2 minute drive away. A doctor is available 2 doors down from our daycare for emergencies.

Please note: There are security camera's in each of the classrooms as well as air conditioners.

Upon registration an emergency contact, other than the parents – MUST be given on the enrollment form. In an emergency staff will always attempt to contact the parents first.

A random monthly evacuation drill is conducted as part of our program. Children are oriented to the procedure within their first week of attending our program to ensure their safe retreat. In the event of a building evacuation, we have an assembly point (clearly signed) at the front of the house. Fire drill procedures are situated in each of the classes.

We ask that you assist us in providing a safe environment for the children by ensuring that your child does not bring balloons (either inflated or deflated), toys with small pieces or anything which may be a hazard to the young children at the daycare.

Medication

Please note that no medication will be administered at the daycare. If your child is on medication this must be administered before school, provided they are well enough to attend school.

If your child is on chronic medication – parents are to complete the form available at the daycare.

Sun Protection

Please ensure sun protection is put on your child before he/she comes to school during the warm weather. Parents are encouraged to supply a hat each day. Please see list of requirements.

Nutrition

Wholesome, nutritious lunches and snacks (morning and afternoon) are provided for the children. Menus for the current week are posted on the notice board at the entrance to the classrooms. The needs and allergies of your children should be discussed with the teacher/principle prior to enrollment. Please do not send sweets, gum, and other junk food to school with your child. Think healthy. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated.

PLEASE DO NOT SEND FOOD ITEMS THAT CONTAIN NUTS OR MAY CONTAIN TRACES OF NUTS

Clothing and Possessions

If your child isn't dirty at the end of the day, give them back to us because they haven't played hard enough to learn anything!

Playing and learning is hard dirty work. Here are some clothing tips to help your child play and learn:

- make sure your child knows it is ok to get dirty. Children often refuse to take part in a messy activity because they are afraid they will get dirty
- dress your child in comfortable, washable clothes
- make sure your child has a change of indoor and outdoor clothing in their locker at all times, in case of accidents.
- please help keep your child safe by removing strings from your child's clothing (jackets/hoods etc.) to prevent choking/ strangulation
- label all clothing so they can be easily identified, all items without a label will be placed in the "lost and found" and after a period of time unclaimed items will be donated.
- send your child with clothing that encourages independent dressing and are easily laundered.
- SHOES – please avoid sending lace up shoes to school – this makes getting ready for activities quicker for the teacher.

Hours of Operation

This ECD Centre is open year round and operates Monday to Friday 7:00 a.m. to 5:15p.m. Children must not arrive at the daycare BEFORE 7:00 a.m.

A late fee charge of **five rand per minute per child** must be paid to the staff on duty if you arrive after 5:15 p.m. to pick up your child.

The daycare closure dates for 2015 can be found on our calendar on the website or in any of the classrooms.

Arrival and Departure

Children must be brought directly to the classroom in the morning. Under NO circumstances should a child be sent into the daycare alone and expected to find their classroom. Parents must ensure that a staff member is aware of the child's arrival. Make your presence known to the teacher, if your arrival hasn't been acknowledged.

Children must be picked up by 5:15 p.m. or late charges apply. If anyone other than the person authorized on your application will be picking up your child, please let the teacher or principle know in advance. We will only release your child to persons you have advised upon. In the event of custodial disputes we must have legal documentation regarding child custody arrangements.

The daycare assumes no responsibility for children once they are picked up by a person authorized by the parent (i.e. relative, an emergency contact, child care provider, etc.)

Enrollment

Many children can enter a childcare facility with little or no complications. However, this transition can be difficult for some children. Our staff will do everything they possibly can to help both the child and the parent/guardian overcome the anxiety of separation. It has been our experience that children will quickly calm down and begin to explore their environment once the parent has left. We also welcome parents' calls at any time throughout the day to discuss their child's day and to assist in reassuring the parent their child is adjusting.

An enrollment package must be completed and returned, and the registration fee paid prior to the child attending.

While every effort is made to accommodate each child, there may be occasions where a child's particular needs cannot be met by our daycare. In that event, the principal will work with the

parents to find appropriate care and may ask that the child be withdrawn. You will be given withdrawal notice of at least 2 weeks in this rare case.

Fees

A non- refundable registration fee of R3000.00 is required upon registration.

Fees are paid in advance and on the 1st of every month. If fees are not paid by the 1st of every month a 2% interest fee will be applied. Payment can be made via EFT or cash. Cash must be handed directly to the principal.

Two months' written notice is required when you wish to withdraw your child from the ECD Centre.

If you wish to take your child out of the ECD Centre within the last quarter of the year, you may do so on or before the 1st October. (I remind all parents of the 2 months' notice period) If you choose to take your child out after the 1st October, you will still be liable for November and December full fees.

We have found over the last couple of years that parents have opted to take their children out just before we commence the December month, as this is a short month. This does affect the teacher's holiday pay and since we are open throughout the year, we feel that it is only fair that we safeguard our teacher's end of year payout and holiday. Which I am sure you will agree is very well deserved.

If your child is absent or sick or you are taking a family vacation during the year you will still be liable for the full fees for the month.

Communication and Parent Participation

It is our goal as a daycare to maintain an "OPEN DOOR" policy. We feel it is important to have open communication with parents and families. Parents are always welcome at the centre at any time during the day to visit with their child without giving prior notice, and please feel free to call at any time to check on how your child's day is going. We ask that you advise us of any changes or events at home that may affect your child's behavior. Our staff are committed to providing an environment which fosters co- operation between the home and centre. It is very important that both the parents and the teachers work together to help your child reach their full potential. Daily contact with parents is encouraged at drop off and pick up time. Feedback and suggestions are welcome at any time. Electronic surveys are sent out periodically. Reports are given at the end of Term 2 and Term 4. We will also provide an opportunity for all parents to sit down at scheduled times during the year and discuss their child's progress with the teachers and principal.

A yearly calendar will be in the classrooms indicating themes for the year and the associated activities etc.

Field trips – parents will be notified of any field trips and off- site activities through the monthly calendars as well as postings. Parents are encouraged to come along with their child on these outings.

Fundraising- parents are asked to assist the ECD Centre in the fundraising throughout the year. Fundraising helps us in keeping our childcare fees down by assisting us in purchasing numerous program supplies, such as new toys, gross motor equipment and educational games.

Important numbers:

Shelley Schram: 061 369 0124

Maxseen McCarthy: 074 134 2476