



Leq'á:mel
Aboriginal Head Start

Introduction

Welcome to Leq'á:mel Head Start! We are excited to have your child attend Leq'á:mel Head Start program! Our goal is to provide a healthy, safe, and nurturing environment for your child to grow and develop with our aboriginal culture and traditional teachings as well as encouraging your child's growth in their spiritual, physical, emotional, mental, and social development. This Program is completely free and offered to children between the ages of 3-5. We look forward to getting to know your family and your child.

Our Philosophy

Our vision is to nurture the growth and development of our future generations, our children, with our indigenous culture and traditional teachings. We strive to provide a healthy, safe, and nurturing environment to encourage the spiritual, physical, emotional, mental, and social growth of our children. We believe children are sacred gifts from the creator and are valued and respected. Each child is born with their own unique gift, and we provide a learning environment with exploratory and discovery experiences. We implement our cultural teachings that include our traditional ceremonies, language, stories and songs, arts and crafts and field trips.

Our traditional beliefs will be implemented daily, and our environment is designed to encourage all areas of growth for each child. Children will learn about respecting Earth's gifts and caring for our planet. There will be an elder to provide cultural guidance and children will learn the importance of respecting our elderly. Children will be learning equality, cooperation and sharing, consideration for others and to respect their peers. We value and respect families and encourage family involvement as we work together for the health and well-being of the child.

At Leq'á:mel Childcare Centre the staff will develop and implement cultural and developmentally appropriate play-based curriculum for the growth and development of each child. The staff will follow core values of respect, trust, integrity, and responsibility.

Respect: Leq'á:mel staff will respect the diversity of all individuals, children and families, and colleagues and recognize that children are best understood and supported in the context of their family, cultural beliefs, community traditions and the greater society. We can trust one another as we work together in the best interest of the child and family, advocating for and supporting one another.

Trust: Leq'á:mel staff appreciate and support the bonds between each child and family and recognize that children achieve their full potential through relationships with trust and respect. We commit to keeping our word, following through, and giving our best effort in building trust with our children and families.

Integrity: Leq'á:mel staff respect the dignity, worth and uniqueness of each child, family and colleagues and recognize and appreciate childhood as a unique and valuable stage of life. We are making a difference in our community today and for future generations.

Responsibility: We have a responsibility to our community as a whole and each other. We take ownership of our roles and ensure that others can rely on us to provide quality care for each child and work together with each family.

Program Components

All Aboriginal Head Start on Reserve programs include six components: culture and language, education, health promotion, nutrition, social support, and parent and family involvement.

Culture & Language

First Nations languages in BC have experienced a century of language repression, followed by decades of neglect. While the AHSOR program cannot undo this loss of language, its focus on culture and language - part of the health of communities - plays a positive role in a child's development. The culture and language component allows First Nations children to experience their cultures and learn their languages. Activities give children a sense of belonging and an identity as a First Nations person.

Education

The education component promotes life-long learning with activities that encourage a child's readiness to learn. Activities also focus on the physical, spiritual, emotional, intellectual, and social development needs of children. Community members, including Elders, are involved in helping with early literacy activities, such as printing and recognizing sounds and words.

Health Promotion

The health promotion component encourages children and families to have a healthy lifestyle. Programming promotes physical activity, such as playground activities and traditional games. Staff promote self-care, such as helping children to brush their teeth, and encourage appropriate assessments for children.

Nutrition

Nutrition is an important part of healthy living. Good food can improve an individual's health and poor or inadequate food can undermine health. Good eating habits established early can lead to better health throughout life, providing information about nutrition and healthy eating to children and their caregivers is key to long-term health. Programming offers nutritious snacks and meals and provides children with opportunities to participate in traditional food-gathering activities.

Social Support

Social support is an important social determinant of health. Quite simply, the support of family and community is critical in determining an individual's health. The social support component informs parents and guardians about the resources, services, and health providers available to them to achieve a healthy and holistic lifestyle.

Parental & Family Involvement

The parental and family involvement component recognizes and supports the role of parents and family as the primary teachers and caregivers of their children. Programming provides opportunities for participation of parent/guardian committees.

About Our Program

Program Activities, Play Areas, and Child Development

The curriculum implemented in the daily routine will consist of art, circle, indoor play, and outdoor play. Monthly themes are implemented into the program based on the children's interest; this is to encourage learning experiences for the child.

During art children are developing their fine motor skills, eye and hand coordination, using their imagination in their cognitive development and expressing their emotions through creativity. At circle time, children learn songs and stories that develop their cognitive thinking and enhance their vocabulary. They learn to express their emotions through music. They also develop their large motor muscles through music and movement. Circle time will also have an indigenous cultural component that encourages learning in language with songs and stories. Children also learn traditional music.

During indoor play, children engage with peers and develop their social skills. There are play areas set up to encourage learning experiences for the child and encourage all areas of growth. In the classroom, there are puzzles, manipulative toys, block play, art, housekeeping, and a book area.

During Outdoor play, children engage with peers and develop their social skills. They develop physically by moving their large motor muscles. The outdoor play area includes a sandbox, water play, bike riding, climber, balls, and other outside toys to encourage all areas of growth and development.

Aboriginal culture is implemented into all areas of play and implemented into the curriculum. Our knowledge keeper (elder) comes to the daycare regularly and engages with children and shares Aboriginal culture and teachings.

9:30	Head start opens Quiet activities are set out
9:45	Circle Time
10:15	Art & Free Play
10:30	Snack time
11:00- 12:00	Outside Play
12:00	Home Time

Head Start On-Reserve

Statement of Beliefs and Values about Children

We believe...

- *That children are a gift from the Creator;*
- *That our children have a right to live proudly as First Nations people in the lands of their ancestors;*
- *That children have a right to learn their respective First Nation language(s) and histories, and adults have a responsibility to pass on the instructions that the Creator gave at the beginning of time as are reflected in our languages, cultural beliefs and cultural practices;*
- *That each child is part of what makes a community whole;*
- *That it is essential for children to develop meaningful relationships with Elders, the carriers of knowledge and history;*
- *That children, under the guidance of Elders, will learn to love learning throughout their lifetime;*
- *That adults are community role models who are to teach children how to live a good life;*
- *That children deserve opportunities to gain knowledge and experience of how to live a good life;*
- *That children acquire knowledge by watching, listening and doing, and adults are responsible for encouraging and guiding them in all those activities;*
- *That children, through being loved, valued and encouraged, will gain the courage, the strength and the wisdom to use the power of a good mind and spirit in all that they do;*
- *That children have a right to enjoy the opportunities that education offers;*
- *That children have a right to live in healthy, self-determining communities that are free of violence.*

Welcome to Leq'á:mel Head Start on Reserve

Hours of Operation

Leq'á:mel Head Start program is a completely free program for children between the ages 0-6 years old. Head Start will run on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:30am-12pm. *Please Note This program will not run over Spring, Summer, and Winter break*

Closures

Leq'á:mel Head Start on Reserve is closed for all statutory holidays, we are also closed for Holidays based on the days of the week that December 24 to January 1st land on.

Statuary Holidays include New Year's Day, Family Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Victoria Day, Indigenous Peoples Day, Canada Day, BC Day, Labor Day, National Truth & Reconciliation Day, Thanksgiving Day, Remembrance Day, Christmas Day, Boxing Day.

Parking

Parents will have parking located at #62 Moq'wem Place. Parents are asked to turn vehicles off, please no idling, when dropping your child off and when picking your child up.

Open Door policy

At Leq'á:mel Head Start, we value, and respect families and we encourage family involvement. Parents are encouraged to share their gifts in their child's programs. Parents are encouraged to participate in programs or special events at the daycare or participate in going on program field trips.

Complaints and concerns

Please email or call if there are any complaints or concerns for your child, Leq'á:mel Head Start will do their best to resolve and come to a solution that works for all people involved. If the complaint is regarding lost items, please give us time to track down missing belongings. If the complaint is regarding a staff member, we would like parents to try and communicate with the staff to come to an agreement for their child in our care first. If the communication is not successful with the staff, then management will work with the parent(s) on coming up with a solution that works for everyone in the best interest of the child. In an instance regarding specific care for your child, a care plan will be developed in the best interest of the child. The parent(s) and staff will agree to the care plan.

Confidentiality

All staff will keep confidentiality with our programs, children, and families. Staff will only communicate with you about your child and will not communicate information regarding other children. Anything that is said in confidence is kept confidential between Leq'á:mel staff and kept confidential if it doesn't put anyone in harm's way.

Photographs and Videos

Parents have an option to sign consent for their child to have their photograph and/or video taken for advertisements, Head Start promotions, Head Start website and daycare social media pages.

Devices and Screen time

Leq'á:mel Head Start will not be allowing any screen time in the childcare facility unless it is for Educational Purposes, or special occasions, if not for educational purposes parents will be notified prior to and all programs will be rated G. Children are encouraged to engage in daycare program activities. Leq'á:mel Head Start staff requests you keep your child's device at home. Leq'á:mel daycare is not responsible for any broken, lost, or stolen devices brought into the daycare.

Home Toys Policy

Children are required to keep their home toys at home. Leq'á:mel daycare has a variety of toys supplied at the daycare for the children to play with. Leq'á:mel daycare is not responsible for any broken, lost, or stolen toys that are brought into the daycare.

Guidance and Behaviour

Leq'á:mel Head Start staff will guide your child's behaviors with a variety of strategies. Our environment is set up to peek your child's interest in play. Leq'á:mel Head Start staff will engage with the children and develop relationships with your child. The children are valued, their emotions are acknowledged and Leq'á:mel Head Start staff listen to what the child has to say about what they need. Leq'á:mel Head Start staff redirects behaviour by guiding the child into play and focusing on acknowledging and encouraging positive behaviour. Children will hit and push or fight over a toy and this is common as they are learning how to resolve conflict. Sometimes the children have disagreements, and Leq'á:mel Head Start staff encourage communication between children to resolve their conflicts. We help the child develop the words they want to say to each other.

Biting

Sometimes children bite. Children with less vocabulary to express what they want and/or being able to express their feelings, the child is frustrated, they will bite. Sometimes biting occurs because a child is teething and other instances where in defense if another child is hitting or pushing.

Aggressive Behaviour

Aggressive Behaviour is defined as punching, choking, kicking, and throwing toys and furniture that is exhibited by a child that causes serious physical harm to other children and staff. Every effort will be made to try to implement behaviour strategies to reduce/eliminate aggressive behaviour. Care Plans are developed to help design an individual strategy or plan to meet the needs of the child.

Inclement weather policy

Inclement weather is described as heavy snowfall and storms that potentially can affect the safe commute of staff and families. Leq'á:mel Head Start will be closed for inclement weather when the school district announces school closure.

Unforeseen Closure

Unforeseen closures can occur sometimes with advanced notice or short notice. For example, if city crews give advance notice for the shut off from our water or power, we will inform families as soon as possible of the planned closure and instances where short notice would be given is when a water pipe bursts. Leq'á:mel Head Start staff will do our best to inform families as soon as we possibly can in unforeseen closures.

Power Outage

Leq'á:mel Head Start will be closed in the occurrence of a power outage.

Our procedure:

If the power outage has occurred during the night and is still out by 8:00 am, Leq'á:mel Head Start will remain closed. If the power outage occurs during operation hours, we will first contact BC Hydro for an estimated time for restoration of power. If the estimated time is more than two hours, we will contact the parent(s) to pick up as soon as possible and close. If power restoration is less than 2 hours and we are losing heat fast then we will contact parents for pick up as soon as possible. Leq'á:mel Head Start will not accept any drop offs for any children when the power is out.

Medical Emergency and Emergency Transportation

In a medical emergency where a severe injury has occurred and an ambulance has been called, a staff member will apply first aid until Paramedics arrive. Emergency Transportation consent is required for Leq'á:mel Head Start staff to transport your child by ambulance or allow Leq'á:mel staff to provide transportation in a medical emergency.

Non-Medical Emergency

When an injury has occurred and is a non-emergency, the staff will administer first aid and then the parent will be notified, and the parent will make the decision to come pick up their child and bring them in to see a doctor for further assessment or if they allow their child to stay at daycare and continue out their day.

Illness Policy

Parents are required to keep their children at home when their child is sick and if they have experienced any of the following symptoms within the past 48 hours, as recommended by the Centre for Disease Control.

- Fever over 38.3°C / 100°F
- Complaint of unexplained or undiagnosed pain
- Cold with a fever, runny nose, teary eyes, coughing or sore throat
- Difficulty breathing wheezing, or persistent cough
- Sore throat or trouble swallowing
- Infected skin or undiagnosed rash and infected eyes
- Headache or stiff neck
- Diarrhea, vomiting, or upset stomach
- Severe itching of the body and scalp
- Any child unable to participate fully in the program.
- Children with known or suspected communicable diseases or viruses

If a child comes to Head Start exhibiting any of these symptoms and is not well enough to participate in the program, the child will be required to go home.

If your child is sick, we require your child to be symptom-free without the aid of medication (Tylenol, Advil) and homeopathic medicine for 48 hours before returning to Head Start.

Headlice

Parents have the primary responsibility for the detection and treatment of headlice. Because head lice spread so easily children with lice cannot attend childcare. If your child is found to have headlice or nits, we will require you to pick up your child immediately. If you discover headlice at home, please let us know immediately so all other children in the Centre can be checked. If your child does have lice this information will be kept confidential as to who had lice in the Centre. Please keep your child home until they are lice and nit free