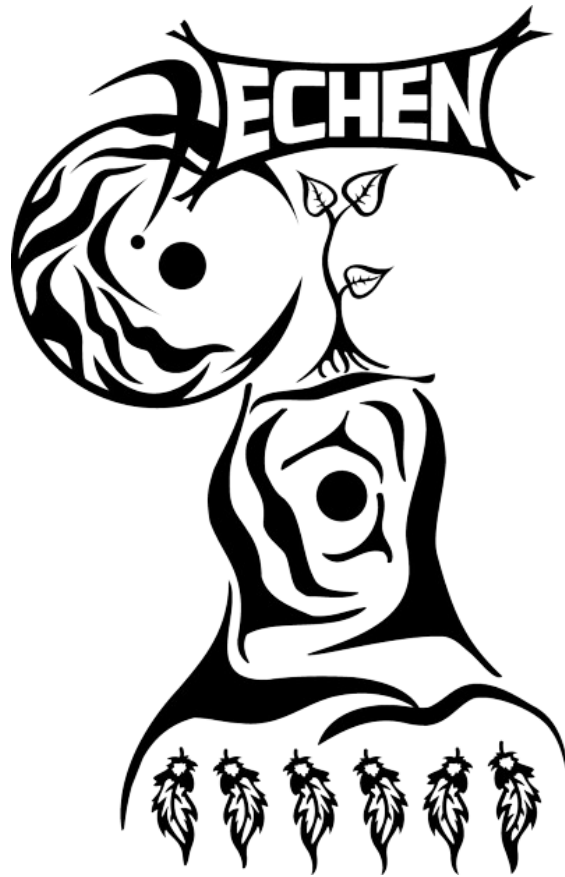


ECHEN HEALING SOCIETY
KINDERGARTEN
PARENT HANDBOOK



ECHEN HEALING SOCIETY
KINDERGARTEN
PARENT HANDBOOK

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ECHIEN HEALING SOCIETY PARENT HANDBOOK FOR KINDERGARTEN

School Philosophy

Our kindergarten program is dedicated to nurturing a love of learning in a supportive and inclusive environment. We believe in the power of play to develop critical thinking and social skills. Our curriculum is designed to meet the needs of each child, encouraging exploration, creativity, and a sense of community. We value the partnership with families and strive to create a supportive and engaging learning experience for all children. We also celebrate and respect cultural, linguistic, and individual diversity, with a special emphasis on incorporating Indigenous culture and traditions into our learning activities. By doing so, we aim to create a rich and diverse educational experience that honors and respects all backgrounds.

Parents play a crucial role in this philosophy. We view parents as active partners, collaborators, and advocates for their children. By working closely with parents, we ensure that each child's unique needs and strengths are recognized and supported. Parents are encouraged to participate in classroom activities, volunteer for school events, and engage in regular communication with teachers. This collaboration helps create a cohesive and supportive learning environment that extends beyond the classroom

Meet the Teacher and Teacher Assistant

My name is Thelma Stump your Kindergarten teacher for the 2024-2025 year. As we embark on this exciting journey together, I am thrilled to share that our kindergarten classroom will be a place where Indigenous culture is celebrated, respected, and woven into our daily experiences. Here is how we will be incorporating Indigenous knowledge and traditions.

Before we begin each day, we will acknowledge the traditional territories on which we learn and play. We recognize that our school stands on the ancestral lands of the Dakelh and Tsilhqot'in Territory. Our little artists will explore Indigenous art forms. From dreamcatchers to totem poles, will learn about the significance of symbols and colors in Indigenous cultures. Your children will learn from the land itself—observing plants, animals, and natural elements that hold cultural significance. Elders and knowledge keepers may join us on special nature walks.

Get ready for toe-tapping rhythms! We will learn traditional songs and perhaps even create our own. Drum circles will connect us to the heartbeat of the Earth. Elders are our living libraries and will be invited to share their stories, teachings, and experiences with us. Indigenous cultures often revolve around the seasons so we will be marking important occasions to learn about their cultural significance.

Remember, our goal is not just to teach about Indigenous culture but to encourage genuine respect, empathy, and understanding for others. If you have any family stories or traditions related to Indigenous heritage, please feel free to share them with us!

We will be creating a classroom where every child feels seen, heard, and valued—a place where cultural diversity is celebrated and cherished.

Thelma Stump



Welcome to the new school year for Echen Healing Society's First Kindergarten Class! I hope you all had a relaxing and enjoyable summer break. It is my honor and pleasure to serve as the Teacher Assistant, and I am excited about the opportunities and experiences that await us this year.

My teaching philosophy centers around creating a nurturing and inclusive environment where every child feels valued and respected. I believe in the power of play to develop critical thinking and social skills, and our curriculum is designed to meet the needs of each child, encouraging exploration, creativity, and a sense of community. I am excited to embark on this educational journey with you and your child, and I look forward to a year filled with learning, growth, and fun.

We have many exciting events and activities planned, and I look forward to your participation and support. Please feel free to reach out to us with any questions, concerns, or ideas you may have as we are here to support you and your child throughout this exciting year.

Let's work together to make this school year a memorable and successful one!

Mlyssa Stegner

School Information

Phone Number: 250.255.8942

Email Address: kindergarten@echenhealing.ca

Website: www.echenhealing.ca

Address: 610 Wade Avenue Quesnel, BC (BAKER ELEMENTARY)

Office Hours: 8:15 AM- 2:45 PM

School Calendar:

Key Dates

First Day of School: Tuesday, September 3, 2024

National Day for Truth and Reconciliation: Monday, September 30, 2024

Thanksgiving: Monday, October 14, 2024

Remembrance Day: Monday, November 11, 2024

Winter Break

Last day of classes: Friday, December 20, 2024

Schools re-open: Monday, January 6, 2025

Family Day: Monday, February 17, 2025

Spring Break

Last day of classes: Friday, March 14, 2025

Schools re-open: Monday, March 31, 2025

Good Friday: Friday, April 18, 2025

Easter Monday: Monday, April 21, 2025

Victoria Day: Monday, May 19, 2025

Last Day of School for Students: Thursday, June 26, 2025

Administrative Day and School Closing: Friday, June 27, 2025

Professional Development Days (Non-Instructional Days)

Monday, September 23, 2024

Friday, October 25, 2024

Friday, November 22, 2024

Friday, February 14, 2025

Friday, May 16, 2025

Notices will be sent home with if there is any changes to the above dates.

Daily Schedule

8:30 – 8:45 AM: *Arrival and Morning Routine*

- Children arrive, put away their belongings, and engage in morning activities such as puzzles, drawing, or reading.

8:45 - 9:00 AM: *Circle Time*

- Class meeting to discuss the day's schedule, weather, and any special announcements. This time often includes a morning song or greeting.

9:00-10:00 AM: *Literacy Block*

- Activities focused on reading, writing, and phonics. This may include a read-aloud session, small group work, and literacy centers

10:00 – 10:15 AM: *Snack and Recess*

- Children have a snack and then go outside for recess to play and socialize.

10:15 -11:30 AM: *Literacy Block*

- Activities focused on reading, writing, and phonics. This may include a read-aloud session, small group work, and literacy centers.

11:30 AM - 12:30 PM: *Lunch and Recess*

- Children eat lunch and have another recess period to play and relax.

12:30 – 12:45 PM: *Quiet Time*

- A period for rest or quiet activities such as reading or drawing. This helps children recharge for the afternoon.

12:45 - 1:00 PM: *Science/Social Studies*

- Lessons and activities related to science or social studies topics. This may include experiments, nature walks, or discussions about the community.

1:00-2:00 PM: *Art/Music/Physical Education*

- Rotating activities that include art projects, music lessons, or physical education to develop creativity and physical skills.

2:00-2:30 PM: *Closing Circle*

- A time to review the day, share experiences, and prepare for dismissal.

2:30 PM: *Dismissal*

- Children gather their belongings and are dismissed to go home.

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

Drop-Off Instructions

- **Arrival Time** Drop-off begins at 8:15 AM and ends at 8:30 AM. Please ensure your child arrives within this window.
- **Drop-Off Zone** Use the designated drop-off zone located at the front of the school. Look for the signs indicating the drop-off area.
- **Safety First** Ensure your child exits the vehicle on the curbside to avoid traffic.

Pick-Up Instructions

- **Pick-Up Time** Pick-up begins at 2:30 PM and ends at 2:45 PM. Please arrive within this time frame.
- **Pick-Up Zone** Use the same designated zone as drop-off. Look for the signs indicating the pick-up area.
- **Display Identification** Have authorized persons picking your child up ready to display identification to help staff quickly identify them.
- **Safety First** Ensure your child enters the vehicle on the curbside to avoid traffic.

Emergency Plan and Policy

In case of emergency, Echen Kindergarten has an emergency preparedness kit. This kit contains enough emergency supplies to take care of all the children and the staff for 72 hours. Educators will take all reasonable precautions to ensure your child's safety should a fire or other emergency occur. Annual and monthly evacuation drills are held with the children and emergency bags are part of each program's equipment. Please familiarize yourself with the emergency plan posted in your program. Do not enter the building if you arrive during an emergency evacuation. (Drill or Real) The muster point for the school age program is the garbage bin on the corner of the school grounds. (610 Wade Ave).

Emergency Evacuation Procedures

In the event of an emergency that requires us to evacuate the daycare, we will take our emergency kit and all the children to our emergency meeting place, the dumpster bin on the corner of the property location. We will illicit help from additional staff to walk the children to the meeting place when available. Our priority is to get them away from the danger as safely as possible.

Each child will have an emergency contact card, with the child's name, medical number, emergency contact numbers, and contact names. This is brought along anytime the children leave the building so parents can be called when needed as soon as possible.

Our emergency plan will be tested at least once a year, with fire drills monthly to the same meeting location every time.

Power Outage Policy

If the power should be out during the hours of operation and stays off for more than 30 minutes, parents will be called to come pick up their children. Staff will remain till all the children are picked up.

Winter cut-off (including wind chill)

Exercise, fresh air, vitamin D, these are all important reasons to make sure we are getting outdoors even in the winter. Getting kids outdoors and active in winter can be immune boosters, so please send your children prepared to go out. Temperatures at -15c educators will use their discretion regarding the length of time outside. Wind gusts, sunshine and how the children are doing will all play an important factor. Should the temperature reach -36c or lower during the program hours the center might be closed that day for safety reasons. All families will be notified when this happens as soon as possible.

Bus routine for afterschool care during wintertime is treated as their outside time due to it getting dark earlier in the evening and it is unsafe for the children and educators when they can't see anything.

Summer cut-off (including humidex)

During the hotter months we ask parents to ensure that their child has a water bottle ready to go outside with them, as well as appropriate clothing as we will be outside lots. However, if the temperature readings are between +25c and +28c, educators will use their discretion, such as limiting time in sun, seek shade, offer water, and water play, etc. when the temperature reaches hotter than +28c the children and educators will remain indoors. Should temperatures reach +36c or higher during program hours might be closed that day for safety reasons. All parents will be notified when this happens as soon as possible.

We also exercise caution during forest fire season and air quality is poor. All children will remain indoors when air quality is 7 or higher. Children will not go outside if wind gusts exceed 65km/hr as posted for our local area.

The use of sunscreen is encouraged throughout the year as weather dictates. Parents are asked to apply sunscreen to their child in the morning and educators will reapply it in the afternoon.

(if the parent has signed permission form) A bottle of sunscreen can be labeled and kept at the center.
Please check expiry dates on the sunscreen.

Weather and temperature policy

We believe it is important for children to play outside. We play outside in all weather conditions, except for extreme heat, cold, poor air quality, or lightning storms. Also, assuming the children are appropriately dressed for the occasion as we don't want to make them sick.

Safety/ Health: policies and procedures!

These policies and procedures have been developed to provide the highest level of health protection for all the children and staff.

We ask for your full co-operation with the following:

- Diarrhea may be a symptom of a serious illness; therefore, we require that your child remain away from the program for a minimum of 24 hours after the last bout of diarrhea.
- Vomiting: Health policies state that if your child has been vomiting, they must stay away from childcare for a minimum of 24 hours after the last bout of vomiting.
- Cold/Flu: Please do not bring your child if they have or are developing an acute cold with fever, green discharge runny nose and eyes, sneezing, coughing, or sore throat. A communicable disease, parasite skin infection, discharge from eyes, or an undiagnosed rash, an intestinal or stomach disorder with vomiting and or diarrhea, or a fever over 100 F or 38C.

Insufficient recuperation time can leave a child with very low immunity levels and increases their susceptibility to secondary infections. If your child has had any infectious disease or is exhibiting any of these symptoms outlined above, the program staff may request that your child be examined by a doctor or receive medical clearance before re-entering the program.

Please notify staff of any medications being given out to your child outside of program hours. If your child must be taken for an emergency and you cannot be contacted this information may be of critical importance.

Medicine can be administered by our staff if our medication consent form has been filled out and reviewed by the manager. Please ask educators for a form if medication is required.

Please stay home from kindergarten if you have the following:

- Flu
- Hand foot and mouth
- Chickenpox/shingles
- Head lice
- Impetigo
- Croup
- Pink eye
- Strep infections
- Early cold symptoms

Curriculum Overview

Our kindergarten curriculum is designed to provide a well-rounded educational experience that supports the development of the whole child. Throughout the year, students will engage in a variety of subjects and activities that promote cognitive, social, emotional, and physical growth. Here are the key subjects and topics covered:

Language Arts

Students will develop foundational literacy skills through activities such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking. They will explore phonics, vocabulary, and comprehension strategies, and engage in storytelling and creative writing. Indigenous stories and oral traditions will be included to enrich their understanding of diverse cultures.

Mathematics

Our math curriculum focuses on number sense, counting, basic addition and subtraction, shapes, patterns, and measurement. Hands-on activities and manipulatives help children understand mathematical concepts in a concrete way.

Science

Students will explore the natural world through topics such as plants and animals, weather, the five senses, and simple experiments. Indigenous knowledge about the environment and sustainable practices will be integrated to provide a holistic understanding of nature.

Social Studies

Children will learn about their community, family, and cultural diversity. Topics include community helpers, holidays, traditions, and basic geography. We will also explore Indigenous cultures, traditions, and contributions, fostering respect and appreciation for Indigenous heritage.

Art and Music

Creative expression is fostered through various art projects and music activities. Students will experiment with different materials and techniques, and participate in singing, rhythm, and movement. Indigenous art forms and music will be incorporated to celebrate cultural diversity.

Physical Education

Physical development is supported through activities that promote gross and fine motor skills, coordination, and teamwork. Regular exercise and outdoor play are integral parts of our program.

Social-Emotional Learning

We emphasize the development of social skills, emotional regulation, and positive relationships. Activities and discussions help children understand and manage their emotions and build empathy and cooperation.

Learning Goals

Our kindergarten program aims to achieve key developmental milestones and academic objectives that prepare students for future success. Here are the primary learning goals for the year:

Language Arts

- Recognize and write the letters of the alphabet.
- Develop phonemic awareness and basic phonics skills.
- Read simple words and sentences.
- Understand and retell stories, including Indigenous stories.
- Express ideas through drawing and writing.

Mathematics

- Count to 100 by ones and tens.

- Understand and use numbers 0-20.
- Perform basic addition and subtraction within 10.
- Identify and describe shapes.
- Recognize and create patterns.

Science

- Observe and describe the natural world.
- Conduct simple experiments and make predictions.
- Understand basic concepts of weather, plants, and animals.
- Learn about Indigenous knowledge of the environment and sustainable practices.

Social Studies

- Identify community helpers and their roles.
- Understand family structures and cultural traditions.
- Recognize basic geographic features (e.g., land, water).
- Demonstrate respect for diversity and inclusion, with a focus on Indigenous cultures and traditions.

Art and Music

- Experiment with different art materials and techniques.
- Create original artwork and express creativity.
- Participate in singing, rhythm, and movement activities.
- Appreciate and create Indigenous art and music.

Physical Education

- Develop gross motor skills through running, jumping, and climbing.
- Improve fine motor skills through activities like cutting and drawing.
- Learn the importance of physical activity and healthy habits.
- Work cooperatively in team activities and games.

Social-Emotional Learning

- Identify and express emotions appropriately.
- Develop positive relationships with peers and adults.
- Practice empathy and understanding.
- Demonstrate self-regulation and problem-solving skills.

Health and Safety

Health Policies

Immunization Requirements

All students must have up-to-date immunization records on file before the start of the school year. Please provide a copy of your child's immunization record during registration. If your child is exempt from immunizations for medical or religious reasons, please submit the appropriate documentation.

Medication Policies

If your child needs to take medication during school hours, please provide the medication in its original container along with a completed medication authorization form signed by your child's doctor. Medications will be administered by the school nurse or a designated staff member. Teachers are not permitted to administer medication without written consent.

Parent Involvement

Volunteer Opportunities

We believe that parent involvement is crucial to creating a vibrant and supportive school community. Here are some ways you can get involved in the classroom and school activities:

- **Classroom Helpers** Assist the teacher with daily activities, reading to students, or helping with art projects.
- **Field Trip Chaperones** Join us on field trips to provide additional supervision and support.
- **Special Events** Help organize and run school events such as holiday parties, cultural celebrations, and school fairs.
- **Guest Speakers** Share your expertise or cultural traditions with the class during special presentations.
- **Fundraising Committees** Join a committee to help plan and execute fundraising events to support school programs and activities.
- **Parent-Teacher Association (PTA)** Become a member of the PTA to collaborate with other parents and school staff on initiatives that benefit the school community.

Your time, talent, and ideas are greatly appreciated and make a significant impact on our students' learning experiences. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the school office or your child's teacher for more information.

Communication

- **Emails** Email updates will be sent to keep you informed about school news, reminders, and any urgent announcements.
- **Parent-Teacher Conferences** Scheduled twice a year, these conferences provide an opportunity to discuss your child's progress and any concerns.
- **Bulletin Boards** Check the bulletin boards outside the classroom for daily updates, student work, and important notices.
- **Open House and Information Nights** Attend these events to learn more about the curriculum, meet the teachers, and connect with other parents.

Contacting Teachers

We encourage open communication between parents and teachers. If you need to reach your child's teacher, you can:

- **Email** kindergarten@echenhealing.ca Feel free to email them with any questions or concerns.
- **Phone** 250.255.8942 Call the school and leave a message for the teacher. They will return your call as soon as possible.
- **Scheduled Meetings** If you need a more in-depth discussion, you can schedule a meeting with the teacher before or after school hours.

Behavior Expectations

Classroom Rules

In our kindergarten classroom, we have a set of rules to ensure a positive and productive learning environment. These rules help students understand what is expected of them and how to interact respectfully with others. Here are our key classroom rules:

- **Be Respectful** Treat classmates, teachers, and school property with kindness and respect. Use polite words and actions.
- **Listen Carefully** Pay attention when others are speaking and follow directions the first time they are given.
- **Be Safe** Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself. Move safely around the classroom and school.
- **Be Responsible** Take care of your belongings and classroom materials. Complete tasks and clean up after yourself.
- **Try Your Best** Always put in your best effort in all activities and be willing to try new things.

Classroom Management Approach

Our classroom management approach is based on positive reinforcement and clear expectations. We believe in encouraging good behavior through praise and rewards, while also providing consistent consequences for inappropriate behavior. We use a variety of strategies to support positive behavior, including:

- **Positive Reinforcement** Recognizing and rewarding good behavior with praise, stickers, or small rewards.
- **Visual Aids** Using charts and visual reminders to help students understand and follow the rules.
- **Modeling** Demonstrating appropriate behavior and social skills for students to emulate.
- **Clear Instructions** Providing clear and concise instructions to ensure students understand what is expected of them.

Discipline Policy

Our discipline policy outlines the procedures for addressing behavioral issues in a fair and consistent manner. The goal is to help students learn from their mistakes and develop self-discipline. Here are the steps we follow:

- **Verbal Warning** The teacher will give a verbal warning to the student, explaining what behavior needs to change and why it is important.
- **Loss of Privileges** Repeated inappropriate behavior may result in the loss of certain privileges, such as free play time or participation in a special activity.
- **Parent Communication** If the behavior persists, the teacher will communicate with the parents to discuss the issue and work together on a plan to support the child's behavior improvement.
- **Behavior Plan** For ongoing behavioral issues, a personalized behavior plan may be developed in collaboration with the parents, teacher, and school counselor to provide additional support and strategies.

Additional Information

Supplies List

To ensure your child is prepared for a successful school year, please provide the following items:

- **Backpack** Large enough to fit a folder and lunchbox.
- **Lunchbox** For daily snacks and lunch if child requires special dietary foods.
- **Water Bottle** Labeled with your child's name.
- **Change of Clothes** In a labeled bag, including underwear and socks.
- **Indoor Shoes** Non-marking shoes to be kept at school.
- **Blanket or Towel** For rest time (if applicable).

Lunch and Snack Policies

School Meals

Our school offers a nutritious lunch program. Menus are sent home monthly, and meals are included in your child's registration. If your child has dietary restrictions, please inform the school so we can try to accommodate their needs, otherwise parents will need to pack their child's lunch and snacks.

Snack Times

Students will have a morning and afternoon healthy snacks such as fruits, vegetables, yogurt, or whole-grain crackers.

Dietary Restrictions

If your child has any food allergies or dietary restrictions, please provide detailed information to the school nurse and your child's teacher. We will work with you to ensure your child's dietary needs are met safely.

Transportation

Bus Routes

Our school provides bus transportation for students who live in town. Bus routes and schedules are available on the school website and will be sent home at the beginning of the school year. Please review the bus rules with your child to ensure their safety.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up

For parents who drive their children to school, please follow the designated drop-off and pick-up procedures to ensure a smooth and safe process. Drop-off begins at 8:15 AM, and pick-up starts at 2:30PM.

Walking or Biking

If your child walks or bikes to school, please ensure they follow safe routes and use crosswalks. Helmets are required for biking.