



Policy Statement

At MRCS, it is our policy to ensure the same services and opportunities are provided to children regardless of their abilities. We provide accessibility using proactive strategies to children who may fall under the following spectrums:

- Children with diverse abilities;
- Children with supportive needs;
- Children with developmental delays;
- Children who experience cultural discriminations.

Inclusion holds a central focus to MRCS as it is a standard practice of one's human rights and provides emphasis on the importance of diversity, and valuing all beings regardless of race, culture, gender, level of abilities or needs.

Our goal is to ensure inclusion is instilled in our daily policies and procedures, to ensure MRCS is an environment where all children feel welcomed and valued. We will provide an environment focused on equality, where all children are able to fully participate, learn and play.

More information can be found in the Inclusive Child Care Toolkit, a hard copy is kept in the office, with digital copies available through the Government of British Columbia website.

Procedures

At MRCS, all staff will be made aware of inclusive practices:

1. Language: Our staff understand the power of words; we have implemented preset language to use towards inclusivity to ensure children understand the proper terminology. All staff use person first terminology and when applicable, ask the preference of identity-first or person-first terminology specific to the student.
2. Cultural Competency: All programs are designed to ensure the safety and respect of all cultures within our community. Activities are pre-approved in our centres to ensure a removal of any personal values or biases.
3. Access: MRCS has designed their childcare centres to offer care and activities to all levels of abilities. Flexible schedules are available to support full-time and/or part-time to cater to each child accordingly.
4. Environment: All centre's must have play areas accessible to all abilities, each centre will require a sensory safe space, with softened noise, lights and ability to have a quiet area. All spaces must be adaptable to allow for a wheelchair or other aids.
5. Multisensory Materials: All centre's give children access to materials which allow learning through various sensory needs to develop gross and fine motor skills.
6. Learning: All centre's will provide activities which highlights the unique strengths of children with various levels of abilities, this may include cultural interests and areas of passion. All materials are available for children to access independently, and include diversity to abilities and cultures, including sign language, emotions, and imagery learning versus words.



7. Play: All materials provided to children promote cooperative play and allow children of all abilities to participate. Accessories and/or games are provided to represent various cultures and interests of children enrolled.
8. Relationship Building: All staff are encouraged to promote inclusivity throughout the centre. During activities such as free play, it is expected for staff to promote peer interaction and building relationships by encouraging play invitations and/or ensuring fairness and equity during play.
9. Curriculum: The following activities will be included in every centre to ensure the promotion of inclusivity:
 - Free play
 - Arts and crafts
 - Group activities (both as a whole and small groups)
 - Reading (books are chosen which promote inclusivity and diversity)
10. Education & Training: If required, MRCS will engage in any external training required to further support inclusive practices.

Application of this Policy

This policy applies to any child who may:

- Require one on one support for the majority of the day,
- Have needs which pose a risk to their, or other children's health and safety,
- Has needs which require one to one support in order to physically keep themselves and other children safe.

It is understood that most children will occasionally require additional support in various capacities throughout development. However, this policy only applies to children who require support above and beyond what typically a child at this age would require.

Applying this policy to a child can be done so through a case-by-case basis, which includes children who may be at various stages of requiring additional support

- Family is aware child needs additional support and has arranged for a support aide (either in process or approved).
- Family is aware child needs additional support but has not taken any steps to do so.
- Family is not aware child needs additional support, but staff has noticed child having some difficulties.

Individual Planning

MRCS will consult with the parent or guardian of the children to ensure education goals are being met. Concerns will be discussed and priorities highlighted to ensure adequate curriculum catered to each student.

Should a centre need to be altered to cater specifically to students enrolled, all areas can be customized to promote further inclusivity such as:



- Alteration to attendance hours
- Alteration to drop off/pick up routine
- Alteration to program schedule
- Alteration to facility layout

External Support Aides

MRCS will welcome external support aides when a child needs assistance with speech, language, feeding, or mobility. MRCS will work with the parents and local agencies to accommodate external support aides within the facility. A contract will be required to be signed by all parties outlining responsibilities, responsibility of payment and waiving of liabilities.

Assisting with Obtaining One on One Care

Families who are aware their child needs additional support and have applied, will require additional support from MRCS for the time being. MRCS will provide documentation to the family in the form of a log for a one-week period which provides a detailed picture of the child's needs including observation by two different ECE staff.

Inability to Safely Provide Care for Child

In the event that the child is experiencing needs that are unable to safely be met by MRCS staff, we will work with the family to ensure the child is able to still attend the facility in some sort of capacity, this may include:

- Alteration attendance to ensure one to one attention can be given to child with respect to staff/child ratios
- Parent compensating a private one on one worker while waiting for government funding
- MRCS will provide documentation and information for the family to any external childcare development agencies
- MRCS will provide referrals to specific agencies and allow outside agencies access to the facility to view and assess the child.
- MRCS will adjust the program to provide inclusive care in the short-term, while a family is waiting for one-to-one care funding.

Implementation & Assessment

Should a child require any sort of alternative care, a meeting will be scheduled with the family and any other support systems required. The alternative plan will be reviewed, discussed and an implementation date and timeline established.

Part of the implementation plan includes assessment of the child; MRCS will work with the family and external support systems to provide a daily log and re-assessment from two ECE staff. From here it can be determined if the alternative plan is successful or if areas need to be changed.



Parent Communication

In the event MRCS staff have noticed a child may require additional support, and it has not been addressed by the parent, it is crucial the family is contacted in a diligent timeframe to ensure the child can receive the best care possible.

MRCS will hold an in-person conversation which will include the following discussion points:

- Explanation of needs or behaviour in which is occurring
- Discuss if this is also happening within the home environment
- Information on strategies which have been tried and may work for their child
- Next steps and how MRCS and the family can work cohesively to obtain further care for the child
- Plan to meet again, review and discuss further

Records of Information

Accurate records must be kept daily for any children who may require additional support. The child log is vital to ensure all health and safety needs are being met in the event the MRCS staff are required to carry out the tasks.

Cultural Competency in Inclusion Policy

Cultural inclusion for Indigenous children is vital to our policy. MRCS will ensure all Indigenous children will be able to fully participate in culturally safe and respectful programs. MRCS will work alongside the BC Aboriginal Child Care Society to ensure our program is free of personal biases and values are emitted from interactions with children in our facility. MRCS will ensure:

- Social, cultural and linguistic needs are met through program activities,
- Our space is safe from biases, and an environment is upheld where all cultures are respected and upheld,
- Continue to educate and understand the importance of culture competency within the childcare setting.

Inclusive Child Care Supports

MRCS will provide all staff and families with information and access to the following external agencies:

- Supported Child Development and Aboriginal Supported Child Development: provide information and support for children, families and childcare centres to support inclusivity for children of all abilities.
- Early Intervention Therapy: Occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech-language pathology, and support services for children and families.
- Affordable Childcare Benefit: Additional funding for families eligible to assist with childcare costs.



Maple Ridge Childcare Society INCLUSION POLICY

January 2025

- Autism Funding: Assists families with additional services and support to promote skill development for children living on the Autism Spectrum.