

POMME D'API HANDBOOK



LAST REVISION
September 1, 2022

BIENVENUE! WELCOME!

Bienvenue and welcome to Pomme d'Api! We are happy that you have chosen it for your child's preschool experience.

Pomme d'Api is a parent-run preschool, and all families must be involved in running it. Parent participation not only helps keep our tuition fees low and our equipment well maintained, but also creates a great sense of community among parents, teachers, and students.

This handbook provides general information about the preschool. It also guides parent volunteers, board members, and staff in decision-making related to routine situations and specific issues that may arise. This is particularly important in helping Pomme d'Api's regularly changing board and volunteer pool ensure a smooth transition for the school community.

Our vision is for Pomme d'Api to continue offering quality programs long after our own children have moved on. We recognize that parent commitment and staff dedication are critical to the preschool's success. We also recognize that "parents" may be other family members. Families of all configurations are welcome at Pomme d'Api.

Please review the information in this handbook carefully. If you have any questions, please contact the registrar at registrar@pommedapi.org.

Pomme d'Api Quick Reference

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Board of Directors

President	chair@pommedapi.org
Vice President	vp@pommedapi.org
Treasurer	treasurer@pommedapi.org
Secretary	secretary@pommedapi.org
Parent Participation Director	participation@pommedapi.org
Fundraising Director	fundraising@pommedapi.org
Publicity Director	publicity@pommedapi.org
Maintenance Director	maintenance@pommedapi.org
Francophone Director	francophone@pommedapi.org
Technology Director	technology@pommedapi.org

We acknowledge that Pomme d'Api sits on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Squamish (Sḵwxwú7mesh), Tsleil-Waututh (Səíílwəta?/Selilwitulh), and Musqueam (xʷməθkʷəy̓əm) Nations.

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STORY AND PHILOSOPHY

In 1983, a group of parents decided to establish a preschool where children could be introduced to the French language naturally through creative play. They formed the East Side French Preschool Society and began offering an immersion program. A Francophone program was added for children of French-speaking parents in 1994, and the preschool changed its name to Pomme d'Api.

“Pomme d'Api” refers to a small apple, like our students who grow and mature every day. We believe that children learn spontaneously while engaged in free play and fun structured activities, and we provide opportunities for the children to develop emotionally, socially, physically, and academically. Because children benefit from regular outdoor activity, a portion of each class is held outside, weather permitting.

We provide a safe and nurturing environment where children can develop healthy self-esteem. All children are accepted and respected, and their family heritage is valued. We encourage parents and children to share special cultural occasions with the teachers and other students.

Our preschool is committed to offering students quality early childhood educational experiences where French is an integral part of the program.

Pomme d'Api aims to

- make our children’s first experience of school as enjoyable as possible;
- provide a stimulating and friendly environment in which they can explore;
- introduce them to the French language as naturally as possible;

- engage them with a wide variety of activities, equipment, and materials; and
- explore topical themes with songs, games, puppet plays, creative activities, outings, and invited guests.

As a parent-run organization, we draw from the talents of the parents to administer the school and organize events that directly benefit the children both in the classroom and during extracurricular activities. We want to enable our children to get the best possible experience and ensure that Pomme d'Api continues after we have moved on.

PROGRAM

Pomme d'Api provides quality preschool-level education in consideration of [BC's Early Learning Framework](#). What sets us apart is our French immersion classes.

We recommend that students spend more time at Pomme d'Api in the second year if they attended only 2 days a week in their first year. This will allow the teachers to work in a targeted manner with your child to prepare them for kindergarten, both socially and through play-based academic learning. Regularly attending preschool is a great way to prepare your child for starting school by getting them used to playing and learning in a structured setting with a larger group of peers.

Students who graduate from Pomme d'Api attend English- and French-language schools in the public or private sector, as well as a variety of immersion programs. Attending Pomme d'Api does not give your child priority registration at any one elementary school, but if your child is enrolling in a French immersion program or a Francophone school, their experience and exposure to French at Pomme d'Api will give them a head start when transitioning to elementary school programs.

Classes

We offer four sets of Francophone / French immersion classes that differ by schedule rather than by content. Children ages 3 to 5 can enrol in any set of classes, with a fixed schedule of 2, 3, or 5 mornings per week or 3 afternoons per week.

Children enrolled in any of our classes may also enrol in an open class held on Thursday afternoon.

Note: The Thursday class has been put on hold due to COVID-19.

Pomme d'Api is licensed to have up to 20 children per class, and we have two teachers for each class. Therefore, with full enrolment, the teacher to student ratio is 1 to 10.

Class Activities

The morning and afternoon classes follow a familiar routine, which incorporates free play, directed activities, arts and crafts projects, outdoor and playground time, circle time (including opportunities for show and tell), and snack time.

In addition to the daily class structure, students are exposed to monthly and seasonal themes and activities. Classes also have occasional field trips or in-class events that feature special performers or introduce students to a new theme.

At the beginning of the preschool year, teachers work on bringing a harmonious atmosphere in the classroom, supporting students experiencing separation anxiety, teaching problem-solving and respect for one another (sharing, taking turns, cleaning after oneself, etc.), and following routines. This is done through a cooperative play environment while acknowledging every child's individual development.

As the preschool year moves on, teachers continue to help students develop social skills, but also start encouraging students to complete some "work," focusing on fine motor skills and activities that will develop pre-math, pre-reading, pre-writing, and logic. Sometimes the work is done individually, and sometimes groups of children engage in projects together. These activities are adjusted to each child's age and individual developmental level.

Approach to Teaching French

The teachers are skilled at differentiating and working with children according to their level of French.

There are two basic steps for teaching in the French immersion program:

Step 1: Establish trust. At the beginning of the school year, we concentrate on welcoming the children as individuals and establishing a solid foundation of trust and friendship. French is introduced gradually.

Step 2: Increase the use of French. As children become comfortable in the preschool setting, we increase the use of French and decrease the use of English, with the ultimate goal of English being used only when dealing with matters of safety or discipline. The language is kept simple yet challenging, and is adapted according to the maturity of the children.

French is spoken from the beginning to students who already have some grasp of the language. Group activities and, as much as possible, all individual interactions are conducted in French. Teachers always adapt to the needs of each child, using English when necessary.

Essentially, teachers speak French to children according to their language level, meaning that a child who has no prior mastery will be gradually introduced to French, whereas a child who comes from a Francophone family will be addressed by teachers solely in French. As such, all children in the classroom will be continually exposed to French when spoken to them or around them. We want all our students to feel comfortable and understood at school, whether they are new to French or fluent.

Children need both structure and flexibility in order to develop a positive attitude towards the French language. Therefore, we provide structure, but remain flexible based on the children's needs, language levels, and learning styles. The teachers do not point out language mistakes to avoid discouraging the children and hindering their spontaneity. Instead, the teachers rephrase the children's statements in a supportive and positive manner.

Teachers incorporate French into the children's daily experience of coming to class through the repetition of phrases and expressions during routines. From the start, the class sings about their transitions in French, and French songs are sung at circle time over and over again.

Active Play

Pomme d'Api recognizes the need for children to engage in physically active play, both inside and

outside. This helps children develop their gross motor skills, grow in a healthy way, and connect with their bodies as they grow. Including indoor and outdoor playtime, children are provided with 30 to 60 minutes of active play in each class.

Because classroom space is limited, Pomme d'Api has a two-pronged policy for ensuring physical activity for children during class hours. Inside the classroom we have sensory play materials available for children, such as a water table, and physical activities such as stretching or dancing are incorporated into classroom routines. Outside the classroom Pomme d'Api has a playground with age-appropriate equipment that allows children to climb, run, crawl, and dig to ensure their physical and emotional health and development. Outside time is incorporated into every class if weather permits.

Screen Time

Children spend a limited amount of time at Pomme d'Api and we believe their time is best spent engaged in analogue play and structured routines that correspond to our learning curriculum. Screen time is not part of daily routines at Pomme d'Api.

Teachers or guest presenters can bring in personal tablets to support curricular activities (e.g., incorporating short videos related to subjects the children are learning about in the completion of specific projects). Usage will be kept to a minimum. Screen time will occur maximum once or twice per month, for no longer than 10 to 15 minutes at a time.

REGISTRATION

Eligibility and Priority

A child can enter preschool when they are 30 months but they must turn 3 years old (36 months) by December 31 of the same year. This means children must be 32 months of age as of September in the school year in which they begin attending. Pomme d'Api in order to comply with child care licensing regulations. This also ensures that the school is able to provide age-appropriate activities, toys, and furnishings. They must also be toilet trained when they begin school. Pomme d'Api is an inclusive preschool, located in a wheelchair-accessible building.

Registration generally occurs on a first-come, first-served basis. When registration for the next school year opens, spaces are filled in the following order:

1. returning students,
2. siblings of current or previous students,
3. children who recently left the program, and
4. children applying for first-time admission.

Most students start at the preschool at the beginning of the school year in September, but students may enrol for the current school year up until February 1, if space is available. Registrations may also be approved beyond the deadline with the agreement of the teachers.

No family will be discriminated against on the basis of race or ethnicity, language, religion,

socioeconomic status, family or marital status, citizenship, gender identity or expression, or sexual orientation.

Registration Process

Early registration for the next school year opens in January for currently enrolled students who will return, as well as siblings of current or previous students. Previously enrolled children who intend to return may be registered next. General registration opens at Pomme d'Api's annual Open House, usually held in late February or early March.

After general registration has opened, parents/guardians may register their children by contacting the Registrar. If requested, a class visit may be arranged in advance of registration (see Appendix A).

New children will only be accepted in the classroom if their parents/guardians have submitted all required materials and paid the registration fee and tuition for the first and last month.

Waiting List and Mid-Year Enrolment

A waiting list is started once a program is full. No fees are required to be placed on the waiting list. When a space becomes available, the Registrar will contact the family of the first student on the list. The family will be asked to provide the registration fee and tuition deposit. If these are not received within the predetermined time, the student will be placed back on the waiting list (if they are still interested) and the spot will be offered to the next student on the list.

Program Switch

Families may choose to switch their child to another program during the school year, space permitting.

A program upgrade (i.e., student moves from a 3-day class to the 5-day class, or student moves from the 2-day class to the 3-day or 5-day class) will be facilitated as soon as possible. In this case, the family will need to top up their tuition deposit to reflect the new program.

A program downgrade (i.e., student moves from the 5-day class to a 3-day or 2-day class, or student moves from a 3-day class to the 2-day class) requires one calendar month's notice in order for the family to be refunded the difference in the tuition deposit amounts. If the family does not provide one month's calendar notice, Pomme d'Api retains the difference in the deposit.

Registration Responsibilities

- The **family** submits complete registration packages and pays fees.
- The **Registrar** processes applications, ensures all required documents have been submitted and the necessary fees have been paid, and confirms registration with families via email. They or a designated assistant open a file for each student that is kept at the preschool. They also respond to inquiries (see Appendix B) and maintain an enrolment list and waiting list.
- The **Parent Participation Director** assigns the family to one or more volunteer roles.
- The **Technology Director** adds the family to the relevant email lists.

Withdrawal

Families may withdraw a child from any program at any time. To withdraw a student, families must email the Registrar and then fill out the provided online form.

Teachers and parents can work together to determine if the preschool is the right fit for their child, and to determine whether the child is adapting well to the preschool environment. After consultation with the teachers, if the school is deemed not to be a fit for the child, a family can withdraw their child from the preschool by notifying the registrar and filling out the provided online form. If this occurs during the first 6-weeks of their enrollment, the tuition deposit for the month of June may be refunded (this does not apply to returning students and does not apply to withdrawals that occur prior to a student starting to attend classes).

Regular withdrawal

To withdraw a student, families must email the Registrar and then fill out the provided online form. The date the initial email is received will be considered the date of withdrawal notice, provided the online form is submitted within one week.

If a family gives notice of withdrawal at least one calendar month in advance, their tuition deposit for the month of June will be applied to their final month of preschool (if their account is up to date with no outstanding debts). Otherwise, the deposit will be forfeited.

The regular withdrawal policy applies when a family decides to withdraw a child prior to September. The family must email the Registrar and complete the online withdrawal form. Families that provide at least one calendar month's notice—in this case, prior to August 1—will receive their tuition deposit back. Families that do not provide notification of withdrawal more than one calendar month in advance will forfeit their tuition deposit.

Withdrawal at the request of the preschool

If a child is withdrawn at the preschool's request at any point of the school year, the family's tuition deposit will be returned after the family has emailed the Registrar and filled out the required online form (provided their account is up-to-date with no outstanding debts). The family will not have to give one calendar month's notice to receive their tuition deposit back.

Withdrawal responsibilities

- The **family** must email the Registrar and then fill out the provided online form. If a family first tells the teachers of their intentions to withdraw, the teachers will direct the family to contact the Registrar by email.
- The **Registrar** will refund or retain the family's tuition deposit in accordance with the withdrawal policy. They will notify the teaching staff of the withdrawal. The Registrar will update the accounts/files and inform parents/guardians of children on the waiting list that a space has become available.
- The **Parent Participation Director** must reassign the family's volunteer roles.

- The **Technology Director** must remove the family from the relevant email lists.

FEES AND PAYMENTS

Fee Schedule

The following fees and deposits apply:

- **Registration fee:** A one-time payment of \$100 due when a family's registration package is processed (non-refundable).
- **Tuition deposit:** A one-time payment of one month's tuition also due at registration. This amount will be applied towards the June tuition.
- **Fundraising deposit:** A one-time payment of \$100 (or \$150 for families with two or more children enrolled) collected with the first month's tuition payment (and prorated for mid-year enrolments). Families can earn back this money by participating in fundraising activities throughout the year.
- **Tuition fees:** Monthly payments of tuition. No tuition will be withdrawn in June, as the tuition deposit will be applied to that month.

Additional fees collected only in specific circumstances:

- **AGM fee:** A one-time withdrawal of \$25, only for families who do not attend the Annual General Meeting. (This fee will not be withdrawn from families who attend the meeting.)
- **Volunteer fee:** A one-time withdrawal of up to \$600 at the end of the school year that applies to families who have not met their minimum participation hours. (This fee will not be withdrawn from families who have met their minimum participation hours.)
- **Any other approved fees:** These could include, for example, fees related to class field trips and would be collected with family approval.
- **Surcharges:** A \$15 processing fee per late, missed, or bounced payment.
- **Late pick-up fee:** Applied only in exceptional cases of repeated late pick-up of a child after a written warning has been issued, charged at \$1 per minute late starting after the teachers have gone back inside with any remaining children after general pick-up has ended.

Late and Missed Payments

If a pre-authorized fee payment fails, the Registrar or nominated person will issue a written notice to the family. If the fee remains unpaid after one week, the Registrar, Treasurer, or nominated person will follow the procedure for dealing with late and missed payments (see Appendix C).

Families are encouraged to contact the President and Treasurer if there are extenuating circumstances that may result in the late payment or non-payment of fees.

Affordable Child Care Benefit

The Affordable Child Care Benefit is a monthly payment to help eligible families with the cost of child care. Factors like income, family size, and type of care determine how much support families can get. The criteria and application form can be found at the provincial government [website](#).

Applications can be submitted and approved online.

Upon receipt of the benefit from the provincial government, the school will issue the amount granted to eligible families. Please note this takes time, and benefits may not be received immediately.

Families are responsible for ensuring that Pomme d'Api claims their benefit according to the program criteria. Please familiarize yourself with the current eligibility criteria and update the Treasurer accordingly.

As of January 2021, a family receiving the benefit can be absent for up to two weeks in any calendar month due to sickness or vacation and remain eligible for their regular benefit. Up to four weeks of vacation in a calendar year are permitted while maintaining eligibility for the benefit. Absences beyond these allowances should be brought to the attention of the preschool.

Tax Receipts

In February, Pomme d'Api will electronically issue child care expense receipts for tuition collected.

The June tuition paid at the time of your registration is included in the January to June period. Monies collected for the Affordable Child Care Benefit will be deducted from your child care expense receipt.

At the time of registration, if you choose to opt out of your volunteering or fundraising obligations and instead donate these amounts, you will be eligible for an official donation receipt.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Pomme d'Api is administered and operated entirely by parents. Parent participation is essential to developing a sense of community, keeping tuition fees low, maintaining or improving existing infrastructure, supporting our teachers, and ensuring the best experience for our children.

Families are required to participate in three ways:

- All families must participate in **fundraising** activities.
- At least one parent/guardian (or caregiver) must **volunteer** for the operation and administration of the preschool.
- At least one parent/guardian must attend **general parent meetings**.

Fundraising

Fundraising is an integral and required component of Pomme d'Api. In addition to your parent

participation role, Pomme d'Api relies on your fundraising efforts to

- support classroom programming,
- maintain tuition affordability,
- increase Pomme d'Api's profile and build partnerships in the community, and
- access government funding.

The fundraising committee, under the direction of the Fundraising Director, will offer families opportunities in which to participate throughout the year.

The minimum fundraising goal for each family is:

- \$100/year for one child
- \$150/year for two or more children

For mid-year enrolments, the annual fundraising amount is pro-rated and calculated as follows: is also due at the time of registration:

- 10/month for one child
- \$15/month for two or more children

This amount will be collected at the beginning of the year as a fundraising deposit. At the end of the school year, the amount you have fundraised will be reimbursed up to the maximum amount of your deposit. Any remaining amount will be retained by Pomme d'Api. Families who decide not to earn to back their fundraising deposit will forfeit it.

At the beginning of the year, a family can choose to opt out of fundraising and instead donate the fundraising deposit and be eligible for an official donation receipt.

Volunteering

Parents are required to volunteer their time throughout the year by holding a designated volunteer position, either on the elected Board of Directors or in a non-elected role. Pomme d'Api's success depends on the support and cooperation of all parents.

Pomme d'Api is not a member of the Council of Parent Participation Preschools, and as such does not require that all parents spend time helping in the classroom.

Please be sure to fill out a parent participation form. This will help to place people in positions that match their skills and interests. A variety of volunteer opportunities are available to suit individual schedules. Parents may choose to serve on committees, sit on the Board of Directors, complete routine tasks, or arrange special events.

The Participation Director will ultimately assign every family one or more volunteer roles in order to make sure that all necessary administrative and practical tasks to operate the school on a daily basis are fulfilled.

Board members are officially elected at the AGM in September. All other volunteer positions are filled over the summer and early in the school year. Some volunteer opportunities come up over the course

of the year and are announced via email.

Every family must contribute an average of 4 hours per month, or 40 hours over the course of the school year (prorated for mid-year enrolments). Some volunteer positions require a steady number of hours per month, while others involve a significant effort and hours in concentrated periods of time (e.g., Open House committee). Each month, you will be asked to submit your volunteer hours using an online form.

If at any point you need help finding volunteer work, please contact the Participation Director at participation@pommedapi.org.

Annual General Meeting

At the September AGM, board positions are elected and the financial statements are reviewed. At least one adult from each family is required to attend the AGM. If a family representative does not attend the AGM, then a one-time fee of \$25 is withdrawn.

The date of the AGM is shared in advance. If nobody from your family can attend due to extraordinary circumstances, please contact one of the board members.

Free child care for registered students and their siblings is available in the Pomme d'Api classroom during the Parent Orientation Meeting and AGM, which are held in the adjacent church.

Note: Meetings may be held online during COVID-19.

In order to keep the children safe, we have the following policies regarding child care during meetings:

1. All children who will be left in the classroom must be signed up ahead of the date of the meeting. There will be no last-minute additions.
2. All children must be signed in and out of child care the evening of the meeting.
 - a. No child can be left in the classroom until they are signed in and given a name tag.
 - b. No child may leave the classroom until they have been signed out. If a child becomes very upset, a caregiver will come find their parents, but the child will need to be signed out before being released.
3. There will be at least one caregiver for every 6 children.
4. All volunteer caregivers will wear name tags identifying them as caregivers, and one person will be designated to be in charge.
5. Once all children are inside, the classroom door will be locked. Prior to that, a volunteer will watch the door to make sure that no children wander out.

Non-Participation Policy

Any family that has contributed less than the required hours of volunteer time by December 31 will receive an email in January:

- to outline the unfulfilled role or task, based on the monthly parent participation record,
- to ask the family to report any outstanding volunteer hours that may have occurred but not been reported,
- to remind the family of the volunteer policy and requirements and the consequences of refusing

- to participate (volunteer fee of \$300), and
- to ask the family to make efforts to volunteer in the coming months (acknowledging that if they are on the Open House committee, their hours will likely increase naturally in the coming months).

Any family who has contributed less than the required number of hours of volunteer time by April 1 will receive a warning that a volunteer fee of up to \$600 will be collected if they do not reach 40 hours by the end of the school year.

At the end of the year, the board will review the list of families with outstanding volunteer requirements. The volunteer fee will be withdrawn for those families that did not meet the requirements.

STARTING PRESCHOOL

Toilet Training

Students need to be toilet trained when they start at the preschool, as the school does not have equipment or allocated teacher time to perform diaper changes. If your child is mostly toilet trained, but prone to accidents, you may wish to have them wear pull-ups during the first few weeks.

Clothing

Shoes

Your child will need indoor and outdoor shoes. Try to choose shoes that can be easily put on and removed.

Weather-appropriate gear

Children must be provided with appropriate clothing for both indoor and outdoor activities, as the teachers take the children outdoors during classes (unless the weather endangers safe outdoor play). Parents/guardians should ensure their children have appropriate indoor and outdoor clothing at all times, taking into account seasonal variations in weather. This may include boots, coats, hats, mittens, rainwear, or sunscreen.

Extra change of clothing

All children should have a complete change of clothing in case of accidents.

Note: Due to COVID-19, no items will be stored at the school this year. An extra clothing should be kept in the child's backpack.

Snack and Water Bottle

All classes include a snack time. This is an opportunity for children to learn about their health and nutrition. Please provide a healthy, nutritious snack for your child. The teachers integrate nutrition into the curriculum so it is important not to send “junk food” (e.g., candy, sugary cookies, soft drinks).

Due to allergies, no nuts are permitted at Pomme d’Api. This includes peanut butter and Nutella. If children have other severe food allergies, you will receive a letter outlining what foods are not permitted in the preschool.

Water is always available in the class. Please send a water bottle with your child.

Labelling Items

Please label all belongings with your child’s name. This includes clothing, shoes, backpacks, snack containers, water bottles, and other personal items.

Emily Press offers adorable personalized labels for use on your child’s items, as well as allergy and medical alert labels. Pomme d’Api receives a portion of all sales made through our unique weblink: <http://www.emilypress.com/pommedapi>

Handwashing

Handwashing is an important measure to prevent the spread of illness. It is recommended that parents/caregivers wash their children’s hands before and after preschool.

Gradual Entry

Students beginning preschool in September will follow a gradual entry process. Students starting mid-year are not required to follow a gradual entry process but families may consult with the teachers to decide if this would be beneficial.

Gradual entry is a planned process for introducing children to their new preschool environment with minimal stress on child and caregiver. It allows time for the child to get to know the teachers, and adapt to a new routine and setting.

Gradual entry will help your child

- feel comfortable at the preschool,
- begin to build a trusting relationship with the teachers,
- have a positive start at the preschool, and
- build confidence in staying at the school without you.

Gradual entry steps

Step 1: Initially, a parent or caregiver should plan to stay for the duration of the class, which will likely be shortened during the gradual entry process. You may be asked to come into the classroom for the first 15 minutes (parents of returning children can gauge, with the teachers’

help, whether this is necessary). Then you are encouraged to step outside. You may wish to take short walks in the neighbourhood or remain in your car.

Step 2: During this step, you will briefly come into the classroom with your child and help them get involved in activities. Once your child is settled, say goodbye and explain that you will come back when the class ends. This process should take no longer than 5 minutes.

If, after a few days, your child still cries when you leave, you may feel uncomfortable about leaving. However, the teachers are trained to deal with this situation, and are very good at helping the children cope. (In fact, many children stop crying as soon as their parent or caregiver is no longer in sight.) Your children are in excellent hands, and your ability to leave will help the adjustment process.

Step 3: During this step, you bring your child into the preschool. Once your child's coat and bag are in the cloakroom and they are wearing their indoor shoes, say goodbye, tell them you will pick them up after class, and leave. Your child will spend a regular day at the preschool.

Note: In the context of COVID-19, we have amended our gradual entry procedure so that after drop-off, students stay in class for one hour or more during their first week, then stay for regular hours the following week. Parents/caregivers should still plan to remain outside the school for the gradual entry period.

Considerations

All children adapt differently. Some are quickly comfortable at the preschool, while others take longer to adapt to the new environment. The teachers will help determine whether the gradual entry process needs to be adjusted for your child.

Parents are advised not to bring siblings into the classroom, if possible, as the presence of extra children can disrupt the class. At no time are unenrolled children allowed to stay unattended in the classroom, and at no time are children who are not immediate family members of an enrolled student allowed in the classroom.

If the presence of siblings becomes a problem, teachers will point out to parents that the presence of additional children contravenes licensing requirements and creates added responsibility for the teachers and distraction for the students. If a parent continues to bring other children to class, teachers are to bring the matter to the attention of the Board of Directors. The board will close the matter with the parents.

If, after the scheduled period of gradual entry is over, you or your child still needs extra support, you can arrange a meeting with the teachers. They will help you to take the following steps:

- establish goals,
- identify strategies to meet the goals,
- set a timeline, and
- consider the possibility that your child might not be ready for preschool at this time.

If you and the teachers agree that your child is not ready for preschool within the six-week probationary period, you may withdraw the child without forfeiting your tuition deposit. To do so, you

must contact the registrar by email to provide written notice of withdrawal and fill out an online form. Your tuition deposit will then be reimbursed.

Dual Enrollment

Because Pomme d'Api offers only a part-time program, some parents/guardians may choose to enroll their children in additional programs.

In this case, we strongly advise parents/guardians to monitor how their child is adjusting. If parents or teachers have concerns about a child's adaptation to the program, a consultation will be scheduled. Teachers will share their expertise with parents, and draw up a plan to assist with adaptation if required.

If it becomes obvious that a child is not adapting after a reasonable amount of time, parents/guardians and teachers may decide to withdraw the child from one program until they are better prepared for an additional preschool experience.

If you choose to have your child in two programs, remember that all child care programs differ in philosophies, teaching methodologies, and staff personalities. As Pomme d'Api is one of the few preschools offering French immersion and a Francophone program, its program delivery will differ from others not specializing in language acquisition.

GENERAL INFORMATION

This section contains general information about the operations and policies of the preschool.

Attendance and Absences

Families are expected to notify the school if their child will not attend on any given day. They are also expected to inform the teachers if a child is absent because of a communicable illness so that other parents/guardians may be informed that their child may have been exposed to the illness.

If your child will be absent from preschool, please call 604-800-1197 with a message that includes the following information:

- child's name
- class
- parent/guardian name
- relevant health information (if your child has a communicable illness)

If you know in advance that your child will be missing one or more classes, please let the teachers know. This helps them maintain accurate records of attendance in case of emergency.

No refunds or prorated fees will be provided for missed classes. Tuition fees must be paid to hold a child's space, regardless of the reason for absence.

Teacher responsibilities

- record attendance each day of class
- inform the Registrar of any unusual circumstance (e.g., a child is absent for a week and the parents/guardians have not called to inform staff)
- contact parents/guardians who have not notified the preschool of an absence to ask why the child has not attended, and if the child is returning
- immediately forward relevant information (e.g., complaints, communicable diseases, withdrawals) garnered from contact with parents/guardians of absent children to the Board of Directors

Allergy Awareness

Pomme d'Api is a nut-free environment. This means no nuts are allowed on the premises, including peanut butter and Nutella. If children have other severe food allergies, you will receive an allergy letter outlining what foods are not permitted in the preschool. Teachers will monitor and remove snacks that pose a potential hazard to children in the class.

Children with Extra Support Needs

Pomme d'Api is an inclusive preschool, located in a wheelchair-accessible building. We recognize the mutual benefit of having children with and without disabilities in the same program.

When the teachers receive a request to accept a child with extra support needs, a confidential meeting will be arranged between the teachers, the child's parents/guardians, the child's special assistant (if one is required), and any other person requested by the parents/guardians. The purpose of the meeting is to share the expectations of all parties involved and to develop a care plan that suits the child's individual needs.

Supported Child Development Program

The BC Centre for Ability offers additional support through its [Supported Child Development Program](#), including a dedicated professional, for children who require it in the classroom. If you are concerned or have questions about your child's development, you may self-refer for a consultation. Alternatively, you may request a teacher or physician to refer on your behalf. Extra support tailored to your child's needs in early childhood can be invaluable. Families who have participated in the program speak positively about their experience.

Celebrations and Special Days

A number of fun days are held during classes, such as a Halloween party, a pajama day, and various cultural celebrations. You will be informed of these in advance if there is anything special your child should bring or wear.

Pomme d'Api holds an annual winter concert and party in mid-December (usually on the evening of the last day of classes before the Christmas break) in the church next to the school. Each class will

perform a selection of songs. **Note: Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the performance may be held in class and filmed for families to view later.**

A graduation ceremony will be held during class in June for students moving on to kindergarten.

You are welcome to bring a treat for the class on your child's birthday, but please speak to the teachers ahead of time so they are prepared and to ensure all allergy restrictions are considered.

If you have a cultural celebration that you would like to share with your child's class, please speak with the teachers to make arrangements. They are always happy to incorporate their students' cultural backgrounds into the curriculum.

Holidays and School Closures

Pomme d'Api follows the Vancouver School Board's holiday schedule. The preschool is closed on all statutory holidays and has two-week breaks coinciding with the Vancouver School Board's Winter Break and Spring Break. The Secretary will send out a list of school closure dates for the current year shortly after the preschool opens in September.

Pomme d'Api will be closed for the following:

- National Day for Truth and Reconciliation
- Thanksgiving
- Remembrance Day
- Winter Break (two-week vacation)
- Family Day
- Spring Break (two-week vacation)
- Good Friday
- Easter Monday
- Victoria Day

Field Trips

Classes at Pomme d'Api may have field trips over the course of the year. For most field trips, parents/guardians must arrange transport for their own children and have a caregiver who remains present throughout the field trip.

Occasionally there may be a field trip where some volunteers are required, but not all caregivers need to stay with their children (e.g., for a walk to a nearby park or fire hall). In all cases, information about the field trip will be handed out in advance.

Who Can Attend Events

Pomme d'Api's insurance policy covers enrolled students and their immediate families. This means that we cannot allow unrelated children to attend events at the school.

Siblings of registered students are welcome to attend in-classroom events such as class potlucks.

Children who are not registered students or siblings of registered students cannot attend in-classroom events. The only exception is our annual Open House, which is held outside of regular classroom hours and is open to the public.

Children who are not registered students or siblings of registered students may attend field trips under some circumstances, because they are not held on school property and the children remain under the supervision of the adult they arrived with.

If you would like to bring a child who is not a student or sibling of a student along on a field trip, please speak to the teachers and the field trip rep ahead of time.

Communication

Most communication between families and the school is done by email. This is why you are asked to provide the school with an email address that you check at least once per week.

In emergencies or situations that require communication on short notice (such as school closures due to bad weather), we will contact you using the phone/text notification procedure discussed in the Emergency Procedures section.

Confidentiality

By default, information that families share with the teachers and the school is confidential. This confidentiality can be waived by families for specific information (e.g., many parents choose to allow their email addresses to be shared with other parents).

Any specific confidentiality rules are contained in the policies to which they apply.

Behavioural Concerns and Discipline

Pomme d'Api aims to promote cooperation, support autonomy, and encourage the development of each child's unique self-expression. Our goal is to shape behaviour in a positive and educational manner, recognizing that limits must be set and reinforced. We help children learn to share, we encourage them to express their feelings, and we use diversion when necessary. We believe that discipline must be appropriate for the age and developmental level of the child.

Where there is concern about a child's behaviour, the teachers will follow a process that includes meeting with the child's parent/guardian for problem-solving and, if required, consulting with external resources (see Appendix D).

DROP-OFFS AND PICK-UPS

Pomme d'Api has a number of policies and procedures regarding drop-offs and pick-ups.

Gate Closure

Please close both gates behind you as you enter and exit the school yard. These gates must be kept latched at all times so the children are safe while playing in the school yard, both during class time and before and after school.

Sign-in/Sign-out Sheet

When you drop your child off, you must sign them in by recording your child's name, the time, and your signature. The sign-in/sign-out sheet is kept on a table near the front door.

When you pick your child up, you must sign them out by recording the pick-up time and your signature on the sheet. If the children are outside in the school yard at the time of pick-up, the teachers will have the sheet outside.

It is very important to sign your child in and out every day, so that the teachers know which children under their care are at all times. This is particularly important in case of an emergency situation.

Note: Due to COVID-19, parents/caregivers will line up outside to drop off and pick up their child. If a parent/caregiver must enter the preschool, they are required to wear a mask.

Late Drop-offs

A "class in session" sign will be placed on the outside door 20 minutes after the start of each class. Students who arrive after the sign has been placed on the door will not be admitted to class that day. There will be no tuition refund for classes missed due to lateness.

The teachers may use their discretion on when to put out the sign—for example, on days when there is very bad weather. In extreme circumstances, exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis.

This policy may seem harsh, but when a child is very late, the entire class is disrupted for several reasons:

- the child has less play time and may still wants to play when it's clean-up time, so the transition is harder on them;
- the teachers have to keep interrupting what they're doing to answer the door, leaving only one teacher to supervise and interact with the children;
- there is an increased risk that the classroom door will be left unlocked if a parent leaves without informing the teachers;
- some children who are unsettled get more anxious when the teachers leave them to answer the door; and
- some children develop an unfulfilled hope that it might be their parents buzzing at the door and coming back for them.

Note there is an exception for the morning class, which starts at 9 a.m. We acknowledge that for parents dropping older siblings off at school at 9 a.m., it is difficult to arrive on time at the preschool. The first 15 minutes of the morning class constitute a grace period of welcoming the children into the classroom for free play, so you may drop off your child between 9 a.m. and 9:15 a.m.

Late Pick-ups

It is your responsibility to pick up your child on time at the end of each class. If you know there will be a change in pick-up routine, please tell the teachers ahead of time. In an emergency, please phone the school at (604) 800-1197 to inform the teachers. In an emergency, you must make arrangements to have somebody else pick up your child. The teachers will only release your child only to authorized persons you have designated in writing (see the next section for details).

If a parent or other designated adult has not arrived to pick up a child 15 minutes after the scheduled class ending time, the teachers will attempt to contact the child's parents/guardians. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached, the teachers will then attempt to contact the emergency contacts listed on the child's registration form.

The following procedure will be followed, at the discretion of the teachers:

- The first time this situation occurs, there will be no penalty.
- If this situation occurs a second time, a written warning will be issued.
- If this situation occurs a third time, the parent/guardian will be charged \$1 per minute late (the clock starts about 10 minutes after the end of class, when the teachers go back inside with any children who have not yet been picked up).

If no resolution can be reached, the parent/guardian will be asked to withdraw their child from the preschool. This penalty may seem harsh, but late pick-ups infringe upon the teachers' time, affect the child's self-esteem, and violate licensing regulations if the child is left for too long after class ends.

Safe Release Procedure

The teachers will follow Pomme d'Api's Safe Release procedure when releasing your child after class. This procedure details who may pick your child up, and under what circumstances teachers may refuse to release your child.

The teachers will not release your child to someone you have not authorized. To authorize somebody to pick up your child, you must follow this procedure:

1. Fill out a form listing the names of all persons who are permitted to pick up your child.
2. If somebody not already on the authorized list will be picking up your child, you must notify the school and teachers in writing and provide the person's name, phone number, and physical description. In a rare emergency situation, written notice can be made at the last minute via email.
3. Make sure the authorized person is prepared to show photo ID.

Note: Notice cannot be given by phone. The school must have a written record.

Unauthorized Pick-up

If an unauthorized person arrives to pick up a child, the following procedure will be followed:

1. The child will remain under the supervision of the teacher at the preschool.
2. The teacher will speak to the individual and explain the policy that no child will be released without written authorization from the parent or guardian.
3. The parent or guardian will be contacted.

If difficulties arise, all reasonable efforts will be made to ensure the safety of the child and the other children. If necessary, the police will be called for assistance.

Suspected Impaired Pick-up

The teachers at Pomme d'Api will not release a child to an authorized person who is unable to adequately care for the child. The teachers will offer to call a relative or friend to pick up the person and child.

If the person is driving a vehicle, the teacher will explain that driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol is against the law and that the teacher is obligated to ensure the safety of the child. If this person chooses to get in the car (with or without the child), the teacher will immediately notify police and provide a description of the car and direction/location headed. If the teacher believes that the child is in need of protection, the Ministry of Children and Family Development will be notified.

Custody and Related Court Orders

If a custody or court order exists, a copy of the order must be placed in the child's file at Pomme d'Api. The guardian is responsible for providing accurate and up-to-date information concerning the legal guardianship of the child. Without a custody or court order on file, the teachers cannot deny access to the non-enrolling parent.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Health and Safety Committee promotes the health and well-being of students, teachers, and parent/guardian volunteers in the classroom. This committee reports to the Vice President. With the teachers' help, the committee ensures the health and safety of persons at the school. The committee's responsibilities include

- cleaning the classroom toys on a monthly basis,
- developing guidelines for safe conduct of the preschool program on the premises,
- developing procedures for use in the event of illness or emergency,
- delivering health and wellness information to students and parents/guardians, and
- closing the school when warranted.

The decision to effect school closures will be made by the teachers, the Board, and the Environmental Health Officer.

Health and Immunization History

You are asked to provide the preschool with a copy of your child's immunization record as part of registration.

If your child's immunizations are not up-to-date, you must inform the preschool in writing. This information will be forwarded to Vancouver Coastal Health. If there is an outbreak of an immunizable disease for which your child is not immunized, the Health Department will notify the preschool, and your child will not be allowed to attend classes until the city's Medical Health Officer deems it safe for the child to return.

Families are encouraged to share pertinent health information about their children, as this will help the teachers to best care for the children's needs. If parents/guardians disclose health information about their child to the teachers or a board member, this information will not be shared in such a way that identifies the child involved without permission. For example, if a child comes down with chicken pox, all families will be informed that a child in the school has chicken pox, but will not be given the name of the child or any identifying information beyond what class they are in.

Medication

Any necessary medication, including inhalers, should be administered by parents/guardians before class. The only medication that will be administered by teachers is epinephrine in the case of an allergic reaction. If your child has an epinephrine auto-injector, you must fill out the medication administration form as part of registration.

Illness and COVID-19

If your child is sick, you must keep them at home. Please inform the teachers so that any necessary preventative measures can be taken with the rest of the class and other families can be informed if needed. Your child should not attend school if they have any of the following:

- fever within the previous 24 hours
- runny nose, persistent coughs, sore throat, headache, earache, rash
- gastrointestinal upset within the previous 24 hours (diarrhoea, vomiting, etc.)
- lice (please notify school)
- any contagious disease (please notify school)

Parents/guardians must also assess their child for symptoms of COVID-19 before sending them to school. Common symptoms include fever, chills, cough or worsening of chronic cough, shortness of breath, loss of sense of smell or taste, diarrhea, nausea, and vomiting. Please regularly review the [BCCDC's Daily Health Check Forms](#) for COVID-19. As per current health guidelines, the following people must stay home and self-isolate:

- a person experiencing COVID-19 symptoms,
- a person waiting for results of a COVID-19 test,
- a person confirmed by public health as a case of COVID-19,
- a person confirmed by public health as a close contact of a confirmed case or outbreak of

COVID-19, or

- a person who has travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days.

When a child at preschool is unwell, the teachers will contact a parent or caregiver to take them home.

For all health concerns, children are required to stay home until they are no longer contagious and they are well enough to participate in school activities.

Teacher Responsibilities

- helping the children learn proper handwashing techniques, which means washing the front and back of hands, fingers, and wrists for 30 seconds and turning off faucets using a paper towel
- sending a sick child home with a parent or caregiver
- communicating health information when warranted:
 - posting health information on the school bulletin board
 - distributing relevant health information to families to take home
 - talking to parents/caregivers at drop-off and pick-up, if the illness is communicable, to inform them of the current illness and the number of children with the illness
- informing Vancouver's Environmental Health office and Pomme d'Api's board when more than two children are absent from school with the same communicable illness
- teachers may ask questions or clarify their own concerns and ask for relevant materials to distribute to families
- the Environmental Health office will investigate the cause of the outbreak and may contact families of the ill children to identify possible sources of the exposure or to obtain health samples from symptomatic children
- the teachers will liaise with the Environmental Health office and the board until the outbreak is declared over

Health and Safety Committee Responsibilities

The Health and Safety Committee has the following responsibilities:

- organizing cleaning of toys and play clothes by using parent volunteers
 - toys are cleaned monthly using diluted bleach
 - additional cleaning sessions will be organized in the event of communicable illness
 - in the event of lice, play clothes will be washed
- communicating to parents by email that a communicable illness has entered the school
 - depending on the severity of the situation, the committee may choose to initiate the emergency phone/text notification procedure instead
- answering questions that parents may ask via phone or email
- phoning, in the event of an outbreak, any parents whose children miss school if the parents have not informed the school of the reason for the children's absence
 - teachers will email or phone the Health and Safety Committee with the names of parents that need to be contacted within 24 hours of the child missing class, as the teachers must inform the Environmental Health office of the number of children missing school due to

illness.

Accident Procedures

In the event of an emergency, teachers will contact the appropriate resources without delay.

For accidents requiring first aid, you or your child's designated caregiver may be called to come to the preschool.

In more serious cases, including deep cuts and head injuries, your child will go to BC Children's Hospital for examination. If you or your child's other emergency contacts cannot be reached or cannot come to the preschool immediately, another responsible adult will accompany your child to the hospital.

When the child is out of danger, a teacher will provide the parent/caregiver an official description of the accident, witnessed by another adult. The teacher will also file an accident report, as required by Vancouver Health Department regulations.

Emergency Procedures

Emergency situations may include weather-related incidents (leading to school closures), health-related incidents (serious communicable illness), disasters (fire, flood, snowstorm, earthquake) and other urgent school matters or safety concerns.

Communications

The Health and Safety Committee will coordinate communications to all parents in the case of a health or safety concern or emergency. For non-emergency situations, the information will be communicated by email. In emergency situations, the information will be communicated via the emergency phone/text notification procedure.

At the beginning of the school year, class representatives will collect the phone numbers of families in their class. If possible, you should be able to receive texts at this number. If you cannot receive texts, please notify your class rep.

The class rep will create a contact list so they can text all families at once. (If any parents cannot receive texts, the class rep will have a note of that, along with those parents' phone numbers.) The President will also have this contact information, with a contact list for each class.

If there is an emergency, the class rep (or the President, if necessary) will follow this notification procedure:

- Send a group text to all of the parents in the class with information about the emergency; requesting a return text to confirm the message was received.
- Phone any parents who cannot receive texts, with the same information that was included in the text.
- Keep track of responses to the text. After a reasonable amount of time, any parent who has not responded to the group text will be phoned.

- If an answering machine is reached when a parent is phoned, the information should be left as a message, along with a request to call back as soon as possible to confirm that the message was received.

This phone/text notification procedure will also be used in non-emergency situations that require communication on short notice (such as school closures due to bad weather).

Evacuation

If there is an emergency where the school must be evacuated, students and teachers will move to a muster point in the empty lot at the back of the church (on Gladstone just north of 44th, across the alley from the back door of the preschool). The teachers will also bring along the class first aid kit, as well as the attendance form from that day.

Parents/guardians will be contacted to come get their children. The teachers will stay with the children until they are released to a parent/caregiver or other designated adult.

In the case of a prolonged emergency or if parents/guardians cannot be contacted, children may be moved to a different location. In this case, a posted message will be left on the back door of the preschool (a grey fire door facing the empty lot behind the church) with the location and contact information for each child. If possible, parents/guardians will also be phoned, texted, or emailed with the information.

In the event of a disaster such as an earthquake, students and teachers may go to the nearest [Disaster Support Hub](#), located at the Fraserview Library (1950 Argyle Drive).

Emergency Kit and Personal Comfort Kits

The preschool has an emergency kit with supplies for two teachers and 20 children for a three-day period. The kit is kept in the outdoor storage area to the east of the playground, under the ramp leading to the church. It contains the following:

- water packs, paper cups, and survival nutrition bars
- light sticks and whistle
- flashlights, radios, and batteries
- survival candles and waterproof matches
- basic first aid kit
- portable toilets and toilet paper
- Swiss army knife, Exacto knife, duct tape
- rope and tarp
- emergency all-weather blankets
- safety vest, goggles, dust masks
- pad of paper and permanent marker
- personal comfort kits including emergency contact information for all students

Each family provides a personal comfort kit for their child. It is a large ziplock bag labelled with your

child's name, you can include small items that would provide comfort to your child in case they have to wait to be reunited with you in an emergency. The kit must include one copy of the emergency contact card filled out during registration.

Here are some examples of what else the kit can include:

- a short letter from you
- pictures (e.g., family, a pet, your child's room)
- a notepad or drawing paper
- small markers or pencil crayons
- a small stuffy, toy, playing cards, or a game
- a flashlight with batteries

The kits should *not* contain the following:

- food
- medication
- crayons (which can melt in the storage bin)
- items that do not fit in the ziplock bag

MONEY HANDLING

All finances at Pomme d'Api including all revenue and all expenses are accounted for in compliance with Canada Revenue Agency regulations. Cash transactions are avoided.

Reimbursement for Purchases

Designated individuals (e.g., board members, purchasers, volunteers) sometimes purchase items or services on behalf of the school. Authorized costs related to school business will be reimbursed upon submission of receipts to the Treasurer.

To be reimbursed, individuals must fill out the online reimbursement form and attach receipts. Submissions for reimbursement must be made within 60 days; otherwise, reimbursements will not be fulfilled.

Collection of Money

Rarely, there may be occasions when the board designates a parent volunteer (such as a class rep) to collect funds on behalf of the school. Following collection, these individuals will submit the funds along with a transaction record in person to a Board member within 7 business days. The transaction record should include the date, name, and amount and purpose of funds. The Treasurer will reconcile the funds with the transaction record and follow up with any questions.

All persons collecting or handling money are responsible for the money until it is received by the Treasurer. Teachers are not to be designated persons for handling money.

Fundraising Procedures

The Fundraising Director is responsible for the following:

- recording orders and collecting funds;
- reconciling orders and funds (ensuring that the amount collected from each individual matches the order placed);
- producing a transaction summary/invoice for the Treasurer or accountant totalling the order plus the profit/commission generated for the school within two weeks of the event (this is an accounts payable to the school);
- informing the Treasurer of the outstanding accounts payable amount and when to expect this payment;
- tracking fundraising per family over the course of the year; and
- segregating funds for each fundraising campaign.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Pomme d'Api is governed by the constitution of the Pomme d'Api Society, which is presided over by the Board of Directors. Board positions are filled by election and held by parent volunteers whose children are enrolled at Pomme d'Api.

The Board of Directors consists of a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and several Directors as determined by the Society's members at the start of each year (see Appendix E for more information about the director positions).

All board members are voted in at the AGM in September. If two or more people vie for one position, it will be determined by election.

Only one parent per family may fill a board position.

The Board should ideally include both new and returning parents, to help with continuity and the transfer of past experience.

Responsibilities

The Board is legally responsible for the preschool and the following:

- filing all relevant documents,
- preschool administration,
- policy development and maintenance,
- finances (with the help of a hired accountant),
- staffing and ensuring adherence to personnel policies (see Appendix F), and
- organization of the AGM and parent meetings.

Note: The teachers report to the Board. However, any parent concerns regarding teachers must be raised with the President or Vice President in a confidential meeting, not a Board meeting.

Meetings

The Board meets monthly to discuss all issues that concern the preschool. Parents who would like to address the Board can do so by advising the Secretary that they would like an item to be added to the agenda, stating the nature of their concern. Non-Board members who address the Board may be asked to leave the meeting after their address is finished if the Board has sensitive issues to discuss.

Board meetings are summarized in the minutes. Any discussions that are sensitive in nature will be noted as occurring in camera, but not detailed in the minutes.

Financial Oversight

A Finance Committee comprising no more than three signing officers of the board, including the Treasurer and two other directors, typically the President and Vice President (preferably someone with financial/banking knowledge), oversee and account for all financial transactions. Payroll and remittance payments must be made semi-monthly. All revenue and expenses are reconciled monthly with supporting documents (e.g., funding reconciliation reports, invoices, and receipts) sent to the school's accountant. All Board members are responsible for reviewing the monthly and year-to-date profit/loss and balance sheets and ensuring that enrolment is sufficient to support the school's expenses.

Two signatures are required for payments, including e-transfers and cheques. Signers must initial any supportive documents, such as invoices or transaction records, to indicate they are correct. It is the responsibility of the signing officer to return, unsigned, any cheques with errors on them to the Treasurer or Treasurer's Assistant.

A complete payroll report, summarizing all staff pay, should be reviewed by the Treasurer, President, and Vice President (or other signer) and signed off on for each payday. Proper oversight requires documentation and reconciliation. The payroll report should be compared with the bank's direct deposits report to ensure they balance.

Board Member Removal

To remove any member from a Board position, 75% of the voting members must vote in a special resolution to remove that person. A successor must be elected to serve until the next annual general meeting.

QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

From Families

If you have a question or concern about your child's progress, you can make an appointment with the teachers. Please do not discuss concerns with the teachers while class is in session or during drop-off and pick-up. Our children need their attention at this time.

Families are encouraged to discuss questions and concerns related to the program with the teachers,

President, or Vice President and to take a problem-solving approach to resolving conflicts.

If you have a complaint about any aspect of the preschool, including the administration or the teachers, please contact the President or Vice President. In case of a dispute, we have an established procedure and will attempt to resolve conflicts objectively, quickly, and confidentially (see Appendix G).

From Teachers

If teachers are aware of conflicts that have the potential to be disruptive to the preschool, they can, at their discretion, encourage the involved parties to follow Pomme d'Api's procedure for resolving disputes (see Appendix G).

If a teacher has a grievance or an irresolvable conflict, they will contact the President or Vice President, who will follow a process similar to that outlined above. Teachers will not discuss issues with the parents, as conflicts should always be resolved at the executive level and not with the general membership.

Appendix A: Procedure for Visits to the School

When parents interested in registration visit the school, teachers will

- answer parents' questions and clearly state that parent participation is mandatory,
- encourage parents to contact the Registrar should they have further questions about the school's philosophy, volunteer requirements, etc.

If a given program is full, parents can email the Registrar to be placed on a waitlist. The Registrar will provide a waitlist form to be filled out with their names, their child's name, and the child's date of birth. The Registrar will contact them when a space becomes available.

Appendix B: Procedure for Responding to Inquiries

Telephone inquiries

When a family phones Pomme d'Api for information and/or to register, the teachers may answer the calls and respond to questions. The Registrar or other board members are also required to assist in returning calls regarding registration questions.

Email inquiries

When a family emails Pomme d'Api for information, the Registrar or Registrar Assistant is responsible for replying to the email, in English or in French as appropriate.

Social media inquiries

When a family requests information through social media (e.g., Facebook), the team member responsible for monitoring our social media accounts may reply to the query, or if necessary bring the query to the attention of the Registrar, who will assist in replying to the query.

Procedure for contacting new families regarding an inquiry

When contacting interested new families prior to the annual Open House, teachers or the Registrar will

- inform parents that registration is on a first-come, first-served basis;
- inform parents that the next year's registration begins at the Open House event scheduled in late February or early March; and
- offer parents the opportunity to make an appointment to visit the class they intend to register their child in.

If the date for the Open House has not yet been set, the Registrar will keep a list of interested families and contact them to let them know the Open House date once it has been set.

When contacting interested parents after the Open House has occurred, teachers or the Registrar will

- offer parents the opportunity to make an appointment to visit the class they intend to register their child in,
- inform parents how much space is available in the class they intend to register their child in, and
- explain the waitlist procedure if the class they intend to register their child in is already full.

The Registrar will arrange a suitable time for each visit and inform the teaching staff of all scheduled appointments.

Appendix C: Procedure for Dealing with Late and Missed Payments

If a fee remains unpaid beyond 7 business days despite the email request, the Treasurer or designate will follow these steps:

1. The Treasurer or designate will phone the family within the next 5 days to remind them of the overdue fees and arrange payment. If a family is experiencing financial difficulty, they may choose to meet to develop a payment plan. The parties will then meet to draft and sign an agreement.
2. In the event that payment has not been received and a payment plan has not been signed within 7 days of step 1, the Treasurer or designate will issue a final written notice sent by mail and electronic mail requesting fee payment within the next 7 business days.
3. If payment is not received within 7 days of issue of step 2, the fees are now considered unpaid and the family's child is suspended from class until further notice.

In the event family signs but does not adhere to the agreed-upon payment plan, the follow-up process will recommence at step 2.

If a family's fees are late on more than two occasions,

- on the third occurrence, the family will only be provided 7 business days to pay the outstanding fees before the account is considered unpaid and the family's child is suspended from class until further notice, and
- on the fourth occurrence, the account will be immediately be considered unpaid after the due date.

Ultimately, two failures to remit fees will result in the family being asked to withdraw from the school.

The Board reserves the right to take legal action to recover debts owing to the preschool. When a family owes money to the preschool, no further program placements will be provided to any child in the family until all outstanding monies are paid or a written payment plan has been signed by the appropriate Board representative (Treasurer or President) and the family.

Appendix D: Procedure for Addressing Behavioural Concerns

1. The teachers and the parents/guardians of the child will meet confidentially to discuss the concern and make a plan to improve the situation. This plan may include discussions with external resources. In some cases, the Board may be involved in this discussion.
2. If the problem persists, the teachers will observe and document the child's behaviour.
3. The Board, teachers, and parents/guardians will meet again and discuss the concern, clarifying the behaviour with written documentation.
4. If all positive efforts to resolve the problem have been exhausted, and the teachers believe the persistent behaviour is detrimental to other children in the program, the family may be asked to withdraw the child from the preschool.

If there is a concern for the well-being of a child, the Executive Board or teachers will immediately make contact with the proper authorities.

Appendix E: Board Positions

President

- oversees all activities of the school and its committees
- chairs monthly Board meetings and all parent meetings
- member of the Finance Committee
- hires employees (with the Board and teachers)
- supports health and safety volunteers and photocopiers

Vice President

- member of the Finance Committee
- responsible for the school's insurance policy
- responsible for all maintenance of the school
- responsible for the physical space of the school
- acts as a liaison between the Board and the teachers
- acts as a liaison between the Board and the school's landlord (the adjoining church)
- oversees all personnel matters

Treasurer

- member of the Finance Committee
 - While the Treasurer manages all financial activities, the Finance Committee is ultimately responsible for financial oversight of the preschool and ensuring compliance with all CRA requirements
- collects mail and completes government forms and reports
- manages all financial transactions (e.g., payroll and CRA remittances, bill payments, tuition deposit reconciliation, annual tax and donation receipts, annual insurance renewal, and annual directors liability policy renewal)
- records and reconciles all financial transactions monthly with accountant
- ensures all revenue streams applied for by relevant deadlines (e.g., monthly CCOF, monthly ECE-WE, monthly ACCB, annual Gaming grant, annual CCOF renewal submitted, all new MCFD funding streams as they arise during the year)
- finalizes fiscal year end with accountant: submits annual funding reconciliation revenue reports, accounts payable summary, accounts receivable commission summary (class photos, Purdy's, Flipgive)
- works with accountant to submit all CRA documents: annual charity return and list of directors, Records of Employment within 5 calendar days, T4s by end of February
- files directors with BC Registries and CRA within 30 days of any change
- reimburses registration fees as per instructions from Fundraising Director, Parent Participation Director, and Registrar
- reimburses expenses incurred by parent volunteers and staff following submission of receipts

Secretary

Must be consistently available at drop-off or pick-up at least one day per week.

- takes minutes at monthly Board meetings
- receives monthly calendar of events from teachers and distributes them to all parents via email
- emails parents with school announcements including days off, closures, or cancelled classes
- passes on urgent messages from the teachers to the appropriate board member or volunteer

Parent Participation Director

Must have access to Microsoft Word and Excel.

- assigns parents to volunteer roles and reshuffles roles when families leave or join the school
- ensures all parents participate and all tasks are completed
- keeps parent volunteer spreadsheet up to date
- assists with finding volunteers for events and for unexpected, urgent tasks
- tracks parent volunteer hours

Fundraising Director

- organizes fundraising events throughout the year, with the help of the Fundraising Committee
- coordinates annual fundraising activities in conjunction with the fundraising committee
- tracks parents' fundraising contributions earned over the year
- tracks parents' fundraising contributions owed at the end of the year
- submits spreadsheet of all fundraising revenue and expenses with supporting documentation and transaction summaries to Treasurer
- reconciles all fundraising transactions with fundraising bank account at the end of each term

Publicity Director

- maintains and improves Pomme d'Api's profile in the community through advertising
- oversees social media
- oversees the annual Open House

Maintenance Director

- coordinates and delegate indoor and outdoor maintenance tasks and projects, including those related to school equipment, furnishings, sidewalks, and playground
- plans and executes other building and maintenance projects

Francophone Director

Must be fluent in French. Pre-existing engagement with the local Francophone community is an asset.

- communicates with external Francophone community resources and parents

- assists with French translation when needed

Technology Director

Must have computer skills.

- manages the school's email lists and G Suite
- maintains and updates the website using Squarespace
- provides technical support to the teachers and other parents for preschool-related activities
- upgrades, fixes, or purchases items such as computers, printers, and phones

Appendix F: Personnel Policies

Staff Structure

Two teachers share equal status as co-teachers. One teacher is additionally charged with the position of school administrator.

Hiring Procedures

Recruitment of qualified bilingual staff can present a particular challenge. It is imperative that efforts are made to advertise available positions where the Francophone community may have access to the information. Each hiring phase should include research to find new sources for bringing the posting into the Francophone community.

Once candidates have been identified, interviews are conducted in both French and English. All staff must be fluent in French and English as they will be responsible for communicating with parents in both languages.

Documentation of New Employees

Appropriate documentation must be on file prior to a new employee's first day at work. The Provincial Child Care Licensing regulation requires the following documentation:

- a completed criminal record check conducted under the Criminal Record Review Act (an RCMP criminal record check is not acceptable)
- a physician's letter indicating that the mental and physical health of the person is adequate for the job
- character references (minimum of 3 reference checks is recommended)

All employee files must additionally contain the following:

- a resume
- copies of required certificates/licenses (such as ECE license, first aid certificate)

The Vancouver/Richmond Health Board also recommends that employees in the child and health care field provide written proof of vaccinations that they have received; however, employees have the right to choose whether to be immunized. Pomme d'Api recommends that the employee file contain a copy of the employee's immunization record, or a written statement indicating that the employee has chosen not to follow an immunization program.

For those opting for immunization, the following vaccinations are recommended:

- tetanus/diphtheria (Td): A basic adult series (2 injections 2 months apart plus a booster 6–12 months after the second dose). A reinforcement dose is required if more than 10 years have passed since the previous tetanus and diphtheria vaccination.
- poliomyelitis: A series of 3 IPV (2 injections 2 months apart, third dose 2 months after the second dose) for persons who may have occupational contact with polio virus.
- measles (or MMR): One dose of live attenuated vaccine for persons born after 1956.

- rubella (or MMR): One dose of live attenuated vaccine or serological test (ELISA) indicating immunity.

Probationary Period

All new staff will be advised that they will be under a three-month probationary period prior to a permanent appointment. The rate of pay will be determined by the Board of Directors and will be based on the new teacher's qualifications. After the probationary period, new staff members will be given a pay increase provided they have met the probationary requirements.

During the probationary period, the designated board member will regularly consult with the new employee to provide feedback and guidance on job performance. After the probationary period is over, the employee will either receive a permanent appointment, an additional probationary period (if performance was questionable), or dismissal (if performance was unsatisfactory).

Under the Employment Standards Act, either party can terminate employment without notice if the employee has completed less than six consecutive months of employment. After six months of employment, Pomme d'Api is required to give an employee two weeks' notice, or two weeks' pay, for dismissal.

Working Conditions

Schedule

Pomme d'Api follows the same holiday schedule as the Vancouver School Board, including all statutory holidays, the two-week winter break, and the two-week spring break. However, we do not close for Vancouver School Board professional development days or other district closure days.

Staff members are paid for all statutory holidays, the winter break, and the spring break.

Hours

Staff are paid for the requisite number of hours worked, as agreed to between the board and the teachers and documented in the contract. Staff are required to remain on site during the scheduled hours. The work schedule will be discussed at the outset of each year, and may vary. In addition, staff will be paid for attending meetings and events requested by the Board.

Meetings

Staff may be asked to attend general meetings, board meetings, parent-teacher conferences, and other events such as the Open House. Pomme d'Api policy requires staff to be paid for four hours or for the accumulated overtime, whichever is greater. The preschool will also pay for reasonable taxi fare if staff do not have transportation after evening meetings or events.

Program planning

Staff may choose two program-planning days per working year on which they may plan activities, prepare materials, rearrange layouts, and hold parent-teacher conferences. Staff will inform parents of the dates well in advance and should choose alternating days so that the planning day does not always affect one program. (For example, if staff choose Monday for the first planning day, a Tuesday or Thursday is preferable for the second planning day.) Staff are required to be on the premises for the entire day that they will be paid for, unless otherwise arranged in advance with one of the Executive members.

Parent-teacher conferences

Teachers will accommodate requests for parent-teacher conferences. Preferably, these will be scheduled on afternoons that classes are not in session (i.e., Tuesdays) or during planning days. If required, staff will accommodate parents after classes on other days; however, conferences are to be scheduled such that teachers do not work more than eight hours per day. Due to budget constraints, overtime is to be used sparingly.

Inclement weather

In cases of inclement weather, Pomme d'Api may close at the discretion of the board with appropriate input.

Power shortages

Occasionally we are informed in advance of planned power cut-offs. Should this occur, the school will close as the lack of a telephone connection and lighting in the building presents opportunities for accidents.

Upon receiving advance warning of power cut-offs, staff will immediately contact an Executive member and the class representatives. The class representatives will be instructed to use the emergency phone/text notification procedure to contact the parents of the class. If class reps cannot be contacted, it is the staff's responsibility to contact parents and tell them that class has been cancelled.

Professional development

The staff are encouraged to keep up-to-date in their field, and the Executive will support reasonable conference and course costs. An education amount for each staff member is budgeted in the yearly financial planning process. In addition, staff are entitled to take two professional days per year to attend conferences and workshops. Staff are responsible for obtaining approval from the Board for leave of absences prior to taking professional development and for ensuring that a substitute has been arranged for the duration. Staff must also seek approval from the Board before attending a course or event if they intend to seek financial reimbursement for it.

Evaluations

The Executive will endeavour to coordinate an evaluation process for the staff before the end of each school year. The purpose of the evaluation is to examine strengths and weaknesses and to set professional goals for the upcoming year. The process consists of several components:

- self-evaluation
- peer evaluation
- staff evaluation by the Board of Directors
- program evaluation by parents

The Executive will review the information and meet with each staff member on an individual basis to give constructive feedback. This is also an opportunity for the Executive to gain valuable feedback and insights from the staff.

Terminations

Pomme d'Api Executive members will endeavour to monitor potential problems with staff and will provide appropriate feedback in order to correct gaps in expected performance. Should a staff member's performance remain unsatisfactory, the Executive will terminate their employment.

According to labour standards, if the staff member is still on probation the preschool is not required to give notice or severance pay in lieu of notice. However, once a staff member has passed the probationary period, the preschool is required to give at least two weeks' notice of termination, or two weeks' severance pay (the choice is made by the Executive on the basis of the best interests of the children and preschool).

For major infractions, the staff member's service contract will be immediately terminated and they will receive two weeks' severance pay in lieu of notice.

Substitute teachers

In the event that one or both of the teachers is absent (e.g., due to illness) a substitute teacher will be hired to ensure that the classroom ratio of 1 teacher per 10 students is maintained.

If one teacher is a fully qualified ECE-licensed teacher, then the substitute is not required to be fully licensed, but should be in training towards an ECE, or equivalent, licence.

Given the challenge of finding qualified substitute teachers, it is the joint responsibility of the teachers and the Board to maintain a list of qualified substitutes and to work collaboratively to arrange for their substitutes.

Substitute teachers will be paid according to their level of completion of ECE training, and their ability to speak French, as follows:

- Level 1: In training for ECE license, limited or no French
- Level 2: In training for ECE license, fluent in French
- Level 3: ECE license, limited or no French
- Level 4: ECE license, fluent in French

Appendix G: Procedure for Dealing with Disputes

When an issue arises in relation to concerns about the staff or volunteer parents conducting Pomme d'Api business, the following steps will be followed to resolve the conflict peacefully and confidentially:

1. The individual should first address the concern directly with the other individual involved. Most conflicts arise from misunderstandings, and are often resolved at this step if dealt with in a direct and timely manner. Should either party feel uncomfortable discussing the matter on their own, they may ask a Board member to witness the exchange. The Board member must remain impartial.
2. Should the direct approach in Step 1 fail to resolve the issue satisfactorily, the individual should formally contact the President or Vice President in writing and make an appointment for a face-to-face discussion with one or more Board members. The Board will acknowledge the individual's concern and outline next steps. An unannounced presentation at a Board meeting is not an appropriate method for airing a grievance.
3. Two Board members, or one Board member and at least one teacher, will meet with the individual to define the issues and state their point of view. The purpose of the discussion is to clarify the issue and to start seeking solutions. Should the tone of the meeting become aggressive and accusatory, the meeting will be immediately terminated and rescheduled when all parties are calm and ready to talk rationally. A Board member will document the content and the outcome of this meeting.
4. If necessary, the Board members will gather information by interviewing witnesses. They will document their findings and the witnesses will read the reports and sign them. These findings will be summarized in a written letter to the individual. Witnesses will not be identified without their consent. If the issue has the potential to affect the licensee, a copy of the letter and report will be sent to the licensing officer.
5. A plan will be agreed upon by the complainant and the Board. If a plan cannot be agreed upon by all parties, other arrangements may be required.