



Effective date: Feb. 24, 2026

**Pacific Montessori Society
Active Play and Screen Time Policy**

Policy Statement

Selkirk Montessori School's preschool and extended day care programs are licensed under B.C.'s *Community Care and Assisted Living Act* and as a licensee, the school must follow the regulations provided by the Child Care Facilities Licensing Board.

All community care facilities and classes of community care facilities in B.C. must comply with the Director of Licensing Standard of Practice for Active Play. This Standard of Practice includes a provision limiting the amount of time children should be exposed to screens (TV, computer, electronic games) in a given day.

Policy Rationale

Active play and daily physical activity have a positive impact on students' health and achievement, helping them develop good habits that can contribute to longer, healthier lives.

Active play promotes healthy growth and development and supports body control and movement.

Active play can help build strong bones and muscles, improve balance, coordination and assists with the development of gross motor and fine motor skills.

Active play also helps to develop children's confidence, improves concentration and thinking and learning skills and provides opportunities to develop social skills and make friends.

Policy in Full

Selkirk Montessori School must, in addition to care, provide children with opportunities for social, emotional, physical and intellectual growth.

The school must provide to children a comprehensive and coordinated program of indoor and outdoor activities that is designed for the development and care of children and is appropriate for the age and development of children in the school's care.

Procedures Related to Policy

Whenever possible, it is recommended active play and physical movement should be incorporated in the child care environment throughout daily routines and activities for a total of 120 minutes.

1. Selkirk Montessori School's licensed child care programs must ensure a minimum of 60 minutes per day of outdoor active play (indoor active play is acceptable when weather is poor or outdoor physical space is limited). Active play may be accumulated through 15-minute portions of time throughout the day or continuously. Licensed child care programs where children are in attendance for 3 hours or less must develop an active play plan acceptable to the Medical Health Officer (Licensing Officer).
2. Selkirk Montessori's licensed Preschool care program must ensure the minimum outdoor active play corresponds with the length of time the preschool program is offered, as outlined in the table below (indoor active play is acceptable when weather is poor or outdoor physical space is limited):

Length of Preschool program	Amount of Active play
1 - 2 hours	20 minutes
2 - 3 hours	30 minutes
3 - 4 hours	40 minutes

Active Play

At Selkirk Montessori School, daily active play will consist of un-facilitated play and facilitated games and activities. This information will be shared with parents/families.

1. Un-facilitated play (free play) is child-chosen, self-directed, and self-led movement, activity or interaction that encourages children to use their imagination, discover their interests and tap into their creativity. Un-facilitated play is open ended and not directed by an adult. Un-facilitated play does not include playing with most electronic toys (computers, tablets, or automated pets or games). Examples include:
 - A group of children initiating playing soccer together, versus the adult/employee setting out that the activity is soccer.
 - Building block towers, sand castles or other structures and knocking them down.
 - Children using their imagination to invent games with water, sand, balls, cars or any other object.
 - Children running, jumping and dancing around the play space or park.
2. Facilitated play is play that is directed by adults/staff and has a set of rules with specific objectives. Many games fall under the category of facilitated play, such as card games and board games. Examples include:
 - Organized sports such as soccer, hockey, and tennis.
 - Staff led games such as Simon says, follow the leader, tag or duck duck goose.

Fundamental movement skills and injury prevention

Fundamental movement skills and injury prevention must be incorporated into all active play activities. Children should have opportunities to practice fundamental movement skills as part of their indoor and outdoor daily routines.

1. Fundamental movement skills are gross motor skills that involve different body parts such as feet, legs, trunk, head, arms and hands. Fundamental movement skills include:

- Balance skills – movements where the body remains in place but moves around its horizontal and vertical axes.
 - Coordination skills – involves gross motor manipulation of objects such as catching, throwing, or kicking a ball or beanbag; balloon batting; scarf tossing.
 - Loco motor skills – running, jumping, hopping, galloping, skipping and leaping.
2. Injury prevention is the conscious and thoughtful effort to prevent or reduce injuries before they occur. Children will be instructed on how to be safe and act responsibly in the play space, how to correctly use toys and equipment, and to be aware of potential hazards.
- Injury prevention strategies will vary depending on the age of the children, their developmental levels and the environment. For example, a particular area of a play space may be made inaccessible for younger children as the toys and equipment located in that area are specifically designed for older children. Another example is the use of protective ground surfacing such as pea gravel under climbing equipment to reduce the risk of injury from falls.
 - Other injury prevention examples include seat belts and infant car seats, bicycle helmets, personal flotation devices, and poison control.
3. Physical literacy is motivating, building confidence and physical competence by increasing the knowledge and understanding of the value of engaging in physical activities for life. Physically literate people consistently develop the motivation and ability to understand, communicate, apply, and analyze different forms of movement. They are able to demonstrate a variety of movements confidently, competently, creatively and strategically across a wide range of physical activities.

Screen Use

Selkirk Montessori School's licensed child care programs and elementary and middle school programs follow the regulations by limiting screen time (TV, computer, electronic games) to 30 minutes or less a day. Programs where children are in attendance for three hours or less don't include screen time activities as a part of the daily routine.

Prolonged Sitting

Selkirk Montessori school limits prolonged sitting activities in all of its programs and schedules frequent short bursts of activity for one to two minutes where applicable. All staff at Selkirk Montessori school demonstrate appropriate modelling of active play activities and screen time.

References:

[BC Injury Research and Prevention Unit](#)
[Canadian Paediatric Society - Active Kids, Healthy Kids](#)
[Canadian Paediatric Society - Physical Activity for Children](#)
[Healthy Families BC](#)
[Physical Literacy](#)

Authority

[Community Care and Assisted Living Act](#)
[Standards to be maintained](#)

7 (1) A licensee must operate the community care facility in a manner that will promote the health, safety and dignity of persons in care.

[Child Care Licensing Regulation](#)

Opportunities for growth

43. A licensee must, in addition to care, provide children with opportunities for social, emotional, physical and intellectual growth.

Approved