HRCE-EXCEL

EXCEL Before and After School Program

Parent Handbook

2023-2024

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EXCEL PROGRAM INTRODUCTION

EXCEL is a High Five® registered before and after school recreational program offered by the Halifax Regional Centre for Education at 69 elementary schools across the Halifax Regional Municipality. EXCEL's dedicated and qualified program leaders plan and facilitate weekly games and activities that consider the needs and interests of the registered students. These program plans reflect EXCEL's overall philosophy which is focused on providing opportunities for physical activity and positive social interaction in a safe and fun environment.

While program size and operating space may differ at each school, EXCEL's programming objectives are consistent. Since the program began over 25 years ago, it has developed significantly based on experience, advancements in the field of youth recreation, and feedback from participants, parents and staff. EXCEL provides engaging and inclusive recreational opportunities for nearly 4000 program participants.

Program Highlights include:
- Structured and unstructured active play both inside and outside;
- A *minimum* of 45 minutes per day of structured physical activity;
- Opportunities for participant choice in programming;
- Special guest presenters and external programmers;
- Loose Parts and Loose Arts Play - open-ended activities using a variety of natural and human-made materials to build, create and imagine;
- P.A.L.S. (Playground Activity Leaders in Schools) for participants in Grades 4-6; and
- HRQ Gym (Homework/Reading/Quiet Time/Gym) from 5:30 to 6:00 pm.

ABOUT THE STAFF

Our programs strive to maintain a standard staff to student ratio of 2:24 for Before and After school programs. The on-site leaders are employees of the HRCE and have education and/or experience working with children in group childcare or recreation settings. EXCEL provides on-going professional development workshops and seminars for our staff that include topics essential to our program's operation such as: First Aid & CPR, High Five, Fundamental Movement Skills, Verbal De-escalation, Child Guidance, and EPI-Pen training.

Recreation Programmers provide supervision and support to the Program staff at each site. Each Recreation Programmer is responsible for a group of program sites to guide the staff's development and delivery of the program, address parent/guardian concerns and provide general information, and to deliver training and evaluations. A listing of the Recreation Programmer contact information is included on page 12.

REGISTRATION

All families interested in having their children participate in the EXCEL Program are required to register online for each new school year. This information is necessary to understand the desired program participation level as well as to ensure EXCEL staff have immediate access to current student, parent/guardian and emergency information. Confirmation emails will be sent to parents/guardians as verification of your enrolment status. Please note that students may not begin attending the EXCEL program until parents have received an **Enrollment Approval** email through EZChildTrack. The Enrollment Approval email will indicate which activity(ies) (i.e., Before/After School) your child has been approved to attend and any activities for which they have been waitlisted. The options for enrollment include Before only (full-time), After only (full time) and Before and After (full-time). Children can be enrolled in one activity (i.e., Before or After) and be waitlisted for the other activity (i.e., Before or After).

Registration for the EXCEL Program occurs in the Spring of the current school year for the next school year and is completed online through the EZChildTrack Parent Portal at: https://ca.ezchildtrack.com/excel/parent. Families with a child(ren) enrolled in the current year's EXCEL program are provided with an advance opportunity to register their current participants and siblings (who will be starting school) for the next school year using the email address on file in EZChildTrack. This will provide the primary account holder exclusive access to the online registration system during this period. Registration procedures are sent to families with children enrolled in the current year's program by email and posted on the EXCEL pages of the HRCE

website. We encourage families to apply early as there is no guarantee of re-enrolment for returning students. **Any applications received from parents re-registering after this advance re-enrolment period will be regarded as new enrolments and will be processed based upon the date and time of receipt.**

At the completion of the early registration period, the general registration period begins. Registration procedures are posted on the EXCEL pages of the HRCE website. New families (i.e., those who do not have a child(ren) enrolled in the current year's EXCEL Program) will be unable to access the online registration system prior to the opening of the general registration period.

Until the program begins in September, the anticipated start date is the first day of school. Registration during the period leading up to the beginning of the program is intended for families who wish to enroll their child(ren) in the EXCEL program at the earliest opportunity. We do not hold spots for families who are interested in enrolling at a later date. If you would like your child(ren) to start the program at a later date, you will be billed for the days/month(s) of service leading up to that start date to reserve your place in the program.

If registering after the beginning of the program in September and spaces are available (i.e., the program is not waitlisted), the preferred start date must be within two weeks of the date of submission of your application. If you would like your child(ren) to start the program after the two-week period, you will be billed for the days/month(s) of service leading up to that start date to reserve your place in the program.

Acceptance to the program will be based on the date and time applications are successfully submitted through EZChildTrack. Past experience has shown that many EXCEL program applicants cannot be accommodated at specific school sites where the demand exceeds program capacity. EXCEL recommends that parents/guardians register early to ensure the greatest opportunity for entry into the program. If necessary, waiting lists are formed for individual school programs. A confirmation and/or waitlist notification email will be issued within ten business days of application submission.

EXCEL monthly tuition fees are calculated by multiplying the applicable daily rate by the total number of instructional days each month. Parents/guardians are not charged for holidays, scheduled breaks, Professional Development days, Assessment and Evaluation days, or report card day, as service is not provided on these days.

Once a child(ren)'s enrolment is approved, parents/guardians will have access to our online parent portal and are asked to update the system with any address changes occurring throughout the school year as well as any changes to your payment card numbers and expiry dates. All parents/guardians must identify emergency contacts in case of illness and/or cancellations. If there are any changes to these contacts, parents/guardians are asked to update these changes in the parent portal or by contacting the EXCEL office. For more information on using the features of the EZChildTrack Parent Portal, please click on the Help tab on the Home Page.

All individuals wishing to register for EXCEL must do so through our online registration system. At the time of registration, parents/guardians are asked to identify any medical concerns their child(ren) may have or if their child(ren) will require support beyond our standard staff to student ratio to participate in our group recreation program. To fully explore the scope of the needs identified and the potential accommodations required, you will be emailed a participation questionnaire after submitting your online registration. It may also be necessary to arrange for a phone call or in-person meeting with the Recreation Programmer for your child's EXCEL program site. Your position in the queue will not be impacted during this process.

As in previous years, account holders must pay an annual registration fee ($37.00). This fee is non-refundable even if the child(ren) are withdrawn from the program, regardless of whether or not they attended. Payment can be made online during the application process using Visa, MasterCard, Visa Debit or MasterCard Debit. Under the heading, **"Pay Now: Select Payment Method",** Credit Card will be the choice presented. The following payment cards are accepted: Visa Credit or Debit, MasterCard Credit or Debit. The system will recognize the different cards based on the card number. The name of the payer, address (must match the address provided to your credit card company or financial institution), expiry date and CVV (3-digit number on the back of the card) are required. **Please note: the payer must be a person listed on the application form as primary or secondary account holder, emergency contact, or authorized to pick up.**

Families who wish to pay monthly tuition fees online can set up **auto payment** at the time of registration with

the payment card used to pay the registration fee. On the "Make Payment" screen where you are required to enter your payment card information, there is a section that says, "Enroll in Recurring Autopay". Below, it will say "Use this card for autopay" and will provide Yes or No as your options. Simply click Yes if you would like to set up for autopay, then click the "Make Payment" button. Tuition payments will be applied to the payment card entered on the 20th of the month preceding the month of service.

By enrolling in Autopay, the Payer authorizes the Halifax Regional Centre for Education to process payments on a recurring basis for the amount of the Account Balance on each Payment Due Date. If the payment fails for any reason, the payer has until the end of the Payment Due Date to post a one-time payment to cover the Account Balance. A Late Payment Fee of $18.50 will be posted to the Account on the day following the Payment Due Date if the balance has not been remitted.

If you choose to pay the registration fee later by cash, cheque or money order, please mail or deliver payment to the EXCEL Administration office at 25 Alfred Street, Dartmouth, NS, B3A 4E8 to complete the registration process. Please make cheques and money orders payable to HRCE/EXCEL.

The $37.00 registration fee will be applied even if your child(ren) are only enrolled in one of your desired activities (i.e., Before or After). If the capacity has been reached for all program activities in which you wish to enroll and you are waitlisted for all desired activities, you will not be required to pay the $37.00 registration fee until such time as space is available for your child(ren) to enroll.

ACCOUNT INFORMATION

PAYMENT OF FEES

All fees for the EXCEL Before and After school program are processed on the 20th day of the month preceding the month of service, beginning August 20th for service in September. Options for payment include online payments using Visa or MasterCard, Visa Debit or MasterCard Debit, Post-Dated Cheques, Cash or Money Order. Tuition must be paid by the Payment Due Date and in full each month.

If paying monthly tuition fees online, families can make payments manually each month or set up **auto payment.**

Manual Online Payments

To make manual online payments, sign in to your account on the EZChildTrack Parent Portal (https://ca.ezchildtrack.com/excel/parent). Click on the [Pay Now] button in the 'Payments & Statements' section of the Home Page. Select the desired payment method (i.e., credit card). You will be taken to a page wherein you can select the payer and specify the payment amount. **Please note: the payer must be a person listed on the account as primary or secondary account holder, emergency contact, or authorized to pick up**. If you wish to use another payment method, click on the [Change Payment Method] button. The 'View Current Invoice' link can be used to view details linked with the current invoice. There is also an option to view the refund policy. If no credit card details have been saved for the account, you can specify payer information (address must match the address provided to your credit card company or financial institution), and click on [Enter Credit Card] button. A form is shown where you can enter payment details and, if you wish, use the card details for autopay. Click on [Make Payment]. If the transaction processed successfully, a payment receipt will be emailed to the payer and the Primary Account Holder (if different). A screen will appear indicating that the payment was successfully processed and provide the option to print the receipt. A Late Payment Fee of $18.50 will be posted to the Account the day following the Payment Due Date if the balance has not been remitted.

Autopay

Enrolling in autopay can be completed at the time of registration with the payment card used to pay the $37.00 registration fee. On the "Make Payment" screen of the application where you are required to enter your payment card information, there is a section that says, "Enroll in Recurring Autopay". Below, it will say "Use this card for autopay" and will provide Yes or No as your options. Simply click Yes if you would like to set up for autopay, then click the "Make Payment" button. Tuition payments will be applied to the payment card entered, on the 20th of the month preceding the month of service.

To enroll in Autopay later, sign in to your account on the EZChildTrack Parent Portal (https://ca.ezchildtrack.com/excel/parent) **on a device larger than a cell phone**. Click on the [Enroll in Autopay] button in the 'Payments and Statements' section of the Parent Portal Home Page. Select the desired method for automatic payment (i.e., credit card). In the next screen, after selecting the payer from the 'Paid By' drop-down and agreeing to the terms and conditions (please review carefully), click on the [Enter Credit Card] button. A payment form is displayed where you can enter all card details. If the enrolment is successful after you click on the [Enroll in Autopay] button, a confirmation email will be sent to the payer and a confirmation message will come up. Once the confirmation message comes up, you can click on the [Close] button to exit. Any payment due prior to the autopay start date must be made manually.

By enrolling in Autopay, the Payer authorizes the Halifax Regional Centre for Education to process payments on a recurring basis for the amount of the Account Balance on each Payment Due Date. If the payment fails for any reason, the payer has until the end of the Payment Due Date to post a one-time payment to cover the Account Balance. A Late Payment Fee of $18.50 will be posted to the Account on the day following the Payment Due Date if the balance has not been remitted.

To update/change the payment card used for autopay, sign in to your account on the EZChildTrack Parent Portal (https://ca.ezchildtrack.com/excel/parent) **on a device larger than a cell phone**. Click on the [Change Autopay] button in the 'Payments & Statements' section of the Home Page. Click on the [Change Payment Method] button to choose a different payment method. Select the desired payment method. You can also delete the existing saved automatic payment method at this time. Changes to payment cards must be made through the parent portal at least five business days prior to the 20th of the month. ***Please note: If you are set up for autopay and make a one time manual payment with a different payment card, this will not change the payment card set up for autopay. You must complete the steps outlined above to update or change the payment card for autopay. Autopay will be set up on your account from year to year unless you choose to cancel it.***

If you wish to cancel autopay, sign in to your account on the EZChildTrack Parent Portal (https://ca.ezchildtrack.com/excel/parent) on a device larger than a cell phone. Click on the [Change Autopay] button in the 'Payments & Statements' section of the Home Page. Click on the [Cancel Automatic Payment] button to cancel autopay and make payments manually.

Post-Dated Cheques

If paying monthly tuition fees by post-dated cheques, they must be received at the EXCEL office (25 Alfred Street, Dartmouth, NS, B3A 4E8) at least five days prior to the 20th of the month preceding the month of service. If you register partway through the month, payment is required immediately for the days that will be used for the first month of service by visiting the EXCEL Administration office. Enrolment will be completed once payment is received. Receipt of post-dated cheques for the remaining months of service are required five days prior to the next monthly Payment Due Date to avoid interruption in service. Please make cheques payable to HRCE/EXCEL.

Cash/Money Order

Payment by cash or money order must be received by the EXCEL Administration office (25 Alfred Street, Dartmouth, NS, B3A 4E8) on or before 4:15pm on the 20th day of the month preceding the month of service. If you register partway through the month, payment is required immediately for the days that will be used for the first month of service by visiting the EXCEL Administration office. Enrolment will be completed once payment is received. Please make money orders payable to HRCE/EXCEL.

Cost Sharing

Parents/guardians who are cost-sharing fees with another parent/guardian may elect to pay separately. Only one parent/guardian however, needs to complete the actual registration process. If you are eligible to register during the early registration period, the parent/guardian who registered the child(ren) for the previous school year must register the child(ren) for the next school year as your child(ren)'s information is on your account. When registering for the next school year, you will indicate that you will be sharing the costs with another individual and provide the required information. Both accounts are subject to the non-refundable $37.00

annual registration fee. All account holders will receive individual Income Tax receipts.

For new families, only one parent needs to complete the actual registration process. On the online registration form, the registering parent/guardian will indicate that this is a cost-share arrangement. They will include the cost-share details (i.e., %) and the contact information of the second person, including their name, email address and phone number. The EXCEL office will then contact the second person and provide a link for that person to provide their payment information and complete the process. Both accounts are subject to the non-refundable $37.00 annual registration fee. All account holders will receive individual Income Tax receipts.

The parent/guardian who is cost-sharing fees must be added as a contact to the account of the parent/guardian who registered the child(ren). This account also stores the names and phone numbers of all emergency contacts and individuals authorized to pick up the child(ren) from EXCEL, as supplied by the child(ren)'s parents/guardians. This information is given to the Program Team Leader at the site to ensure that they are aware of who to contact in an emergency and who is authorized to pick up the child(ren) from EXCEL. The rights of the child(ren)'s parents/guardians are only limited by a court order. If anyone is prohibited from access to your child(ren) or there are other custody arrangements related to EXCEL, you will be asked to email (excelregistrar@hrce.ca) a signed, stamped copy of the custody agreement upon approval of your application.

There is no refund for non-attendance for any of EXCEL's programs. A fee of $18.50 will be charged for payments that are returned with insufficient funds or declined payment card transactions. This fee offsets the administrative costs associated with settling unpaid accounts. Please make sure that payment card information provided at registration will be valid at the time of transaction. Parents/guardians are responsible to update new expiry dates or payment card numbers in the parent portal. As EXCEL relies solely on program fees for its operation, repeated payments that are returned with insufficient funds or declined payment card transactions may result in the suspension of service.

For account information, please contact our Registrar at 902-464-2000 ext. 2787, or our Assistant Registrar at 902-464-2000 ext. 2236. You may also send us an email at excelregistrar@hrce.ca or excel@hrce.ca.

INCOME TAX RECEIPTS
Income tax receipts are issued in February in the name of the Primary Account Holder. They can be accessed by signing into the EZChildTrack Parent Portal (https://ca.ezchildtrack.com/excel/parent) on a device larger than a cell phone. In the Payments and Statements section of the Home Page, click on the View Statement button. From the Statements page, you can print the tax statement for the last completed financial year. To generate these tax statements, click on the Print button.

ACCOUNTS IN ARREARS
All transactions are processed on the 20th of each month preceding the month of service. Consistent payments in arrears may result in the suspension of service and limit any future registration into the EXCEL Program. If necessary, further action and collection efforts will be taken for recovery of the amount owed.

WITHDRAWAL/PROGRAM CHANGES
As EXCEL is funded entirely by program fees, it is essential that all sites remain fully enrolled at all times. Accordingly, EXCEL requires parents/guardians to give two weeks-notice to withdraw your child(ren) from any program. Notice must be provided by the parent/guardian by calling/emailing the EXCEL Registrar's office or by submitting a Change of Enrollment Request as outlined below. You will be billed for the days within this two-week period where sufficient notice was not provided. The two-week notice period does not apply to withdrawals from the program for the upcoming school year, made prior to September 1st. As indicated in the Registration section of the Parent Handbook, the $37.00 annual registration fee is non-refundable even if the child(ren) are withdrawn from the program, regardless of whether or not they attended.

If you are currently enrolled in the EXCEL Program, you can request a change of enrollment by visiting the EZChildTrack Parent Portal at: https://ca.ezchild(ren)track.com/excel/parent. In the Registration section of the Parent Portal home page, click the [View/Enroll] button. Next, click on the [Change Enrollment] button. Then click on the [Change Schedule] button. You may check or uncheck boxes to select the desired set of activity enrollments. You may also change the Site. The date will default to 14 days from the date you submit the request. If you are withdrawing from an activity(ies), the two-weeks-notice policy will apply. If you are adding an activity, you may be offered an earlier start date depending on the availability of spaces. When all

selections are made, click the [Save Enrollment] button. You can see all selected changes by clicking on the [Revised Schedule] button. When finished, click on the [Review Schedule] button. After reviewing all details, you can submit the Change Enrollment application. You will receive an "Enrollment Submission Successful (Change Schedule)" message as confirmation of your submission.

Once your change of enrollment request is processed/approved, the EXCEL Registrar or Assistant Registrar will forward your child(ren)'s program change information to our school program staff. The Registrar or Assistant Registrar will discuss with the Primary Account Holder any refunds owing or fees outstanding to settle your account.

Exceptions to the two-week notice period will be considered for extenuating circumstances such as family illness or loss of employment. Proof of such circumstances may be required for refunds. Please discuss any extenuating circumstances with the EXCEL Registrar/Assistant Registrar.

Regretfully, EXCEL cannot hold spaces for extended periods of time due to the demand for our program. **Should you require an extended leave period, you would be required to officially withdraw and reapply for enrolment at a later date.**

PRORATED REFUNDS/FEES
If you withdraw your child partway through a month, your refund will be calculated by multiplying the applicable *daily rate* by the total number of service days used in the final month of enrollment and subtracting that from the applicable monthly rate.

When enrolling partway through a month, the first month's fees will be calculated by multiplying the number of service days to be used by the applicable *daily rate*.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

HOURS OF OPERATION & HOLIDAYS
Our Before school programs begin each morning at 7:30 a.m. Your Recreation Programmer or Program Team Leader will be able to tell you should this differ at your school site. The After school program begins immediately following afternoon dismissal and operates until 6:00 p.m.

The EXCEL Program does not operate when school is not in session for students, including during the Summer, the Holiday Break, Spring Break, professional development days, assessment and evaluation days, and the final day of school (Report Card Day). In addition, EXCEL is closed on the following annual holidays:

Labour Day	Remembrance Day	Easter Monday
Truth and Reconciliation Day	Heritage Day	Victoria Day
Thanksgiving Day	Good Friday	

The EXCEL Program does not operate on storm days or when a school is closed for the day due to special circumstances.

LATE PICK UP FEES
Our EXCEL After School Program ends at 6:00 p.m. each day and does not offer extended hours. Parents/guardians are required to pick up their children no later than the 6:00 p.m. deadline. In the event that a child(ren) cannot, for whatever reason, be picked up within the allotted program time, the following procedures will be followed:

- There will be a late pick up charge of $1.00 per minute/family for the first 15 minutes; and $2.00 per minute/family thereafter;
- When notice of a late pick up is received, the applicable fees will be billed to your account. If you are set up for Autopay, your payment will be processed along with your regular monthly payment on the next payment due date. Otherwise, payment of late pick up fees must be made on or before the next payment due date to avoid the late payment fee of $18.50. This can be done by signing into your account on the Parent Portal at https://ca.ezchildtrack.com/excel/parent or by calling/visiting the

EXCEL Office. If a late pick up occurs after the final payment due date of the school year (i.e., May 20th), please sign into your account on the Parent Portal or call/visit the EXCEL Office as soon as possible to make payment.
- If late pick up occurs regularly, staff will discuss with the parent/guardian whether EXCEL hours meet the family's needs. More than five incidents of late pick up may result in the discontinuation of services.

To ensure the safety and security of the child(ren) still in attendance following the 6:00pm program end time, two leaders must remain on site until such time as an authorized individual arrives for pick up.

We would ask parents/guardians to carry the EXCEL Program phone number with them at all times so that when you are running late you can communicate with staff your expected delay in arrival.

Parents/guardians are reminded to allow sufficient travel time during times of inclement weather to ensure your arrival prior to 6:00 p.m. Parents/guardians should consider making arrangements to have a neighbour, friend or relative available to pick up your child(ren) should road/storm delays be encountered.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAYS
The EXCEL Program does not operate on PD/Assessment & Evaluation days. Parents/guardians will be responsible for finding alternate arrangements for these days.

SNOW DAYS & OTHER UNAVOIDABLE PROGRAM CLOSURES
There are two classifications of snow/storm days. If school has been cancelled prior to the start of the school day, EXCEL is also cancelled. The HRCE website, local radio and television stations will provide notice of such closures to parents/guardians. If school is cancelled after children are in attendance and are sent home, EXCEL is cancelled from that point on. For After school programming, EXCEL staff will contact you or your designated emergency contact(s) in the event that children need to be sent home due to inclement weather. Parents/guardians must have alternate arrangements made for storm days. Parents/guardians are advised to discuss with their children where they should go in the event of early dismissal. There will be no refunds in the event of school closure due to storm days.

EXCEL will not be able to operate our programs during power outages, water shut-offs, or under any circumstances that necessitate a school closure. When possible, the school and EXCEL coordinate with the utility companies/contractors to arrange any planned disruption of services during periods when EXCEL is not operational. Should circumstances arise that necessitate a school closure, EXCEL will be required to contact parents/guardians to arrange for immediate pick-up of their child(ren) due to the inability of our program to operate. EXCEL will resume operations in alignment with the school's re-opening plan. There will be no refunds in the event of a school closure due to unavoidable circumstances.

If the EXCEL Program is closed for five consecutive days or more due to a school's response to COVID-19, a refund or credit will be issued to families in accordance with our refund policy.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS
All applications must identify individuals (other than parents or legal guardians) that we may contact should we be unable to reach you. These individuals may be required to pick your child(ren) up from the EXCEL Program due to unexpected program closures.

VACATIONS
There will be no refunds issued for student absences due to family vacations. Please advise program staff of planned absences.

SICK DAYS
Parents/guardians are required to find an alternate caregiver when their child(ren) are sick. If your child(ren) are too sick to attend school, then they are considered too sick to attend EXCEL. If your child(ren) are sick for five consecutive days or more, a refund will be issued upon receipt of a doctor's slip indicating the dates and length of illness.

REQUIRED NOTIFICATIONS

For the safety of your child(ren), EXCEL requires written or verbal notification advising the EXCEL Program staff, that your child(ren) will not be attending the program or that you, or a designated individual, will be picking up your child(ren) during program time. This notice must be provided by the parent or guardian. Your child(ren) will not be released without proper consent from the parent or guardian. We regret any inconvenience this process may cause but we consider the safety of your child(ren) as our primary responsibility.

HEALTH CONCERNS

Parents/guardians are responsible to identify all pertinent allergies or medical information that EXCEL staff should be aware of to ensure the general health and well-being of your child(ren) while under our supervision.

If your child(ren) contract a contagious disease or illness, please advise the EXCEL school staff and keep your child(ren) at home until a doctor certifies your child(ren) are able to return at no risk to other children. Parents/guardians may wish to refer to the HRCE website to review the specific HRCE Policies with respect to Communicable Diseases, etc.

If your child(ren) require a prescription medication, EXCEL staff will administer such medication according to the HRCE's administration of medication policy with necessary forms having been completed and submitted. Forms are available on the HRCE website or from the school office. EXCEL staff cannot administer non-prescription medication such as Tylenol or Benadryl.

If your child(ren) becomes ill during class hours, it is the responsibility of the school to notify you. EXCEL leaders will notify you if an illness occurs during EXCEL time.

ACCIDENTS

If a child(ren) have an accident while attending EXCEL, the staff will assess the situation and act according to the following procedures:

If a serious accident occurs which might require medical attention, the EXCEL staff will contact you immediately for instructions.

If you are unavailable, EXCEL staff will call your emergency contact.

If neither contact is available, staff will call for emergency transport as EXCEL staff may not transport any child in their personal vehicle.

In the event of any accident that is identified as being possibly life threatening or that requires immediate medical attention, staff will first call for emergency assistance and then inform the parent/guardian.

EXCEL staff are responsible for all children in the program and may not be able to accompany your child(ren) in an ambulance, but will make every effort to contact someone to accompany your child(ren).

There are always EXCEL staff on site trained in emergency first aid and CPR and will administer necessary treatment as appropriate.

GENERAL PROCEDURES

1. Parents/guardians must inform EXCEL staff if their child(ren) will be absent from the after school program. It is very important that you do this; otherwise we must assume that your child(ren) are "lost in transit" and take appropriate measures.

2. Parents/guardians must notify staff if they wish to have individuals, other than those listed on your registration form, pick up their child(ren). **A child(ren) will not be released to any unauthorized individual for any reason.** If authorization cannot be confirmed and the individual persists, police may be contacted to intervene.

3. EXCEL staff will record Parents/guardians' names on the parent "Sign in/ Sign Out" sheet along with the pick-up time at the end of each day.

4. In the interest of safety, the EXCEL Program cannot be responsible for any child(ren) not dropped off/picked up from the program by a parent, guardian or individual that has reached a minimum of 19 years of age. If you are requesting an exception to this policy, please indicate yes with your initials in the Releases section of the parent application. The Program Team Leader will then ask you to complete an exception request outlining the specific circumstances under which a person under 19 years of age will be dropping off/picking up your child(ren), including explicit directions as to the time of release, if you require prior daily notice, and instructions for weather/daylight conditions. Exception requests must be approved by the Recreation Programmer.

PARTICIPATION IN EXCEL

EXCEL is a before and/or after-school program with a focus on movement, outdoor activities, and physical literacy. EXCEL will provide reasonable accommodations to facilitate participation.

At the time of registration, parents/guardians are required to identify and detail any needs that their child(ren) may have in order to actively participate in the EXCEL program. Parents/guardians will be contacted by the EXCEL Management Team for a pre-assessment conversation to discuss specific supports that may be required. Some of the factors for consideration may include:

- Does the child require assistance such as washing, toileting, or changing clothes?
- Does the child require assistance with feeding or drinking?
- Does the child have any mobility issues and require assistance to move from one location to another?
- Does the child exhibit aggression or violence towards others?
- Does the child pose a risk of injury to self or others?
- Is the child a flight risk?

The EXCEL Management Team may deem it necessary to meet with parents/guardians at the child's respective school to provide them with an opportunity to explore the EXCEL environment and collaboratively develop a potential accommodation plan, if appropriate. Access to additional documentation such as a child's Individual Program Plan, IWK or doctor's evaluations, reports from previous care providers, or other general information may also be helpful in the process.

If, after acceptance to the EXCEL program, it is determined that a child has needs beyond those that can be supported within the standard staff to student ratio, the child's participation may be suspended until such time as the necessary staffing can be put in place.

BEHAVIOUR EXPECTATIONS

In order to ensure a safe, secure and healthy school environment for all students, the Minister of Education has established a Provincial School Code of Conduct. In an effort to provide consistency in the lives of students, the staff of EXCEL supports and follows the school code of conduct at each site which will be communicated to you by the school.

EXCEL strives to provide a nurturing, respectful, and responsive environment for our participants. A range of proactive interventions will be used to promote positive behaviour. Challenging behaviour is any behaviour that significantly interferes with the child's participation and/or the participation of other children, and/or is harmful to the child, other children or adults in the environment. When challenging behaviour arises, factors including the student's age/developmental needs as well as the frequency, severity, and intensity of the behaviour will be considered when determining consequences.

When efforts to de-escalate/resolve challenging behaviour are unsuccessful, the Program Team Leader may contact the parent/guardian for an early pick-up. If the behaviour continues to persist/escalate in the coming days and weeks, the Recreation Programmer, in consultation with the Program Team Leader, may issue a suspension from the program. As a last resort when all avenues have been exhausted, a child may be withdrawn from the EXCEL program.

Communication between EXCEL staff and parents/guardians is essential to identify solutions to address persistent/escalating challenging behaviour. The EXCEL staff believes in dealing positively with situations and every child will be treated on an individual basis. There will be on-going dialogue with parents/guardians as we work to reach an appropriate resolution in the best interest of the child and the program. Confidentiality will be maintained in all situations.

PARENT FEEDBACK

If you become concerned with any aspect of the EXCEL Program, EXCEL staff will be glad to discuss it with you. If you have a program concern, we would encourage you to first discuss it with the on-site staff. If you are not satisfied, you may address your concerns to the Recreation Programmer and then to the EXCEL Manager or Coordinator.

We are committed to ensuring that EXCEL staff will deal with your concerns professionally, courteously and diligently.

SNACKS

Active growing children need small, nutritious snacks to keep them going throughout the day. Parents/guardians are responsible to provide a snack each day for their child(ren)'s consumption during our scheduled daily Nutrition Break. See Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide (myfoodguide.com) for recommended amounts and types of foods and beverages for your child(ren).

Healthy snacks are "tooth- friendly" - that is, they don't leave sticky sugar on children's teeth. Sweet sticky foods increase the risk of cavities and shouldn't be eaten as snacks at school. Save them for special occasions at home where children can brush their teeth after eating them.

Snacks should be good for the environment as well as good for children. You can pack snacks in reusable plastic containers, wrap them in waxed paper that can go in the compost bin, or send snacks that don't need to be wrapped at all, like fresh fruit.

To ensure that children stay hydrated during the busy and active program day, they are encouraged to bring a water bottle to EXCEL.

Allergies

If your child(ren) have food allergies or dietary restrictions, please list them on your program application.

CODE OF CONDUCT MATRIX
## EXCEL PROGRAM BEHAVIOUR EXPECTATIONS

Respect for **SELF**	• Give your best effort each day • Dress, speak, act appropriately • Follow the school's and EXCEL program behaviour expectations • Use quiet "indoor" voice • Work quietly • Chair legs are to remain on the floor at all times • Be prompt and use your "listening ears" at all times • Report problems or concerns to EXCEL or school staff
Respect for **OTHERS**	• Be considerate of others • Use respectful tone of voice and appropriate language when addressing others • Keep your hands and feet to yourself • Use good manners always • Walk, not run, in hallways, classrooms and stairwells • Respect personal space of others • Practice fair play (i.e. wait your turn) • Items that can be thrown are to remain on the ground (i.e. rocks, snowballs) • Return things to where you found them when finished • Follow safe and proper procedures for use of equipment • Encourage others to do their best • Follow safety rules • Demonstrate courteous behaviour & respect choices of others • Ask for permission to leave the classroom etc. • Abide by your school's policy on foods that are not to be brought to school (i.e. nuts, shellfish etc.) • Remain seated while eating • Always show respect for others
Respect for **LEARNING**	• Be a good listener • Follow instructions and rules • Respect the efforts and contributions of others • Be positive with others • Share materials and equipment as needed • Follow the HRCE technology policy • Follow assigned seating • Demonstrate listening skills • Follow fair play principles • Use "indoor voices" in halls & stairwells
Respect for **ENVIRONMENT**	• Recycle, using appropriate recycling containers • Help keep the school clear of debris/litter • Respect equipment & property of others • Take care with school property & equipment • Flush toilet & wash hands when using the bathroom • Keep areas tidy • Clear eating space when finished & push or stack chair at end of EXCEL program times

EXCEL ADMINISTRATION CONTACTS

JOB TITLE	NAME	PHONE NUMBER	E-MAILS
Registrar	Kimberly Lozon	902-464-2000 ext. 2787	excelregistrar@hrce.ca
Assistant Registrar	Gail Hartling	902-464-2000 ext. 2236	excel@hrce.ca
Assistant Registrar, Client Service	Wendy Terry	902-464-2000 ext. 2491	wterry@hrce.ca
Recreation Programmer - Unit 1	Laura McKinley	902-464-2000 ext. 2014	lmckinley@hrce.ca
Administrator - Unit 1	Lori Fougere	902-464-2000 ext. 2492	lfougere@hrce.ca
Recreation Programmer - Unit 2	Jocelyn MacDonald	902-464-2000 ext. 2493	jocelyn.macdonald@hrce.ca
Administrator - Unit 2	Quentina Parsons	902-464-2000 ext. 2494	quentina.parsons@hrce.ca
Recreation Programmer - Unit 3	Heather Edgett	902-464-2000 ext. 2497	hhanlon@hrce.ca
Administrator - Unit 3	Amy Moore	902-464-2000 ext. 2013	amoore@hrce.ca
Recreation Programmer - Unit 4	Amy Lilly	902-464-2000 ext. 2498	amy.lilly@hrce.ca
Administrator - Unit 4	Tracey Penney	902-464-2000 ext. 5596	tracey.penney@hrce.ca
Manager- Units 3 and 4	Jeff Turple	902-464-2000 ext. 8498	jturple@hrce.ca
Manager- Units 1 and 2	Kate MacDonald	902-464-2000 ext. 2496	macdonald.kate@hrce.ca
Coordinator - EXCEL	Roxanne Manning	902-464-2000 ext. 2495	manningr@hrce.ca

EXCEL Administration Office
25 Alfred Street Dartmouth, Nova Scotia B3A 4E8

We are located within Harbour View Elementary and can be accessed from either Victoria or Windmill Road.
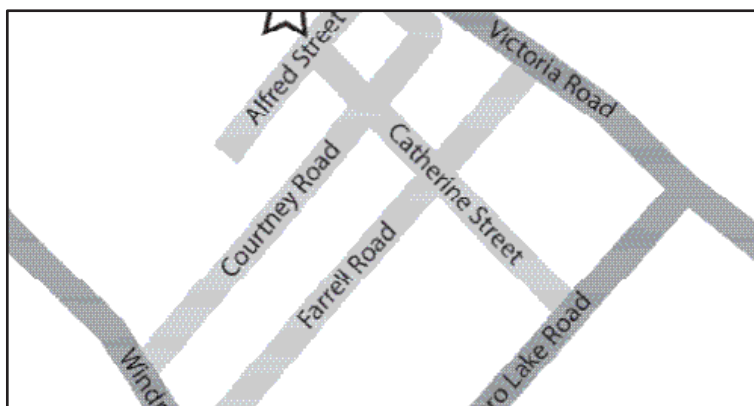
2023-24 EXCEL Program FEES

EXCEL tuition fees are calculated by multiplying the applicable daily rate by the total number of instructional days each month. Parents/guardians are not charged for holidays, scheduled breaks, Professional Development days, Assessment and Evaluation days, or report card day, as service is not provided on these days.

EXCEL **Daily** Fee rates with sibling discounts (if applicable) are as follows:

Program Activity	1st Child	2nd Child - 10%	3rd and subsequent children - 15%
Before	5.38	4.84	4.57
After	13.48	12.13	11.46
Before and After	18.86	16.97	16.03

The EXCEL monthly program fees are due on the 20th of the month preceding the month of service from August 20th to May 20th. If the enrollment is after the 20th of the month, these fees are due upon acceptance.

The number of instructional days each month and associated payment due dates are as follows:

Month	# of Instructional Days*	Payment Due Date
September	TBD	August 20th
October	TBD	September 20th
November	TBD	October 20th
December	TBD	November 20th
January	TBD	December 20th
February	TBD	January 20th
March	TBD	February 20th
April	TBD	March 20th
May	TBD	April 20th
June	TBD	May 20th

*The number of instructional days will be provided once the HRCE 2023-24 School Calendar is released.