



## **Program Policies as of September 2022**

To ensure the highest level of attention to your children's learning needs, we have outlined Program Policies that provide answers to attendance, schedule changes, technology use and issues.

Policies will be updated as needed and available at <https://ldsociety.ca/policies/>. If more information is required, please contact [info@ldsociety.ca](mailto:info@ldsociety.ca) or call 604.873.8139.

### **Attendance**

At LDS, we put the educational needs of our students first. We design individualized programs and match students with instructors to meet each student's learning needs. Continuity of service and regular exposure to the learning methods crafted for each student are very important in ensuring that maximum benefit is realized from our programs. To facilitate this, if there is a situation where a student is not able to attend a session in person or online, their LDS instructor will prepare a personalized take-home study package that can be completed on the student's own time. The personalized take-home study package may include video or audio recordings where possible. Homework support students will receive a personalized **take-home study package** with additional related materials to support them in their coursework.

When we switch a session online for health and safety reasons, we are not cancelling it, and therefore the session will go ahead as planned.

For SLP sessions, a minimum of 48 hours written notice is required to reschedule a session.

If an instructor / clinician cannot attend a session and a virtual session is not possible, we will inform the family as soon as possible. We will try our best to reschedule the session to another day; if we cannot reschedule, the family will not be charged.

Please note that LDS's calendar is available on our site and your personalized calendar of sessions is available via your TutorCruncher account. Note that we serve students across dozens of school districts and therefore our calendar is not necessarily aligned with any particular school district.

### **Moving in person sessions to online**

At times, the need may arise to move in-person sessions online. For example, where mild sickness symptoms are being experienced and we need to limit in-person exposure. We appreciate your assistance in facilitating online sessions.



We understand that many children struggled with whole class online instruction via their schools, as one teacher trying to support the learning needs of over 20 diverse learners is exceptionally challenging.

However, with your child's one-to-one session at LDS, our instructors use an interactive platform that allows for hands on student engagement and sessions tailored to the learning, engagement, and behavioural needs of each student. Many students who struggled in whole class online sessions are able to very successfully engage in individual online sessions developed specifically for them.

If you have specific questions about your child's needs that can be anticipated or accommodated online, our Teaching and Learning team are happy to discuss these.

If you have not had your child do online one-to-one sessions at LDS before, and our Teaching and Learning Team feels they are a candidate for one-to-one online learning, we thank you for trying these individualized online sessions *at least two times* before determining the fit for your child.

If your family does not have the hardware (desktop or laptop) or internet access at home to facilitate online sessions, please let us know.

### **Technical issues**

Technical issues (computer, internet) experienced during the session must be immediately communicated with [info@ldsociety.ca](mailto:info@ldsociety.ca) or the Instructor via TutorCruncher/LessonSpace. LDS will do our best to troubleshoot and ensure the completion of the session. Technical issues that are related to family's internet or computer are beyond the control of LDS. If a session cannot be started by the 15 minute mark, a personalized take-home study package will be prepared for the student to do on their own time and the session will be chargeable.

### **No shows**

Instructors will wait for students for 15 minutes before ending the online or in-person session and switching to preparing a personalized take-home study package. If a student is a no-show on the first session (e.g. first session in September), the instructor will not be able to prepare a take-home study package and therefore the session will be charged in the next billing cycle at the family's normal rate.

LDS reserves the right to discontinue service where there have been 3 or more 'no-shows' or unexcused/unreported absences. This would not be invoked if the family has communicated their extenuating circumstances in advance or as soon as possible.



## **Extenuating circumstances**

Where there are extenuating personal, health or other circumstances experienced by a family or student, partial or prorated refunds may be authorized by the Executive Director.

## **Service discontinuation**

LDS reserves the right to cancel sessions or discontinue service where families are being unresponsive or uncooperative with respect to submitting funding applications (e.g. CKNW Kids Fund, Variety Heart Club), funding authorizations (e.g. AFU, Jordan's Principle), or having a valid credit card on file at LDS.

## **Schedule changes**

Changes to a student's regular schedule after a student has been placed are extremely difficult for us to accommodate as our instructors, staff and space are very tightly booked. A family may request an ongoing schedule change at least one month in advance, but we cannot guarantee that it will be possible to accommodate it. If the family is absolutely unable to attend at the originally scheduled time(s) and LDS cannot reschedule, then the originally scheduled time will be given to another family/student and, after the one month notice period, no charge will be charged to the family who needed to reschedule.

## **Fees & rates**

LDS requires a valid credit card for each family on their TutorCruncher profile. Payments are made approximately on the first business day of the month following scheduled sessions.

For each unpaid invoice, we will charge a \$50 late payment administration fee two weeks after an invoice is issued that is unpaid due to an invalid credit card or if a credit card is not on file. We reserve the right to charge an additional \$50 for each subsequent month an invoice is unpaid.

The RISE onboarding fee is \$150 for new students and \$100 for returning students. This fee includes: intake interview with parent/guardian, getting to know your child better, **informal** assessment of child's early literacy skills (where warranted), review of educational documents (IEP, Psych-Ed, report cards, other information), matching of child with instructor(s) based on learning needs and scheduling requirements, scheduling of sessions, support with funding applications if needed, creation of a TutorCruncher account, hard copy and e-book welcome package with all LDS materials and information. This fee can be split into payments if necessary. Please contact us to set this up.

The RISE onboarding fee is a one-time fee for families who continue service without interruption. This includes continuation over the summer. If a family pauses or discontinues sessions and then re-enrolls at a later time, an additional onboarding fee will be administered.



## **Behaviour management and safety concerns**

LDS strives to make every student feel welcome, comfortable and supported. In a group setting where there are multiple students, we rely on each student to display a certain amount of autonomy. This is important for their learning, the learning of their peers, and especially for the safety of everyone. We expect parents and guardians to give us a comprehensive and accurate description of their child's learning and behavioural needs prior to attending sessions at LDS. This is so we can make an informed assessment of whether we can meet their needs, and how best to achieve this.

If instructor, volunteer or other staff time is fully diverted to managing one student's behavioural needs for extended periods of time, it not only jeopardizes everyone's educational experience, it can also compromise the safety of that child and of others in the group. This can be true even in online learning where a child is not able to focus and engage in the activity at hand.

It is for these reasons, that if any staff member has any concerns about a student's ability to focus, engage, act safely or listen to instructions, we:

- will, if appropriate, contact the guardian/parents immediately to try to resolve the issue(s);
- reserve the right to require instruction to be in person OR online, as the case may require;
- reserve the right to cancel instruction/sessions/camps;
- reserve the right to ask parents to pick up their child(ren) immediately if a safety or health issue has arisen that is not resolvable.

## **Safety and security**

All LDS instructors are required to complete vulnerable population training on an annual basis.

LDS may record online sessions and may 'drop in' to observe online or in-person sessions. This is done for quality and case management purposes as well as to monitor our students and uphold safety and security policies for our whole community.

For online sessions, students aged 12 and under (at least 13 years old) are not permitted to be home without a supervising adult (18 years or older) during online instruction. If we have reason to believe that a student is home without a supervising adult, the instructor will end the session, notify LDS staff, and LDS will contact the parents or guardians immediately. This session will be considered a "missed session" and will be charged to the family. We reserve the right to discontinue future sessions until a plan for adult supervision is in place.

For in-person sessions, instructors and students will follow LDS safety protocol including that all rooms have windows, doors are kept open, and LDS staff do regular 'walk-bys' and spot observations of sessions.



## **Homework support**

Only students registered for homework support may work on homework during their session, unless otherwise approved by LDS staff.

Please send a copy of your child's homework to [casemanager@ldsociety.ca](mailto:casemanager@ldsociety.ca) at least 24 hours before the scheduled session. This ensures the instructor has sufficient time to review the assignment and plan appropriate supplemental work if needed. If homework is not provided consistently, LDS will contact the family about shifting streams to a more appropriate program.

## **Parental/guardian involvement**

Parental help and involvement with their children's education can be very constructive, both at school and at home. While showing an active interest in your child's education can greatly benefit engagement and motivation, please be cautious about providing too much help.

Unconstructive assistance can include telling your child the right answer or taking over for them when they are completing learning tasks. Your positivity and encouragement will make a big difference as you help us promote responsibility and independence.

## **Communication**

Our small team serves hundreds of students a year. Please understand that we are doing our best to serve each of our families in an individualized manner. However, we need to respond to inquiries based on their urgency and, therefore, we request your patience and respect when dealing with our staff, understanding the constraints that we're working with.

Families, students and instructors are NOT permitted to share personal phone numbers, email addresses, or any other personal contact information.

If families do contact instructors outside of the scheduled session time and without prior consent from an LDS core staff member (not an instructor), LDS reserves the right to charge for the full rate of an hour session.

Interactions between the instructor and the student should be confined to prearranged appointments.

If families have any questions related to lessons, lesson planning, learning strategies, and/or case management, families must reach out to their case manager at [casemanager@ldsociety.ca](mailto:casemanager@ldsociety.ca).

If families have any questions regarding scheduling, fees, funding, families must reach out to [info@ldsociety.ca](mailto:info@ldsociety.ca).



## **Abuse and harassment of LDS community members**

Our team members (including instructors, core staff, volunteers) come to work every day with a passion and dedication to serve our families and students. We strive to do our best to serve everyone and to ensure we are taking into consideration the needs of everyone, including our instructors, our families, our students, our staff and our organization as a whole. In line with our commitment to treat all of our team members, families and students with respect and courtesy, abusive (verbally or otherwise), aggressive or harassing behaviour towards any LDS team member or any other member of the LDS community will not be tolerated under any circumstance.

Where an LDS team member feels behaviour (in person, in writing, over the phone or otherwise) has been abusive, violent or harassing in nature, the Executive Director will be notified and the person will be contacted to let them know future behaviour will not be tolerated. LDS has the right to discontinue or suspend services to families or students who demonstrate repetitive abusive, violent or harassing behaviour. We feel sure that our families will understand that respectful behaviour of all is absolutely necessary for our team and the safety of the LDS community and that non-observance will not be accepted.

## **RISE at Home - Online Learning Parent Responsibilities and Agreement**

As we continue with remote learning, LDS wants to ensure that all families and instructors are familiar with best practices for online safety and efficiency. Please review the following document and make sure you understand the expectations for participation in remote learning.

### **A. Online Safety**

- a. Ensure that an adult (at least 18 years old) is in the room or nearby and within ear shot during the remote instruction sessions. Check out <https://mediasmarts.ca/> for more resources on online safety and digital literacy.
- b. LDS may record sessions or drop in on sessions to ensure safety of all participants.

### **B. Efficient Use of Remote Learning Technology**

- a. A desktop or laptop is required for LDS sessions that are being done remotely. A phone or tablet (e.g. iPad) is not appropriate for the instruction we need to deliver.
- b. Eliminate as many distractions as possible during online learning.
- c. Clear the room of playful pets or noisy siblings.
- d. Minimize background noise by turning off the TV and radio.
- e. Turn off cell phones.
- f. Talk to your child about the importance of not multitasking on other websites during the session. If this becomes an issue, you can install website-blocking apps such as Freedom or SelfControl to block apps and websites such as Facebook and YouTube while your child is learning online.



- g. Make sure that your child is ready to learn before the start of session:
  - i. Set up with necessary materials like paper and pencils.
  - ii. Log in a couple minutes before the start time to test your internet connection, speakers and microphone to avoid technical problems during the session.
  - iii. Give your child a chance to explore the online whiteboard prior to the first session so that they can feel comfortable with the tools.

### **Student Expectations**

Students are expected to:

- behave with the same level of respect and politeness that they would in a one-to-one in-person learning environment.
- keep usernames and passwords private and respect the privacy of others.
- immediately report any safety or security problems, or any inappropriate or uncomfortable situations involving technology.

### **LDS's Assistive Technology Program**

LDS is carefully researching and gradually adopting – where appropriate - leading edge assistive technologies to provide the best support for our students. If you have any questions about this, please email 'at@ldsociety.ca'.

### **What is assistive technology?**

Assistive technology is any device, software or equipment that is used to maintain or improve the functional capabilities of a person with a disability, including a learning difference.

### **Why use assistive technology?**

Assistive technology can support meaningful accessibility and inclusion and, providing students an equal opportunity to learn on their own terms. Assistive technology can empower students, provide greater independence, stimulate greater engagement and lead to improved learning outcomes and enhanced emotional and social development.

While technology and assistive technology do not replace effective teaching, they can enhance the teaching and learning experience and enable engagement in ways that are not possible with conventional methods. When appropriately selected, assistive technology can be an effective tool to help bridge learning differences.



## How LDS uses assistive technology

At LDS, we use assistive technology to enhance best practice in our teaching and student learning to further the accessibility and inclusiveness of our support. We are carefully identifying and assessing potential assistive technologies for specific use in individual student's learning plans to maximize the benefit to each student.

We recognize the complex nature of each student's unique learning differences and related social and emotional challenges. We are carefully incorporating select assistive technology in our customized RISE programming. We are employing assistive technology to help our instructors teach more effectively, promote greater student engagement, and provide all students with equal opportunities for success.

## What assistive technology does LDS employ?

Our assistive technology resources include:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Interactive display systems</li><li>· Reading/writing assistance software</li><li>· Smart pens</li><li>· Reading aid lamps</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Classroom audio devices</li><li>· Mind mapping software</li><li>· Calming stimulus devices</li></ul>
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## As part of our assistive technology program, LDS may:

- Determine the need for assistive technology
- Share information with you and your child regarding technology resources
- Assist in the process of obtaining appropriate technology
- Train you and your child on the use of hardware or software
- Video and/or take pictures of child, with your given consent, using various pieces of assistive technology for documentation of progress, presentation, and student files

## In all aspects of our assistive technology program, LDS will:

- Ensure each user has received the proper training to operate any assistive technology safely before they are granted access
- Ensure compliance with federal and provincial laws on health and safety as well as the collection and storage of user data
- Ensure proper sanitation of equipment in accordance with federal and provincial guidelines for COVID-19