



## Program Policies as of September 2023

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, health and safety, technology use and issues.

Policies will be updated as needed. You can find FAQ on our policies and a full downloadable PDF at <https://ldsociety.ca/policies/>.

If you have questions, 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, and reasonable (at least an hour in advance) notice has been given, then their LDS instructor will prepare a personalized **take-home study package** that can be completed on the student's own time. Homework support students will receive a personalized **take-home study package** with additional related materials to support them in their coursework. **Take-home study packages are available after the student's scheduled session ends and are accessible for two weeks after the session.**

Please note, 'no-shows' without at least one hour's notice will not be eligible for a take-home study package because the instructor will not have the time during the scheduled session to complete the appropriate materials. First-ever or first-of-the-academic-year sessions with LDS are not eligible for take-home study packages and will be considered no-shows if they are not attended.

Where a family or learner needs to switch from an in-person to an online session, please provide as much notice as possible. For requests made within 24 hours of the session start time, we may (depending on the instructor's schedule that day) need to delay the start of the session by 15 minutes in order to give your instructor time to transfer in-person lesson content to an online format.

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

If an instructor 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.

### Calendar of service

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



aligned with any particular school district.

### **Drop off and pick up**

For in person sessions, please drop off and pick up your child promptly. If a child is not picked up within 5 minutes from the session end time, parents, guardians and/or emergency contacts on file will be called. Please note weekday after-school sessions end at 20 minutes past the hour (e.g. 5:20pm), and Saturday sessions end at 50 minutes past the hour (e.g. 10:50am).

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

Sometimes we may need 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 the online platform. 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, the session will be marked as a Absence (Tech), no Take-Home Study Package can be provided, and the session will be chargeable.

### **No shows**

Instructors will wait for students for 15 minutes before ending the online or in-person session.



Where LDS has not received notice that a student will not be attending at least an hour before the session start time, and the student does not attend within 15 minutes of the start time, this is considered a no show. No take-home study package can be provided and no credit for the session can be issued.

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**

If you need to discontinue service with LDS, at least one month's notice is required. This one month is charged based on your usual monthly (or equivalent) fees. This allows us time to respectfully wrap up work with the student, and time to place another well-suited student with the instructor during that time slot. We will assume you want to continue attending sessions during that month of notice. If you do not, you may let us know and simply pay the discontinuation fee.

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 and started sessions are extremely difficult for us to accommodate as our instructors, staff and space are very tightly booked. A family on our monthly payment plan may request an ongoing schedule change one time per year, at least one month in advance, but we cannot guarantee that it will be possible to accommodate it.

### **Fees & rates**

LDS requires a valid credit card for each family on their account profile. Payments are made approximately on the first business day of the month for services and programs to be delivered that month.

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.

Detailed information on fees and our sliding fee scale can be found on our website under 'Families.'

### **Group and full day programs**



In summer 2023, our programs are offered in our East Vancouver locations (Learning Centre or LDS Access). If your child is sick, we require that you keep them at home to avoid spreading germs and creating further service disruption. We will do our best to provide an online alternative, but we cannot guarantee the possibility of this (e.g. social programming for camps and the afternoons of RISE and Shine cannot be moved online). We cannot offer refunds or take-home study packages for missed days or hours of programming. If an instructor cannot attend a session, we will do our best to provide a substitute instructor. If we are unable to run the session or program, we will inform the family as soon as possible.

The family will be reimbursed appropriately and on a prorated scale at the discretion of the Executive Director.

### **Behaviour management and safety concerns**

LDS strives to make every student feel welcome, comfortable and supported. 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.

LDS programs are developed to support students in engaging in academic, social and emotional and executive functioning learning and skill development. LDS may ask to be connected with your child's school-based team if we require further information about the supports they require for learning. If warranted, we may also invite your child for an initial assessment by a member of our educational team.

If a student's behavioural needs are not able to be supported within the current placement/program, or if any LDS staff members have any concerns about a student's ability to attend to learning, engage (with support) in their individualized learning goals and objectives, or be safely included in their program 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 require a behavioural interventionist/support worker attend the session with the student;
- reserve the right to temporarily hold or discontinue 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 a regular 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 chargeable. We reserve the right to suspend service 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.

### **Health, sickness, first aid**

For all students, family members and LDS team members:

- if there are any signs of a contagious sickness, please stay home.
- if a student or an instructor is well enough to complete a session, we will move the session online (unless it's inappropriate for the learner).
- if a student is too sick to complete a session, it will be moved to a Take-home Study Package (THSP). If an instructor is too sick to complete a session, we will cancel the session. In rare circumstances, we may be able to reschedule the session.
- If a student becomes obviously sick/ill during a session, the parent/guardian(s) will be called to pick them up immediately.
- if there are known allergies or other conditions that could be interpreted as sickness, please let LDS know
- if there are any pre-existing medical conditions that are relevant for safety and health, please ensure we have that information on file (e.g. asthma, seizures, severe allergies).
- We will do our best to triage and support any first aid issues that arise. Even with first aid training, staff are not permitted to diagnose or treat injuries or medical issues beyond washing cuts, applying bandages, stopping nosebleeds or administering CPR if needed. We will call parents/guardians or 911 as appropriate if issues should arise.

### **Homework support**

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

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**

Parent/guardian 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 communicating with our staff.

Families receive information from LDS via Session Snapshots, Individualized Learning Plans, Mid and Final Year Reports, and Case Manager meetings. We cannot have families asking detailed questions of our instructors before/after sessions as our instructors' schedules are very tight.

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, technical issues, or funding, families must reach out to [info@ldsociety.ca](mailto:info@ldsociety.ca)

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 senior 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.

## Abuse and harassment of LDS community members

Our team members (including instructors, support 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 take into consideration the needs of everyone, including our instructors, our families, our students, our support staff and our organization as a whole. In line with our commitment to treat all our team members, families and students with respect and courtesy, abusive (verbally or otherwise), disrespectful, aggressive or harassing behaviour towards any LDS team member or any other member of the LDS community will not be tolerated under any circumstance. This includes any verbal or written violation of [human rights](#).

Where an LDS team member feels behaviour (in person, in writing, over the phone or otherwise) has been abusive, disrespectful, 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, disrespectful, 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

LDS wants to ensure that all families and instructors are familiar with best practices for online safety and efficiency. Please review the following 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 earshot 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 the 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. If you need a device, please let us know.
- 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 carefully researches and gradually adopts – 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](mailto: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



**Group Program Withdrawal Policy**

We understand that unforeseen circumstances may arise, requiring participants to withdraw from our group programs. We strive to be fair and transparent in our policies while ensuring the smooth functioning of our programs.

This applies to any group programs (not one-to-one) offered by LDS. For example, Early RISers, camps, Social Communication Group, RISE & Shine)

**Withdrawal at least two weeks before the start of the program**

If you provide us with at least two weeks' notice of withdrawal from the program, LDS can issue a full refund, less a \$50 administration fee.

**Withdrawal less than two weeks before the start of the program or once the program has started**

In cases where the withdrawal notification is received less than two weeks (14 days) before the program's start date or once the program has begun, LDS will provide a 50% refund. This is due to the difficulty in finding a replacement for the vacant spot within a short timeframe.

**Withdrawal after the program is over halfway complete**

If the program is underway and over halfway complete, LDS will not offer a refund for a withdrawal.

In exceptional, extenuating circumstances, we may consider further refund requests on a case-by-case basis.

To initiate the withdrawal process, please contact the team member who confirmed your enrollment, or email [info@ldsociety.ca](mailto:info@ldsociety.ca).

Non-attendance without prior notification will not be considered as a withdrawal.