



## Program Policies as of 2 January 2025

To ensure the highest level of attention to our learners' 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

#### Take-home Study Packages and absences

At LDS, we put the educational needs of our learners first. We design individualized programs and match learners with instructors to meet each learner's unique needs. Continuity of service and regular exposure to the learning methods crafted for each learner are very important in ensuring that maximum benefit is realized from our programs. To facilitate this, if there is a situation where a learner in our RISE One-to-One Instruction or Summer Tutoring program 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 learner's own time.

**Take-home Study Packages are available after the learner's scheduled session ends and are accessible for two weeks after the session.**

First-ever, first-with-this-instructor, first-of-the-academic-year, or first-of-the-Summer-Tutoring-block sessions with LDS are not eligible for Take-home Study Packages and will be considered as absences if they are not attended. The session will still be charged as normal.

Please note, absences without at least one hour's notice or with no notice or communication 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. Where no communication is given, instructors will wait for learners for 15 minutes before ending the online or in-person session.

Note that "notice"/ "communication" is written communication to [info@ldsociety.ca](mailto:info@ldsociety.ca) or verbal communication over the phone at 604.873.8139. These are the **only** guaranteed ways of communicating urgently with LDS about absences. Emails to your Case Manager or another team member at LDS may not be reported to the admin team in time, and may result in no Take-Home Study Package being given. It is your responsibility to report to [info@](mailto:info@) or 604.873.8139.

Once a notice of an upcoming absence eligible for a Take-Home Study Package has been made, the instructor will be informed and will plan their schedule with that in mind. If your situation changes, and you would like to attend the live session that had been changed to a Take-Home Study Package, this



request to revert the session must be made at least 24 working hours in advance to allow for adequate preparation. LDS is open 9am Monday – 5pm Saturday, thus requests made on Sunday for a Monday session are not accepted.

LDS reserves the right to discontinue service where there have been 3 or more unexcused/unreported absences. This would not be invoked if extenuating circumstances have been communicated in advance or as soon as possible.

### **Extenuating circumstances**

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

### **Religious or cultural holiday absences**

If your absence is due to observing a religious or important cultural holiday, please inform us in advance and make it clear that the absence is for this observance. There will be no charge for these absences.

### **Learner switching a session online**

Where a 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.

### **LDS switching a session 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.

When LDS switches a session online for health or safety reasons, we are not cancelling it, and therefore the session will go ahead as planned. Note we cannot cancel the session for a refund when we are providing an online alternative.

We thank you for trying these individualized online sessions *at least two times* before determining the fit for yourself or your child. If online sessions continue to be a significant challenge for you or your child, your Case Manager may make a determination of suitability, or you may elect to receive a Take Home Study Package (for RISE One-to-one Instruction) instead of having an online session.



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

### **LDS cancelling a session**

If an instructor cannot attend a session and a virtual session is not possible, or if LDS cannot deliver the scheduled service for any reason, LDS will cancel the session and we will inform the learner as soon as possible. In rare circumstances, we may be able to reschedule the session, if we do not reschedule, the learner 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 Teachworks account. Note that we serve learners across dozens of school districts and therefore our calendar is not aligned with any particular school district.

### **At the LDS Learning Centres**

Please do your best to prepare yourself or your child to enter the Learning Centre environment, however that looks for each individual. Social stories for each Learning Centre are available upon request.

### **Animals and pets**

Learners and LDS families are not permitted to bring animals or pets into an LDS Learning Centre. Guide and Service Dogs are not considered pets, and are always welcome. If you're able to give us notice of a guide or service animal coming to the LDS centre it's appreciated; this is so we can be sure to schedule yourself or the learner in an appropriate space.

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

Weekday RISE One-to-one sessions end at 20 minutes past the hour (e.g. 5:20pm), and Saturday RISE One-to-one sessions end at 50 minutes past the hour (e.g. 10:50am).

### **For Parents/ Guardians:**

If your child has in-person sessions, please drop off and pick up your child promptly. We cannot accommodate learners being dropped off far in advance of their sessions starting or picked up much later than the end of the session, as we do not have the capacity to ensure they are supervised by an adult. If your child is dropped off unreasonably far in advance of the session starting (over 15 minutes) you will be called and asked to pick up your child or return to supervise them until the session begins. 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.

### **For Teen and Adult Learners:**

If you're an adult or a teen learner, please do your best to arrive promptly for sessions. You're welcome to wait in our lobby but note it can get very busy at peak times.

Please note weekday after-school one-to-one 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).

**More detailed instructions for pick-up and drop-off are available on our Families page of our website under Policies > Pick-up and Drop-off Policy**

## **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 the learner'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 an Absence, no Take-Home Study Package can be provided, and the session will be chargeable.

## **Service discontinuation**

If you need to discontinue one-to-one service with LDS, at least one month's notice is required. This one month is charged based on a month's worth of fees. This allows us time to respectfully wrap up work with the learner, and time to place another well-suited learner 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 (the one month's fees).

How to give notice:

We simply invite you to inform the team member you are in contact with, or [info@ldsociety.ca](mailto:info@ldsociety.ca) in writing that you wish to discontinue service with LDS, and either a program manager or a member of Family and Student Services will take over communications to confirm your last session and your fees owing.

LDS discontinuing services:

LDS reserves the right to cancel sessions or discontinue service where families or learners are being unresponsive or uncooperative with respect to a high number of unexplained absences, paying invoices,

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having a valid credit card on file at LDS, submitting funding applications (e.g. CKNW Kids Fund, Variety Heart Club), or submitting funding authorizations (e.g. AFU, Jordan's Principle).

## **Schedule changes**

Changes to a learner's regular schedule after they have been placed and started sessions are extremely difficult for us to accommodate as our instructors, staff, and space are very tightly booked. A family or learner 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 or learner on their account profile. Payments are made approximately on the first business day of the month following services/ program delivery.

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 for RISE One-to-one Instruction can be found on our website under 'Families.'

## **Group and full / half day programs**

In Summer 2024, our programs are offered in our Learning Centres (East Vancouver, North Vancouver, or LDS Access). The location is specified in your placement offer. 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.

## **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.

**Assessments**

Assessments or screenings booked through LDS (KTEA-3, SLP etc.) require a full 7 days' notice to cancel or to reschedule otherwise full or partial fees may be charged at the Executive Director's discretion.

**Behaviour management and safety concerns**

LDS strives to make every learner feel welcome, comfortable and supported. We expect parents and guardians to give us a comprehensive and accurate description of the learner's behavioural and learning needs prior to attending sessions at LDS. We expect adult learners applying for themselves to represent themselves and their needs to the best of their ability. This is so we can make an informed assessment of whether we can meet those needs, and how best to achieve this.



LDS programs are developed to support learners in engaging in academic, social and emotional and executive functioning learning and skill development. LDS may ask to be connected with a learner's school-based team or other supporting clinicians if we require further information about the supports they require for learning. If warranted, we may also invite the learner for an initial assessment by a member of our educational team, ahead of enrolling them in a specific program.

If a learner'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 learner'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/individual 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 learner;
- reserve the right to temporarily hold or discontinue instruction/sessions/camps;
- reserve the right to ask parents or guardians to pick up their child(ren) immediately or the learner to leave 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 learner and uphold safety and security policies for our whole community.

For online sessions, learners 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 learner 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 learners 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 learners, family members and LDS team members:

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- If there are any signs of a contagious sickness, please stay home.
- If a learner or an instructor is well enough to complete a session remotely, we will move the session online (unless it has been deemed inappropriate for the learner by the Case Manager).
- If a learner is too sick to complete a session, it will be moved to a Take-home Study Package. 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 learner becomes obviously sick/ill during a session, the parent/guardian(s) will be called to pick them up immediately. If they are an adult learner, they will be asked to leave.
- 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).
- Our policies extend to acute mental health concerns. If the learner has an emergent acute mental health concern that needs to be addressed, the learner should stay home to recover. If you're not sure if the learner is well enough to be safe at their LDS session, please reach out to share the situation and we can address the best way to support the learner together.
- 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/emergency contacts or 911 as appropriate if issues should arise.

While our primary focus is to provide services and programs that support learning and skill development, we recognize that mental health can significantly influence a person's ability to engage in and benefit from learning opportunities. We reserve the right to pause or discontinue sessions if mental health challenges are creating significant barriers to participation or progress. This decision will be made with the learner's well-being in mind and consultation with them wherever possible. We will encourage learners to return to the program when they are ready. For more information, please see our "Mental Health and Learning Support" document on our website.

## **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.





Generally, LDS group programs cannot accommodate parental/guardian involvement and attendance unless it is a program that specifically asks for parental/guardian participation, like Early RISErs. As a parent or guardian, you're always welcome to wait in our lobby for the duration of any LDS sessions/program your learner is taking part in.

## **Communication**

Our team serves hundreds of learners a year. Please understand that we are doing our best to serve everyone 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 and learners receive information from LDS via Session Snapshots, Individualized RISE Learning Plans, Mid-Year and End-of-Year updates to these plans, and Case Manager meetings. We cannot have families and learners asking detailed questions of our instructors before/after sessions as our instructors' schedules are very tight.

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

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

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

If families or learners 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.

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

Our team members (including instructors, support staff, and volunteers) come to work every day with a passion and dedication to serve our families and learners. 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 learners, our support staff, and our organization as a whole. In line with our commitment to treat all our team members, families and learners 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 learners who demonstrate repetitive abusive, disrespectful, violent or harassing behaviour. We feel sure that our families and learners 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.

### **LDS Use of Assistive Technology**

LDS carefully researches and gradually adopts – where appropriate - leading edge assistive technologies to provide the best support for our learners. If you have any questions about this, please email [at@ldsociety.ca](mailto:at@ldsociety.ca)



## Online Learning Parent Responsibilities and Agreement

LDS wants to ensure that all families, learners, 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 for learners aged 12 and under. 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 the learner 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 the learner a chance to explore the online whiteboard prior to the first session so that they can feel comfortable with the tools.

## Learner Expectations

Learners 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.