

Parent Handbook

International School Childcare Centre (ISCC)

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1. ISCC at a glance

Welcome to the International School Childcare Centre (ISCC)

In this parent handbook you will find information about our educational beliefs, daily routines, the ISCC team, safety and security procedures and financial regulations. Don't hesitate to contact our team if you have any questions or concerns.

ISCC: First Steps in International Education

ISCC is part of the International School of Schaffhausen (ISSH) and has been set up with the particular needs of the international family in mind. ISCC aims to support (working) parents in an expatriate situation by providing a 'home-away-from-home'.

The International School Childcare Centre offers full-day childcare for babies and toddlers age 3 months until they transfer to the Early Years department of ISSH.

Most of our ISCC staff have a multilingual and international background and understand the special situation of expat families. The language of education at ISCC is English. Many other languages, including German, are spoken to help the children settle in their new environment. Our teachers and assistants nurture both body and mind of the youngest, understanding that each child is unique and grows and develops at their own pace. ISCC educational concept takes into account that children are natural explorers and develop best in an inquiry-based, yet structured environment. ISCC respects cultural and individual differences and celebrates shared values.

ISCC has been set up primarily for the needs of the growing international community in the greater Schaffhausen area. The majority of the childcare places are reserved for the families of the employees of international companies, who have entered into an agreement with ISCC. Apart from these reserved places, a limited number of childcare places are available for independent families who wish to enroll their child in view of preparing them for the Early Years Department of ISSH.

Organisation

The ISCC team is comprised of professional childcare specialists and experienced assistant teachers and trainees. Our staff has been carefully chosen and is qualified for their function according to Swiss and international standards.

ISCC strives to employ well-balanced team members with various life experiences and from different cultural backgrounds. We cherish unique skills and talents to build a staff in which teamwork comes natural and members complement each other. Like in the international school, the language of education and communication is English. Each group benefits from a native English staff member. Also other languages, including German, are spoken.

The daily management of ISCC is in the hands of a certified and experienced childcare centre leader, Katharina Krampitz (K.krampitz@issch.ch). She is responsible for the implementation, development and quality of the programme at ISCC. Together with her team, she applies high professional standards in childcare. She ensures that ISCC is a centre where the different needs of children, parents and staff members are catered to.

Supervisory Agencies

ISSC is a section of the International School of Schaffhausen (ISSH) and is under the supervision of the ISSH Board.

Additionally ISCC is licensed by the Canton of Schaffhausen, whose childcare officer regularly checks all childcare centres in regard to personnel, hygiene and safety regulations.



2. Educational concept

“Each mind has its own method” The ISSH educational philosophy is based on the ISSH motto “Each mind has its own method” by the American philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson. We believe that children are by nature eager learners from the day they are born. This quality will stay with them for their entire life, if it is cherished, stimulated and catered for every day. We acknowledge that each child must be approached, catered to and educated in an individual manner. ISCC combines a structured, highly professional approach with a warm and family-like atmosphere in which children grow and develop to their full potential. We nurture a feeling of trust and belonging and encourage your child to discover the world in a multitude of aspects through age-appropriate activities.

ISCC’s educational concept is balanced, multisensory and holistic:

1. ISCC provides a safe, warm and caring environment

Safety and security form the basis of child care. A child who feels emotionally secure and is physically safe will show confidence and develops independence. A toddler wants to try new things and is proud when he/she discovers: I can do that!

For you as a parent, safety and emotional security is the first step to trust. At ISCC we allocate a first contact person to your child: the key caregiver. Often this is the group teacher. The key caregiver strives to bond with your child as quickly as possible by giving him/her special time, attention and care during the crucial phase of settling in. This person is at your child’s side while getting to

know the centre, our routines and the other children and staff members. The key caregiver is your first point of contact for questions and concerns.

To ensure physical safety, ISCC procedures and facilities are - in addition to the regular Swiss inspections - audited by an external safety officer of ISSH. Additionally we undertake regular emergency drills and train our staff for a variety of emergency situations.

2. ISCC offers a range of stimulating activities and opportunities to grow and develop

Young children look at the world from their own perspective. They are eager to discover what is behind the wall, around the corner or in the box. Our staff accompany them in their explorations and provide a multitude of opportunities to discover and understand the world.

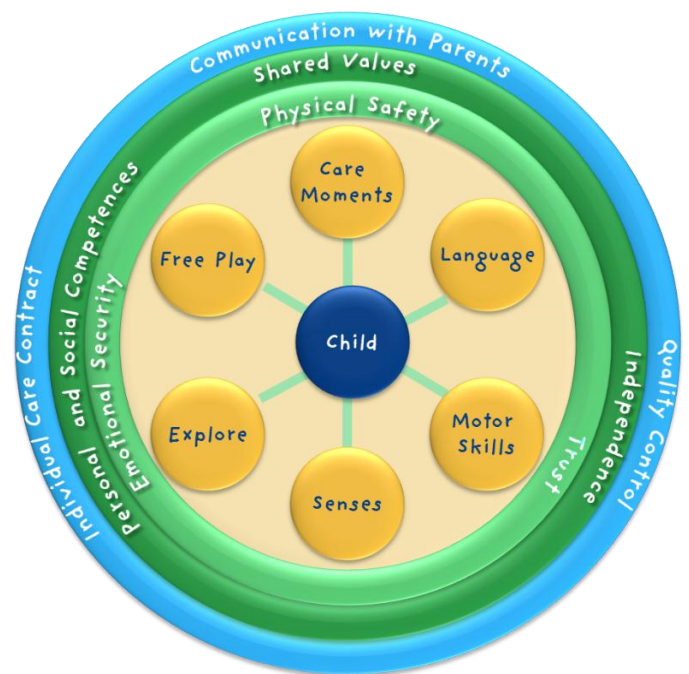
Staff-led activities, free play and care times alternate in a fixed daily routine on our ISCC activity plan. The staff-led activities focus on the development of language skills, fine and gross motor skills and the five senses and on exploring the world around us. During free play times the children develop their social skills through interacting with other children, observation, sharing toys or other resources and through negotiation.

Meals, sleeping or changing nappies alternate with free play and guided activities. Our teachers are flexible to adapt to the rhythm of babies yet encourage older children to become accustomed to structure and participate in guided activities.

3. ISCC encourages the development of personal, intellectual and social skills

The ISCC groups are set up as small units in which each member is catered to and has its own place. Every day we have times in which all children of the group sit together. By singing, talking or just being together, even the youngest members can develop a sense of community.

Self-respect and respect for others are important values in an international environment. ISCC teachers and assistants are inspired by the International School IB Learner Profile: children are encouraged to become caring (share and help), risk-takers (try out new things), inquirers (discover the wonders of the world), communicators (express feelings and thoughts) and open-minded (curious and respectful).



3. Daily routines and procedures

Groups

ISCC offers full day child care, including lunch in vertical (mixed age) groups (ages 3-36 months).

ISCC has space for 22 children with a maximum of 6 babies (<18 months). Since babies are calculated for 1.5 places, in practice the group will not exceed 20 children.

Babies are cared for in a separate area and have their own caregiver and assistant(s).

Every child is allocated a key caregiver, in most cases the group teacher, who introduces new children to the group and is the first contact person for the parents.

Opening hours

The childcare centre is open 51 weeks per year from Monday till Friday from 7:45 – 18:00.

ISCC closes on Swiss public holidays, including the Friday after Ascension Day, and from 24th December until and including 2nd of January.

ISCC is open during the other school holidays, except during the last week of July and the first week of August.

Enrollment

ISCC offers full day child care for babies and toddlers from 3 months until entrance in the Early Years Programme of the International School of Schaffhausen (from 3 years onwards).

To help your child settle in smoothly and become part of the 'family', it is strongly advised to enroll your child for a minimum of two half or two full days per week.

The forms to enroll your child at ISCC can be obtained from the administrative office of the International School of Schaffhausen, which can be reached through info@issh.ch or tel: 052 624 17 07.

Facilities

ISCC is located in the south wing of the 'Logierhaus', adjacent to the Early Years department of the International School of Schaffhausen (ISSH). ISCC has its own kitchenette, sleeping room and sanitary facilities. ISCC shares the playground with the Early Years department. This playground is especially equipped for young children and offers a safe and secure area to play and discover.

ISCC has a 6-seater 'toddler bus', which can be used for walks in and outside the campus.

Nutrition

The ISCC fee includes a morning snack (fruit), a hot lunch, an afternoon snack (cereals, fruit/vegetables, yoghurt) and drinks (water, tea, fresh milk). The hot lunch is freshly cooked by ISCC staff, fruit and healthy snacks are prepared by the ISCC team in our kitchenette.

Special dietary requests and baby nutrition will be agreed upon with the parents. Parents are requested to bring in formula milk for babies.



Daily routine

ISCC follows a daily programme that is fixed between 9:00 and 13:30. Because young children react best to regular routines, parents are strongly advised to bring their child to ISCC at the latest by 9:00 and pick up their child after 13:30.

Start of the day

Children who arrive between 7:45 and 9:00 are welcomed by one of our staff members. Parents are welcome to stay for 10 to 15 minutes and help their children settle and start an activity.

Morning activities

Group activities start at 9:00. Children get together in their group and have a morning snack. After snack time, a guided activity is offered: we engage in singing, arts, exercise or outside play according to the weekly activity plan set up by the group teacher. Depending on the weather we will take the group outside to our play area or let them choose a game inside.

Babies follow their own rhythm in the baby room, where baby beds are available for in-between sleep or they can also be taken outside.

Lunch and nap

Lunch is served at 11:00 followed by “free play”. Children will be taken into the sleeping room for their midday nap at 12:30 to 14:30. Children who no longer nap, take part in quiet activities or just relax in the bedroom. One teacher stays with the children in the bedroom to help them fall asleep and to be there when they wake up.

Afternoon activities

After the children wake up, they are offered a drink and it's time to get active again. The

group teacher offers activities including music, story time and creative games. An afternoon snack is provided around 13:00.

Pick up time

Group activities finish at 13:30 after which there is free play time. Mostly we go outside once more. Most parents arrive between 14:00 and 16:00 to pick up their child. Parents, who would like to pick up their child before 13:30 should make arrangements with the group teacher.

Communication

Key Caregiver

The key caregiver is your first contact person at ISCC. She will mostly be available either at arrival or pick-up time. She will set up the introduction programme for your child (see also chapter 4), inform you about special happenings during the day and share new steps in your child's development with you. She keeps an individual record of special achievements that she will share with you on a regular basis.

Individual Development Sheet

The individual development of your child is monitored and recorded in a development sheet. Also agreements between parents and teachers on nutrition, medical requirements and sleeping times are registered. When your child starts daycare with us, we require you to fill in an extended questionnaire as a basis for the individual development sheet. Two parent meetings are organized during the year to discuss your child's progress.

Group Logbook

Each group teacher keeps a daily record of the happenings in her group. Shared experiences, joyful happenings, celebrations, and reports of

the day-to-day routines of the group will all be recorded in this logbook.

Daily Notes

In the baby group, we record on a daily note when your child slept, played, ate or had a nappy change. You will receive this note at pick-up time. Through this simple communication system we create a smooth hand-over from our childcare centre to your home.

Newsletters

A newsletter with updates about the group, our staff, the activities and meal plan will be sent on a regular basis. This newsletter is sent per e-mail, so please inform us about any changes in your e-mail address.

Since ISCC is part of the International School Community, parents will also receive the monthly school bulletin, including the Parents' Association news and information.

Partnership with parents

Educating children is a joint effort of parents and teachers. Although we acknowledge that parents have a busy working life, we encourage parents to get involved in ISCC during the settling in of their child in the group, through their input in the individual care plan and by participating in parent evenings and family events.

We are committed to an open door policy and appreciate hearing your suggestions and comments. Don't hesitate to share any concerns or questions you may have in relation to your child or the centre with your key caregiver or the centre leader.

All parents are invited to become members of the Parents' Association of the International School of Schaffhausen and to participate in

whole school events (i.e. welcome picnic, garden party, open day, activities for mums and dads).





4. Introduction in ISCC and transition to Early Years at ISSH

Introduction in ISCC

A smooth settling-in phase is the key factor for your child's start in a new child care centre. Both you and your child need time to build up trust and feel at ease with the new situation and the new environment.

Many children are insecure when starting a new childcare arrangement: they see many. Our ISCC team will do everything to make the Transition as smooth as possible for your child and for you. In order to do this we monitor

the settling in period for each child and parent and take into account their particular situation.

Key Caregiver

Every new child will be allocated a key caregiver. Most times this will be the group teacher, but also an assistant teacher that speaks the language of the child can be appointed. It is very important that the child develops a personal relationship with the key caregiver so that he/she feels confident and secure when his/her parents leave them. The key caregiver will introduce the child to the group and the other staff members.

Questionnaire

Before starting the settling in programme, the parents will fill out a questionnaire about their child. We need to know about your child's sleeping and eating habits, allergies and nutritional needs, family structure, but also their favourite game and toy in order to become familiar with your child and prepare everything to make them feel at home. Your key caregiver will discuss the questionnaire with you and set up an individual care plan for your child.

Settling in Period

Every child is different and the settling in period can vary. For some children it will be their first experience of separation from a familiar person, others have been in a day care situation before, or have a sibling that was at ISCC.

Parents need to participate actively in the settling in process. During the introduction period the length of time a child spends at ISCC and the length of time it stays without the parent will gradually be extended until the agreed hours are reached.

When a child attends child care for the first time, the parent is asked to allow for at least a week for the settling in process. Parents are requested to be reachable and available at all times during this period, so that they can assist their child in case the key caregiver feels that this is the best for your child.

The settling in period may differ from child to child, and is carried out at the child's own pace as much as possible. Sometimes this may take longer than a week. For children who attend ISCC on 2 or 3 days a week, we will often propose to settle in on a full time basis and come for shorter periods on 4 or 5

following days, in order to get used to the group room and routines more quickly.

Even though a child may appear to be initially unconcerned about whether the parent stays or leaves, the parent will be asked to stay as planned in case the child changes his/her mind later. The child's allocated key caregiver will adapt the settling in procedure to suit the individual child and communicate with you about your child's progress.

Typical First Week

Day One: The child attends ISCC for 1-2 hours with the parent and spends time with their allocated Key Worker and the other children.

Day Two: The child attends for a longer period (1-2 hours). The parent stays with the child for the first half hour and then leaves the childcare centre/group room until the arranged pick up (mostly 11:00) if the child is happy.

Day Three: The child attends for an extended period (3-4 hours including lunch). The parent stays with the child for the first ten minutes then leaves until the arranged pick up time.

Day Four: The parent settles the child, then leaves and picks up the child at around 14:00, unless the child is distressed and parents are contacted for an earlier pick-up time.

Day Five: The parent settles the child, then leaves and picks up the child at around 15:30, unless the child is distressed and parents are contacted for an earlier pick-up time.

Tips for parents during the settling in process:

- Prepare your child by talking to him/her in advance; tell your child where he/she will be going, what he/she will be doing.
- After a successful settling in period, make sure to have account for at least 15 minutes to help your child to settle into an activity before you have to head off to work. Children are less likely to protest your departure if they are involved with an activity.
- Let your child take a familiar object such as a favourite cuddly toy or blanket. Your child may find it easier to adjust to a particular care situation having a cherished toy to hold when feeling anxious or upset.
- Pay attention to your own body language when saying good bye to your child. If you're showing signs of insecurity about the new arrangement you may transfer some of your own anxiety to your child.
- Resist the temptation to sneak out the door while your child isn't looking. Your child may feel upset when he/she realises that you are gone and will fear that you're going to disappear in other situations, too.
- If you feel there is a problem of any sort you should ask your child's key caregiver if she can provide insight.
- Consistency and structure are important for children, so stick to a routine. Avoid making other changes to your child's routine while getting used to a new childcare arrangement.
- Accept that children are different, settling in requires patience, confidence and hugs.

Transition to Early Years department of ISSH

When your child approaches the age of 3, the ISCC group teacher will invite the parents for a meeting to discuss the transition of your child to Early Years considering the development of your child, the timing in the school year and the group dynamics.

As a general rule your child has to be potty trained and able to be an independent member of the group. The activities and daily routine of ISCC are set up to prepare the children for that. Further it is advised to let the children start at a natural moment in the school year, preferably after the summer or winter holiday.

The ISCC group teacher will contact the Early Years 1 teacher to discuss the group dynamics and the 'readiness' of your child to take part in the class routine.

When the parents and teachers have agreed on the right moment of transition, a member of the ISCC team will accompany your child on short trips to the Early Years department to discover the new world of ISSH. In this way, the child will have the opportunity to get used to this new environment and meet some new friends. This will certainly help a smooth transition.

Please notice that since ISCC and ISSH are separate entities, it is necessary to officially enroll your child at ISSH. The ISSH administrative office can provide you with the necessary forms.



5. Health, Safety and Security

Health Illnesses

If your child is sick, has a temperature above 38° C or has been administered a medicine to reduce fever, it should not be brought to ISCC. Parents are requested to inform the head of ISCC before 9:00. If your child is going to be absent for several days in a row, please inform us about the approximate length of absence.

ISCC keeps a health record sheet of each child. Upon entry parents are requested to fill out this form. If there is any need for changes on the health record sheet, the parents are required to contact the group teacher (i.e. change of mobile number for emergency contact).

Contagious diseases

Should your child or another member of your family be diagnosed with a contagious disease, please notify the head of ISCC immediately. Before returning back to ISCC a medical certificate must be provided. Other parents

will be informed via e-mail so that they can identify symptoms easily.

In the case of serious public health issues (e.g. Swine Flu), ISCC will take appropriate measures to ensure the safety of the community. This could include obligatory medical checks for families who have been exposed to a risk.

Chicken pox & other contagious Diseases

If your child is diagnosed or you suspect they may have chicken pox or similar childhood diseases, please keep the child away from ISCC and inform the group teacher. A medical certificate from your pediatrician is needed to return to daycare.

Medication

If your child needs to take medication on a temporary or regular basis, please inform the group teacher and fill out the medicine authorization, which can be download from our webpage.

Should your child suffer from any allergies, please mention this on the health record sheet. If there is a need for any kind of special treatment in case of allergies or other conditions please provide ISCC with written details. The centre leader keeps a list of allergies and special health conditions. Please also include any information on health issues in the student information sheet that you will be requested to fill in upon entry.

Unwell at ISCC

If your child feels unwell whilst at the nursery, the group leader will call you to discuss the situation. As a general rule, sick children should be collected and taken home as soon as possible.

If we find signs of an infectious illness you must collect your child. He/she may return to the nursery as soon as your doctor confirms there is no (further) risk of infection.

Emergency

Minor accidents involving bruises, cuts, and stings are dealt with by the school staff. ISCC keeps a variety of medical materials like band aid, bandages and household remedies in first aid kits. (Parents who do not wish their children to take these remedies are requested to indicate this on the health record sheet.) The kits are checked and updated regularly.

In case of serious injuries we will contact you immediately and take your child directly to our school doctor or to the Kantonsspital:

School Doctor:

Dr. Sergio Stocker

Geissbergstrasse 81 (Kantonsspital)

8208 Schaffhausen 052 625 00 59

Hospital: Kantonsspital

Schaffhausen:

Geissbergstrasse 81

8208 Schaffhausen 052 634 34 34

Emergency contact details

Please ensure that we have a telephone number where you can be reached at all times and inform us about changes in numbers.

Hygiene

ISCC adheres to the cantonal regulations with regards to hygiene. The ISCC team is trained to take the appropriate hygiene measures for kitchen and sanitary facilities. Regular checks by the cantonal inspection take place and recommendations will be implemented.

Safety and Security

A safe environment is the foundation of child care. The ISCC facilities and procedures are developed and maintained with the safety and security of your child and our employees in mind. Safety locks on doors and windows, safety caps on electrical sockets or sharp corners, secure play area for small babies, safe outdoor play area are some of the measures that guarantee the safety of your child.

ISCC follows the ISSH Safety and Security Policy and its regulations on risk assessments and safety checks. A document with detailed information can be obtained from the ISSH office.

Responsibility ISCC

ISCC's responsibility starts when the parent/guardian hands over the child to the ISCC teacher. Children may only leave the premises with the registered parent and/or guardian. Only with written permission of the parent, will a child be allowed to leave ISCC with a third person, including parents of other children in the group. On our homepage, you can download the pick-up permission form and submit to the ISCC staff.

Supervision

The adult-child ratio at ISCC is 1 on 2-to-3. Children are supervised at all times, including sleeping times. During walks and outings no child will be allowed to walk freely, unless within the ISCC premises, the gym hall or in the secure outdoor play ground.

Safety Drills

ISCC participates in the ISSH safety drills with staff and children on a regular basis, at least 2 times per year. Safety drills are comprised of the evacuation procedure (in which teachers have to evacuate the building in a calm and

orderly fashion) and the lock-down procedure (in which the hazard comes from outside and teachers have to secure the children within the building). The safety drills will be executed in a child appropriate way, without the noise of loud sirens or stress. The purpose is to train the team in evacuating the building in a controlled manner.

Insurance

According to the Swiss system of health and accident insurance, the parents have to make sure their child is adequately insured for accidents, health care and liability. The school has a liability insurance to cover incidents that are reprehensible; however the Swiss Law does not include individual medical costs.



6. Enrollment and financial regulations

Enrollment

Children can start at any time during the year, providing that there is a space available on the preferred days. On confirmation of an available place, the parents will receive an invoice for the application fee. Once this application fee has been received your child's place is secured.

Waiting list

In case all childcare places are occupied, ISCC operates with a waiting list. Parents may choose to enter their children on the list, but are obliged to accept the place within 4 weeks once it becomes available. Please be aware that, since ISCC was set up as a joint project of an international company and ISSH, children of their employees have priority on our waiting list.

ISCC fee

ISCC is a private childcare centre, fully financed by the fees paid through the parents.

ISCC operates on a not-for-profit basis. Fees are independent of the child's age and based on full-day attendance. ISCC doesn't offer subsidized places. A sheet with the current fees and financial regulations can be obtained from the ISSH administration office or on the ISSH website: www.issch.ch

Withdrawal

Withdrawal is possible during the year by the end of the calendar month with a one month prior notice. The withdrawal must be confirmed in writing.

Cancellation fee

In the case that the parents cancel the signed contract (reserved space) before the starting date, 50% of the quarterly fee is payable. This is not the case if the cancellation was announced at least 6 months before the starting date. After the starting date the regular conditions of notice come into operation- see 'withdrawal' above.

End of contract

The contract with ISCC will generally stop at the end of the quarter in which the child reaches the age of 36 months, unless the parents and the group teacher have agreed that the child will stay for a longer period until he/she moves to the Early Years department of ISSH. The moment of transition will be agreed between parents, ISCC key caregiver and ISSH.

