

Westend Community Playschool

PARENT HANDBOOK

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Downstairs class - Mrs. Dutton (3 year, 3-4 year) **Ph: 486-0220**
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Welcome to the Westend Community Playschool! This package was put together to help you get to know the Playschool's staff, policies and procedures.

BACKGROUND

The Westend Community Playschool (WECP) has operated since its initial inception in 1977. Thanks to the initial sponsorship of the Rio Terrace Moravian Church, we continue to offer a self-supporting program organized by an Advisory Board of interested parents and staffed by well qualified teachers and teacher's assistants. The WECP relies upon and appreciates continued volunteer assistance from parents.

PHILOSOPHY OF THE PLAYSCHOOL

The WECP shall provide a quality preschool program that enables each child to progress at his or her own level of development. By providing a stimulating environment, the child will be able to grow emotionally, physically, socially and intellectually. Focus will be on the development of a positive self-image as a learner, pre-literacy skills, early numeracy concepts and cooperation in the class, in a family and in the community.

This shall be carried out by providing "free play" time, in which the child may choose his or her own area to play in such areas as toys, puzzles, craft materials or a quiet area for reading or just being alone. During the circle time, the children are involved in singing, group discussions and stories that will enable them to learn about themselves and their world. In addition students will be exposed to a variety of literacy and numeracy games, activities and projects.

Parents are welcome to discuss their child's progress with the teachers at anytime throughout the year. Students who will continue on to Kindergarten will have an opportunity to discuss their child's progress with the teacher in the early spring.

The Westend Community Playschool is an environment where children, families, teaching staff and volunteers work together in an atmosphere of respect and collaboration. Harassment of any kind will not be tolerated.

IMPORTANT DATES

- ⤴ Classes start first full week after Labour Day (payment made on staggered start entry dates)
- ⤴ Christmas Break – begins one week before Edmonton Public Schools commences Christmas Break and return on same date as EPSB in the New Year
- ⤴ Registration for Alumni – beginning of February
- ⤴ Registration for Public – middle of February
- ⤴ Class confirmation via email – March 1st
- ⤴ Classes end one week before Edmonton Public Schools (June) *32 weeks of classes

TOILET TRAINING

Children **must** be toilet trained and able to manage themselves **independently** in the bathroom. Children are not allowed to attend the playschool in training pants (eg: Pull Ups, Easy Ups, etc).

FOOTWEAR

Indoor shoes that students can independently put on and take off are required. These should be clearly marked with the child's name and may be left in the bins at the school.

Please remove wet and/or dirty shoes at the front door before descending the stairs and entering the classrooms.

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

The WECP does not operate during public school holidays, including Teachers' Convention and Spring Break. The Westend Community Playschool is completely non-denominational. However, we do celebrate Christmas in a non-religious manner.

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

Any emergency medical assistance necessary for a child left in the care of the Playschool will be sought at the medical facility decided on by the Emergency Personnel on site. Parents will be notified of any incident as soon as possible.

Teachers may not give non-prescription drugs to the children. Prescribed drugs will be given only with written permission from the parent. A form must be completed and drugs must be in their original container with a current date.

ILLNESS

Parents are asked to keep ill children at home until they are free of symptoms for 24 hours (including but not limited to: fever, vomiting, diarrhea, sore throat, cough, runny nose, muscle aches, joint pain) and feeling well, and are able to fully participate in all normal daily school activities. This applies to staff as well. Encourage and remind your children to use respiratory hygiene (i.e. cover their mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, or cough and sneeze into their sleeve, dispose of used tissues and wash hands afterwards using soap and water, use alcohol-based hand rub if there is no access to soap and water).

The Playschool must be informed immediately of any communicable disease that your child may have.

SCHOOL CANCELLATION POLICY

WECP may cancel classes due to flooding, power outage, extreme weather conditions and/or any other unforeseen circumstances. In such cases, an email will be sent to all families, a note will be posted on the door of the school and parent volunteers from each class will call to either speak to parents on the phone explaining the situation and/or leave a message whenever possible.

TEACHERS AND ASSISTANTS

The staff is firmly committed to providing a safe and stimulating classroom environment and quality educational experiences to pre-school children. No matter how much is told of its virtues, it is the children and parents who ultimately decide if it is a great playschool. Thirty-five years of its existence speaks for itself.

Sarah Redfern - Teacher - 4 year old programs and Thursday Science Program (optional for 4 year olds)

fouryearoldclass@yahoo.ca

Brianna Dutton - Teacher - 3 year old, 3-4 year old classes

threeyroidclass@yahoo.ca

Susan Hudson - Teacher's Assistant- 4 year old programs and Thursday Science Program

Ana Matthiessen - Teacher's Assistant - 3 year old, 3-4 year old classes

DISCIPLINE POLICY

The WECP believes that the discipline of a child is achieved through patience, consistency, and positive reinforcement. The teachers focus on teaching the children manners, kindness and to be respectful to others. One of the ways in which to achieve this is by the example the teachers set. It is understood that actions and reactions speak much louder than words. The rules of the playschool are explained frequently, so the children know what's expected of them. If inappropriate behaviour is exhibited; hurting others or being destructive or failing to follow directions, the following developmentally appropriate guidance techniques will be used. These techniques are as follows:

Positive Reinforcement: The child will be encouraged when he or she is demonstrating acceptable behaviour.

Redirection: The child is redirected to another activity and given an opportunity to try again at another time.

"Take a Break": The child is separated from the group for an age appropriate amount of time (i.e. 3 year old = 3 minute "break"). This technique is only used when a child repeatedly will not follow our directions or listen to our words, is exhibiting temper tantrum type behaviour, or hurting ones self, others or equipment. When the child shows that he or she is ready to demonstrate acceptable behaviour, they are encouraged to join the rest of the group to try again.

Last Resort: When a child's behaviour is continually upsetting or dangerous to others, a conference will be called with the parents. A plan of action will be discussed with the child's parent/guardian and teacher. The plan of action may include, but is not limited to, the following solutions: environmental restructuring, classroom preventive practices, social/emotional teaching strategies and other programming options. In extreme cases, plans may be made to find alternative school arrangements.

Note: Sometimes if both a parent and a provider are both in the same area (examples would be during drop-off and pick-up times) a child may forget the rules or test the boundaries. **Please help show your child that you respect us, the rules of our school, and our property by reminding them that the rules still apply when you are around.** We will also remind them of the rules and correct them if needed.

Under no circumstances will the teacher, aide or volunteers use physical means to discipline a child.

REGISTRATION and PAYMENT POLICIES

Registration – February

- Pre-Registration in early-February is open to all alumni (immediate) family members.
- Priority will be given to *currently* serving Parent Advisory volunteer board members.
- Open Registration for the public will occur the following week.
- No registration forms will be accepted prior to these set dates.
- Families will be notified of class assignments via email by no later than March 1st.

Registration Fees

A non-refundable registration fee of \$50.00 per child must be submitted with the registration application. The non-refundable registration fee will be reduced to \$35.00 for registrations accepted after February 1st for enrolment in the Playschool for the months of February, March, April, May and June of the current school year.

2 Year Policy

If your child is not three years old as of the first day of classes, there are two options:

- ^ Pay to hold your child's spot in the classes and your child can start as soon as he/she is three years old.
- ^ Child can start on the first day of classes, however a parent/guardian or other adult who has a vested interest in the child (nanny/babysitter) must stay on site during class time.

*These policies are in place in order to meet licensing requirements by Child and Family Services.

Information and Payment – September

Toy Cleaning Fee

A toy cleaning fee of \$30.00 per child must be paid at the beginning of each school year. The fee will be reduced to \$15.00 for all registrations accepted after February 1st. It is up to the discretion of the Treasurer and/or Chairperson whether to return the toy cleaning fee upon early withdrawal from the school.

Fundraising Deposit

On the years WECP is to host a casino event (even years), a refundable cheque of \$250 is required from each family. Once a volunteer form has been submitted and the assignment completed, the cheque will be returned.

Fees

There are 3 ways to pay tuition fees:

1. **Pre-Authorized Payment:** form to be completed and handed in with a void cheque by the first day of school
2. **Bi-annual:** two cheques dated September 1st for the months of September – January and February 1st for the months of February – June must be submitted by the first day of school
3. **Annual:** one cheque dated Sept. 1st for all ten months must be submitted by the first day of school

No rebate or reduction of fees is allowed for temporary absence or holidays.

Fees are collected at the same rate per month regardless of the number of classes that month. The tuition fee is for the entire year (32 weeks of classes), but in order to provide the option of automatic withdrawal, the fees per month are consistent as opposed to being per class.

In the event that a child needs to be withdrawn from the Playschool, the parent must provide one month's written notice to the Registrar of the Parents Advisory Board. If a child is withdrawn for the month of June, that fee will not be refunded. The Parents Advisory Board can use their discretion in extenuating circumstances.

NSF Cheques

Because of numerous problems with NSF cheques, the following policy is in effect:

- No more than 1 NSF cheque will be permitted per family during the school year.
- Once an NSF cheque has been received the Treasurer will provide written notice to the family requesting reimbursement, and notify the family that upon receipt of a second NSF cheque, they will be asked to withdraw their child from the school.
- A \$20.00 charge will be levied to the parents for any NSF cheque returned from the bank.
- The budget committee shall have the discretion to waive any of the above points due to extenuating circumstances.

WECP fees are as follows:

	3 year Mon/Wed 9:00am-11:15am	3 year Tues/Thurs 9:00am-11:15am	3-4 year class Mon/Wed 1:00pm-3:15pm	4 year AM Mon/Tues/Wed 9:00am-11:30am	4 year PM Mon/Tues/Wed 12:45pm-3:15pm	4 year Option Thurs Science 9:00am-11:30am
Monthly	\$95	\$95	\$95	\$155	\$155	\$60
Bi-Annually	\$475/\$475	\$475/\$475	\$475/\$475	\$775/\$775	\$775/\$775	\$300/\$300
Annually	\$950	\$950	\$950	\$1,550	\$1,550	\$600

*In addition to the above fees, a \$30 toy cleaning fee is required on the first day of classes for all regular classes.

*In casino years (even years) a non-dated cheque for \$250 is required on the first day of classes as a deposit for volunteer hours - to be returned when volunteer form and shift has been completed.

CASINO

Our playschool receives funds from just two sources: fees and fundraising. The funds are used for salaries, rent, supplies, up-to-date toys, books, computer equipment and more. The fees you pay for your child each month do not cover the costs needed to maintain the high level of programming at WECP. The fees contribute to only a portion of the revenue needed. The rest of the revenue comes solely from fundraising.

The WECP Parent Advisory Board is a non-profit organization, thus enabling us to apply for a casino gaming licence. Alberta Gaming requires us to fill all volunteer positions in order for us to maintain our casino licence every two years. Profits raised in the past have exceeded \$70 000. Obviously, this is a worthwhile fundraising event. Each time we are granted a casino, we are required to provide 60 volunteers over two days to cover both daytime and nighttime shifts, lasting about 8 hours long. These volunteers are recruited from the families that belong to our playschool, and no previous training or knowledge of casino games is needed.

Our next casino will take place in the final quarter of the year 2012.

SNACK/SHOW AND SHARE DAY

Your child's "snack day" is also their "show and share" day. We encourage children to bring something special that they would like to share and tell everyone about, whether it is a special stuffed animal, toy, picture, book , etc.

Switching Days

If the day assigned to your child is inconvenient, please make arrangements to switch with another parent from your child's class and let the Teacher know. Each parent will receive a class list of names and telephone numbers. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that a snack is brought on their child's assigned day.

Birthdays

Your child will have a "Snack and Share Day" as close to possible to their actual birthday. Parents are welcome to send a peanut-free treat in addition to the regular snack on this special day. Bringing a birthday treat is completely optional.

Snack Requirements

We ask that you send a **nutritious** snack which includes 2 food groups. The school will provide children with water, however if you choose to bring a beverage (milk or unsweetened juice) it will be served. We request a small snack that can be easily eaten with their fingers. The number of snacks that are to be brought is indicated at the top of the monthly calendar.

As a general guideline the 4-year classes & option classes require snacks for 20 children and the 3 year & 3-4 year classes for 16 children.

The Board of Health requires that snacks are NOT to be baked or prepared at home. All purchased goods must be washed and cut up on the Playschool premises by either the snack parent or Playschool staff.

We are a nut-free school, so please read labels carefully.

Preferred Snacks (guideline only):

Fresh fruit or vegetables, plain or with yogurt dip
Cheese or sausage
Yogurt tubes
Apple Sauce
Cereal bars
Crackers or bagels
Raisins or dried fruit
Bears Paws
Pretzels

Please do not send foods of the following nature:

Pop and Chips

Chocolate bars

Peanuts or nut products

Homemade snacks

Allergies

Allergies for each class are posted on the bulletin boards outside of each class. Please check the bulletin boards for this information when considering your snack choice. Please do not send any snack with nuts or nut products. Allergic reactions can be very serious for some children. The snack will be checked each day and if there is a risk, the snack will not be provided for the children. It is at the discretion of the Teacher whether or not a child with severe allergies needs to bring their own snack.

Forgetting Your Snack Day

If you happen to forget your snack, the Playschool will provide a nutritious snack and water. In turn we ask that you replenish the snack provided by the Playschool.

OTHER PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents are to provide transportation to and from Playschool.

- a) Parents/Guardians must inform the teacher if there will be any persons other than themselves picking up the child.
- b) If the parent/guardian is away for several days and has an alternate care giver transporting the child, written confirmation must be given to the teacher beforehand. This shall include the name, phone number, and address of the caregiver.

The children are not to arrive more than 10 minutes before class time and must be picked up promptly, at the end of each class. Parents are responsible for helping their children remove and put on their coats and shoes each day.

Parents must advise the Playschool of **ALL** allergies whether food or environment, no matter how small or insignificant the allergy may be. In cases of certain food allergies, the parent may be required to provide a daily snack for their child.

The Playschool must be notified of a change of phone number and/or address.

Due to Social Service regulations regarding licensing, in cases of separation, divorce or unsettled situations, the person who has custody of the child must advise the teacher if there is any difficulty expected regarding an unlawful party picking up the child. In such a case, the parent must give the teacher the name of the party not allowed to pick up the child and record it on the registration form.

Parents are to confirm the emergency phone number with the person named on the registration form, to assure that the person named will accept the responsibility in the event of an emergency.

It is important Teachers are able to reach parents in the event of a toilet accident, illness or emergency. Parents are expected to provide contact numbers so they can be reached at all times. Please provide teachers with all numbers available including home, work, and cell for both parents and ensure the teachers are informed of any changes to contact numbers on file.

Government of Alberta Stay At Home Subsidy

Once a family qualifies for this subsidy, tuition fees still need to be made directly to the school. Once the school has received the subsidy payment from the Government, the school will then reimburse the family for the tuition fees received from the Government.