



Parent Handbook

WELCOME

Thank you for choosing Willow Park Preschool. This handbook has been prepared especially for you. In it, you will find many of our policies and operating procedures explained. We suggest that you keep this handbook nearby as a reference throughout the year. Whenever you have questions, please feel free to call or stop by the preschool.

INTRODUCTION

Willow Park Preschool is a parent-run cooperative located in the Willow Ridge Community Centre that offers morning and afternoon classes for children ages 3 to 5.

We believe **learning-based play** is a vital part of a child's development that builds critical skills necessary for their social, intellectual, physical, mental and emotional wellbeing. Therefore, we strive to provide our students with a caring and stimulating environment that allows for purposeful and high quality play experiences with other children.

A key component to the successful running of our school is parental involvement. Parents contribute to the preschool in various ways ranging from an executive position on our parent board to signing up for one of the many daily and weekly tasks that ensure our classes run smoothly.

PROGRAMS OFFERED

THREE-YEAR-OLD PROGRAM

Days: Tuesdays & Thursdays (Sept – June)

Morning Program: 9:00 am - 11:00 am (Ms. Michelle)

Afternoon Program: 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm **Currently not available for 2017**

Monthly Fees: \$165.00

The focus of our three-year-old program is on developing and enhancing socialization skills such as listening, decision-making, problem solving, healthy communication, empathy, sharing, respect, and self-control, as well as fostering curiosity, independence, self-esteem, imagination, hand-eye coordination, language and cognitive skills.

The school year is organized into monthly themes, which are accompanied by a wide range of play stations and activities that are designed to integrate the skills and concepts being taught.

FOUR-YEAR-OLD PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

Days: Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays (Sept – June)

Morning Program: 9:00 am - 11:15 am (Ms. Holly)

Afternoon Program: 12:45 pm - 3:00 pm (Ms. Michelle)

Monthly Fees: \$190.00

Our four-year-old program reinforces and expands on the behaviours and skills learned in our three-year-old program. The focus is on continuing to stimulate social growth while preparing students academically for the rigors of kindergarten.

Students learn to say and recognize the capital and lowercase letters of the alphabet, recognize simple words, identify colours, shapes and numbers, complete geometric patterns, compare objects based on size, shape, length, count from 1 to 20, and print their name and the numbers 1 to 10.

The school year is organized into monthly themes, which are accompanied by a wide range of play stations and activities that are designed to integrate the skills and concepts being taught.

ENROLLMENT/REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Enrollment in Willow Park Preschool is open to all children, ages 3 through 5 years old. Willow Park Preschool has a rolling registration policy based on availability, (i.e. if a child turns 3 in November and there are openings in the preschool they could enroll at that time). It is also possible to hold a space for your child in the class if they are not going to be 3 year's old until sometime after September. To hold a space for your child, the preschool would require 40% of the monthly fee for every month until attendance starts.

Classes are filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Enrollment in the preschool is official when all registration materials have been filled out, signed and submitted to the preschool as well as fees (processing and first months tuition) have been paid. An email will be sent to confirm enrollment and parents will receive a letter in August informing them of class start time, first parent meeting and their volunteer position.

REGISTRATION PROCESS

Registration begins in January at the Preschool's open house and may be an ongoing process throughout the year, depending on class sizes. Registration forms are available online. A registration meeting must be held with at least one of the child's parents (or legal guardian) and either the preschool teacher or the president/vice-president for the following purposes:

1. Complete/sign registration forms and any other paper work
2. Discuss registration materials and go over policies
3. Answer any questions parents/guardians may have
4. Pay fees (parents must pay fees at the registration meeting)
5. Meet the teachers and tour the classroom

REGISTRATION FEES

There is a one-time processing fee of \$30 that is due upon registering your child in the program. This fee is non-refundable.

We also require a postdated cheque for the first month's tuition fees, dated June 1st. This fee is also non-refundable unless a month's written notice given. If you decide not to enroll your child at Willow Park Preschool we would need to be notified in writing by June 1st. **If notice is not provided, you are responsible for the first month's fee.** It is at the discretion of the board to refund this fee if another student fills your child's space.

LATE PAYMENT OF FEES

Monthly preschool fees are required on the first school day of each month. We ask that 10 post-dated cheques for the year be given to the preschool (October - June) at the first parent meeting. Please make cheques payable to: **Willow Park Preschool**. You can also choose to provide one cheque in the amount of the tuition for the whole year. It is also possible to pay biannually or quarterly upon request.

If payment is received after the first class of the month and no prior notice of late payment has been given to the Board, it is at the Board's discretion to charge a late fee on amounts owing. The late fee will start at \$10. This will increase at the Board's discretion based on lateness (period from first of month to payment) and frequency or occurrences. There will be a \$25.00 NSF fee charge for all returned cheques.

If late payments become a recurring issue, Willow Park Preschool reserves the right to withdraw the child from the program.

WITHDRAWING FROM THE PROGRAM

The preschool requires one month's written notice, if a child is being withdrawn. If a child is withdrawn without notice, one month's fees will be required in lieu of notice. Payment is required for the 30 days following the withdrawal, regardless of the period of child's attendance after notice. For example, if the child is withdrawn on September 15, payment is required until October 15. Willow Park preschool would then cash the October cheque, and refund ½ of the amount once the cheque has cleared.

WAIT LIST POLICY

Applicants who wish to have their name placed on the Willow Park Preschool waiting list must submit a completed enrollment form. No registration fee is required at this time, although it will speed up the registration process if you provide it. Admission will be granted on the basis of availability. Parents/Guardians will be notified by phone or email when space becomes available.

TERMINATION OF ENROLLMENT

Willow Park Preschool reserves the right to discontinue service to a family if financial commitments are not met or if it becomes apparent that the program is not equipped to meet the psychological or developmental needs of the child. Written notification will be given to the parents to allow for ample time to find alternative care. The teachers and parent board will make every effort to resolve any problems prior to termination. Documentation will be provided upon request prior to suspension or termination. Parents and children are given advance notification when suspension will take place based on a child's behavior.

In the event that the Preschool should ever find it necessary to terminate enrollment, the parent will be given **two weeks written notice except** for reasons such as but not limited to:

- Destructive, uncontrollable or violent behaviors
- Habitual tardiness in picking up the child
- Lateness of payment or nonpayment
- Lack of parental cooperation or participation

PARENT COOPERATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

SNACK DAYS

Parents are required to sign-up for and bring a healthy snack for the entire class. **Any snacks brought into class must be free of nuts.** It is helpful if snacks are prepared beforehand and can be easily dispensed. Please provide healthy foods that includes 2 of the 4 food groups (no meat please) for the entire class. Drinks are not required, however, if you do bring a drink please ensure it is 100% juice and in a 1L container. A detailed list of acceptable snacks is available online.

If you are unable to make a snack on your scheduled day, it is essential for you to either switch days with another parent or contact the class representative and the preschool via telephone. If you are not able to make a snack due to unforeseen circumstances (i.e. sudden illness or a death in the family), the class representative will work with you to find a replacement snack day volunteer.

PARENT MEETINGS

Parent meetings occur every two months. Meetings will start at 7:00 p.m. and run for approximately one (1) hour. Attendance is strongly encouraged as often decisions need to be put to a vote and a quorum of 10 people is necessary to pass a vote. If you are not able to attend a meeting, please review the meeting minutes, which will be emailed to all parents. If a vote is taking place you may send your vote via email to the Secretary upon receipt of the agenda. You are asked to leave children at home as childcare is not available at these meetings.

PRESCHOOL POSITIONS

All parents are required to sign-up for one of the many duties that help the preschool run smoothly. Please indicate your choice on the preschool registration form. If you do not sign-up for a position the parent board will assign one to you. Below is a list of the different positions and their responsibilities:

BOARD POSITIONS

President

- Chair Board and parent meetings
- Liaise with teachers regarding classroom needs
- Liaise with licensing regarding requirements
- Liaise with parents
- Supervise teachers as per licensing requirements

- Answer school emails
- Oversee operation of preschool
- Sign cheques

Vice President (child in the 3 year-old program)

- Become President and coordinate enrollment for the next school year
- Chair Board and parent meetings that the President cannot attend
- Liaise with teachers regarding classroom needs
- Supervise teachers as per licensing requirements
- Oversee operation of preschool
- Have signing authority • Liaise with parents

Treasurer

- Attend parent and Board meetings
- Collect and deposit monthly tuition fees
- Submit subsidy claims
- Maintain the bank account (ie: checking for NSF cheques)
- Contact parents for late payments
- Collect receipts from the teachers/Shoppers/Board members/approved activities and write reimbursement cheques
- Liaise with the bookkeeper/accountant for bookkeeping purposes
- Liaise with accountant for year-end statements
- Perform initial year-end review of financial statements
- Calculate and deliver payroll

Secretary

- Attend Board and parent meetings and take accurate, detailed minutes
- Send out notices of meeting times, book rooms
- Assist in the registration process
- Maintain preschool contact list
- Edit minutes and send to the President in a timely manner, for distribution
- Assist President/Vice President with clerical duties
- Contact new families to answer questions and give information regarding the programs

Website/Advertising

- Attend Board and parent meetings
- Maintain and update the website Liaise with teachers to review advertising needs
- Design advertising for the preschool
- Submit monthly write-ups to local community newsletters based on the teachers' descriptions of what is occurring in class
- Arrange advertisements within budget
- Review preschool material for updates
- Arrange new printing when necessary

DUTIES

Class Representative

- Act as a liaison between parents in your class, the board members and teachers
- Ensure each parent has signed up for a snack day once per cycle
- Encourage parents to fill in evaluation forms, attend events, etc.
- Help parents find a substitute if they are unable to bring a snack on their day

Classroom Cleaners

- Clean the preschool in pairs once every 6 weeks (each volunteer will be responsible for one cleaning session)
- All cleaners will be responsible to attend the final clean-up day in June

Craft Preparation

- Prepare crafts as per teachers' request
- Coordinate reminders to parents to bring in requested items

Field Trip Coordinators

- Work with teachers to explore field trip ideas
- Work with teachers to book field trips
- Post bright, eye-catching posters/sign-up sheets at school informing parents of upcoming field trips

Fundraising Coordinators

- Work as a team to coordinate the preschool's annual fundraisers
- Research and present fundraising choices at September or November's board meeting
- Run fundraiser

Laundry

- Launder items for preschool upon teachers' request

Party Planners

- Assist teachers in planning and coordinating various parties throughout the year
- Organize volunteers
- This position will only be filled once the others are filled

Playdough

- Make playdough upon teachers' request

- Playdough recipe is available online

Repairs

- Complete repairs as necessary and/or arrange for a professional to complete

Scholastic Book Coordinator

- Coordinate Scholastic Book sales
- Distribute order forms in mailboxes, collect and place orders
- Distribute books to teachers to hand out to students

Shoppers

- Shop for supplies upon teachers' request and submit receipts to Treasurer for reimbursement

Parent Substitute

- Substitute for aid if they are unavailable for the class.
- Substitute for other parents when they cannot provide the healthy snack (this position requires a parent who is always available on short notice)

Substitute Teacher

- Fill in for teachers in cases of illness and vacations
- Need to have current first aid certificate
- Need to have a level 2 in ELCC or a Child Development Worker certification

Year-End Financial Review

- Review the preschool's financial statements for the year

PRESCHOOL POLICIES & PROCEDURES

DROP OFF/PICK UP POLICY

Parents are asked to call the preschool 15 minutes before class starts if their child is coming in late or will be absent for the day.

When picking up and dropping off your child please ensure that you sign them in and out on the sign-in sheet located outside the classroom door. Only people on the pick-up list will be allowed to pick up your child. If a person needs to be added to the list, please give a written note to the teacher (this note will be attached to your child's file).

If you know in advance that you will be late from picking up your child from preschool, please arrange with another parent or your alternative pick up person to come and get your child. If you are running late due to unforeseen circumstances (traffic/accident), please call the preschool immediately to let the teacher know and to make other arrangements.

If a parent is late and the preschool has not received a phone call from that parent, the teacher/parent helper will:

- a. Try to contact parents at home and work.
- b. Try to contact emergency contact/pick-up people.
- c. If after 10 minutes of no contact a late fee of \$1 per minute (payable directly to the teacher/parent helper) will be charged until your child is picked up.
- d. After 15 minutes of no contact the teacher/parent helper will begin to make alternate arrangements for your child (i.e. transporting the child to another location).
- e. After 30 minutes, if the preschool cannot reach anyone to pick up the child, Child and Family Services and Calgary Police will be contacted.

Parents who are consistently late in picking up their child from the preschool will have their child's enrollment terminated.

ILLNESS POLICY

Please call the preschool if your child will be away due to an illness. Children should not be at school if:

- Child is vomiting, has a fever, diarrhea or a new unexplained rash or cough.
- Child requires greater attention than can be provided without compromising the care of other children in the class.
- Child displays any other illness or symptoms that may indicate they pose a health risk to the other children and the teacher.

We are required to report suspected outbreaks to the Alberta Health Region. If you are calling/emailing a teacher at Willow Park Preschool to report that your child will not attend due to illness please:

1. Be specific about the symptoms they are displaying (e.g. diarrhea, vomiting, fever, cough, rash etc.)
2. Report whether there is an explanation for the symptom (i.e. reaction to food, allergy, new perfume/product being used)
3. When the symptoms first appeared
4. Whether or not you have consulted a doctor, if so what the doctor said.

In the event that a child becomes ill at school, the preschool requires that the child be immediately removed from the vicinity of other students. If the parent of the child is not present, the child will be taken to a quiet area of the preschool, made comfortable, and directly supervised by the teacher. The teacher will have the parent helper notify the child's parents or alternate contact persons.

Should a child become sick with a contagious disease, the parent/guardians must notify the preschool within 24 hours so the staff can inform other families and Public Health. The sick child should have a doctor's approval in writing before returning to the preschool in the case where the illness was a contagious disease. Ultimately the care of the child is the parent's responsibility.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

I. Evacuation

In cases where the building needs to be evacuated (i.e. fire drill) children will be directed to line up, single file, in front of the Preschool door. The Parent Helper is to lead the group (walking, not running) in exiting the building. The Teacher will ensure that the portable emergency records for children present at preschool that day will be taken on their person before exiting the building. Children, parents and the Teacher are to meet in the field beside the skating rink. The Teacher is to take roll call to ensure everyone has been evacuated and is accounted for. In the event of a real emergency (i.e. fire), the children will be taken to **Mapleridge Elementary School**, located at 10203 Maplemont Road SE, and parents will be contacted immediately.

II. Injuries

If a student becomes injured while at preschool, the teacher will immediately assess the situation and treat the child's injuries, with basic first aide. If injuries are severe and require immediate medical attention, the paramedics will be called and your child will be transported by ambulance (if deemed necessary) to a medical facility accompanied by the Teacher or the Parent Helper. Parents of the injured child will be responsible for any costs incurred.

BEHAVIOUR POLICY

The preschool's philosophy and practices with regard to guidance and discipline are always based on a positive, non-punitive approach. Behavior management is a process by which children develop socially acceptable and appropriate behavior patterns. In cases where 'discipline' is needed, our teachers will acknowledge feelings, set limits, offer appropriate choices, and use natural and logical consequences. It will be a positive learning experience and reinforce appropriate behavior.

If behavior is more significant, the following management action will be taken:

- a. For acts of aggression and fighting (i.e. biting, hitting, etc.): the children will be immediately separated and comfort and care/treatment for the injured child will be provided.
- b. The child is removed from the situation to allow them time to calm down.
- c. The teacher will then discuss with the child as to why he/she was removed.
- d. Depending on the regularity of the misbehavior, privilege loss may be used as a management tool.
- e. A report will be written about the incident and will then be discussed with the parent.

If aggressive and/or disruptive behavior continues to the point that other children's safety is in question or the teacher feels the behavior is affecting their ability to teach, the parent will be asked to choose between removal of their child from the program or attendance with their child in all classes for a two week period to help their child feel secure and aid in properly addressing any further incidences. After the two week period the child's suitability for remaining in the program will be discussed with the board, parents and teacher.

MEDICATION POLICY

Should it become necessary for your child to be given medication at the preschool, parents must adhere to the following guidelines:

- a. If your child requires medicine or has any medication in their backpacks, whether prescription or over the counter, such as Tylenol or Aspirin, regardless of whether or not it is to be administered at the school, it must be accompanied with the appropriate completed medical form, and in its original container identifying the medicine, the child's name, doctor's name, dosage and be up to date (i.e. not expired). These forms are available from your Preschool teacher.
- b. If your child's backpack contains medication, you must hang the backpack on one of the high hooks in the coat area.

SCHOOL CLOSURES

If we need to close the preschool due to circumstances beyond its control (such as an ill teacher and no substitute nor parent helper), every effort will be made to notify parents as soon as possible. In cases of extreme weather the preschool will be closed if the Calgary Board of Education and the Catholic System have cancelled classes. Missed classes will not be made up.

BATHROOM PROCEDURES

Willow Park Preschool prefers that children be toilet trained before attending classes. We understand that this is a learning process and as such your child may attend in training pants if need be.

Children will be taken to the bathroom at their request but cannot be physically helped with the toileting process. You may find it easiest to have them go to the bathroom before school starts to promote their ability to stay clean.

If your child has a urine accident at school they will be helped to clean up and put on the change of clothes you have provided. If your child has a feces accident at school, you will be telephoned to come and clean them up before they can return to playing.

FIELD TRIPS & EVENTS

There will be several field trips and events scheduled throughout the year. Parents/caregivers are responsible for both transporting and supervising their children at any trip/event. Siblings may attend most of the field trips/events but again supervision is the responsibility of the parent and we ask they do not interfere with the learning experience of enrolled students.

Field trips/events are often shorter than a regular class and children do not attend school before or afterwards. Information about field trips will also be provided as posters at the preschool.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

Each month the teachers will send out a class calendar by email. They will also be posted on our school website and FaceBook. The calendar includes important information about what is happening at school. It also includes instructions about field trips, any special items your child will need to bring to school and any school closures, holidays or events.

DRESS & BACKPACKS

Children are encouraged to wear play clothes and comfortable indoor shoes. Daily activities include active and messy play and the children should feel comfortable enough to enjoy themselves without worrying about their clothes. Hats are allowed in the classroom, provided they remain on your child's head for the duration of class, should the hat become a distraction it will be put away until pick -up. In addition, we ask that parents send your child to school with a backpack that includes the following items:

- Indoor shoes
- Extra clothes and underwear
- Any medication that is to be administered to your child. (Please ensure to hang your child's backpack on one of the high hooks if it contains medication.)

BIRTHDAYS

You are welcome to provide a special treat on your child's birthday. We ask that you send smaller sized portions such as mini cupcakes. Again these must be nut free. Another idea to consider is donating a book to the classroom in your child's name on their birthday. June and summer birthdays will be spread out over the last 8 weeks as "unbirthdays" so that the children are not having treats every day.

FUNDRAISERS

Each year we do one or two fundraisers for the preschool. This allows the teachers to buy materials and supplies for the classroom. Two parent volunteers will organize the fundraiser. Please forward suggestions for fundraisers to the fundraising coordinators.

SCHOLASTIC BOOK SALES

Our preschool takes part in the Scholastic Book Club. This is a great way to start or expand your home library, as the books are very affordable. Scholastic sales also benefit the classroom, as the teachers will receive credits towards purchasing classroom books and materials. A parent volunteer will be in charge of scholastic book sales for our school. Scholastic orders are payable by cheque or credit card. Order forms will be distributed by the teachers each month.