



# Parent Handbook



## WELCOME

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

## INTRODUCTION TO WILLOW PARK PRESCHOOL

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 **play-based learning** 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. Our program uses an emergent curriculum that continuously evolves to meet children's ever-changing interests and we also aim to ensure we are meeting each child where they are developmentally.

A key component to the successful running of our school is parental involvement. Parents are required to contribute to the school in a variety of ways ranging from classroom helper to holding 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 MORNING PROGRAM

**Days:** Tuesdays & Thursdays (Sept – June)

**Time:** 9:00 am - 11:30 am

**Monthly Fees:** \$125 per month (subject to government affordability grant eligibility)

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.

Using an emergent-based curriculum, children are provided with opportunities to be active participants in their learning process, through a balance of structured and unstructured child-led and educator-led activities, supported by a play-based approach.

#### **FOUR-YEAR-OLD PRE-KINDERGARTEN MORNING PROGRAM**

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

**Time:** 9:00 am - 11:30 am

**Monthly Fees: \$175 per month (subject to government affordability grant eligibility)**

The focus of the four-year-old program, builds on the skills of the three-year old program, continuing to stimulate social growth while beginning to prepare students academically for the rigors of kindergarten. Using an emergent-based curriculum, children are provided with opportunities to be active participants in their learning process, through a balance of structured and unstructured child-led and educator-led activities, supported by a play-based approach.

#### **THREE AND FOUR-YEAR-OLD COMBINED FULL TIME PROGRAM (AM)**

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

**Time:** 9:00 am - 11:30 am

**Monthly Fees: \$300 per month (subject to government affordability grant eligibility)**

This full time program will run 5 days a week for parents who want to immerse their children in the preschool experience and give them exposure to socialize and learn between ages. It will work to stimulate social growth while eventually preparing students academically for the rigors of kindergarten. Using an emergent-based curriculum, children are provided with opportunities to be active participants in their learning process, through a balance of structured and unstructured child-led and educator-led activities, supported by a play-based approach.

#### **THREE AND FOUR-YEAR-OLD COMBINED FULL TIME PROGRAM (PM)**

**Days:** Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays (Sept – June)

**Time:** 12:00 pm - 3:15 pm

**Monthly Fees: \$350 per month (subject to government affordability grant eligibility)**

This full time program will run 4 days a week with an additional 45 minutes each day for parents who want to immerse their children in the preschool experience and give them exposure to socialize and learn between ages. It will work to stimulate social growth while eventually preparing students academically for the rigors of kindergarten. Using an emergent-based curriculum, children are provided with opportunities to be active participants in their learning process, through a balance of structured and unstructured child-led and educator-led activities, supported by a play-based approach.

#### **KINDERGARTEN AFTERNOON PROGRAM (4.5-5.5 YEAR OLDS)**

**Days:** Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays & Thursdays (Sept – June)

**Time:** 12:00 pm - 3:15 pm

**Monthly Fees: \$350 (subject to government affordability grant eligibility)**

This program will guide children using an emergent curriculum in a way that builds confidence, independence, and familiarity with Kindergarten and other school routines, as well as navigating peer relationships and expressing self-identity. Through a mix of play-based and structured activities based on children's interests and abilities, children are challenged in age and developmentally appropriate ways that will extend what they are learning at school. Our program supplements classroom and community learning by strengthening social skills, early literacy, and numeracy. Our goal is

to help children feel capable and independent, curious, and excited about their learning journey all while having fun in a safe and nurturing environment. This program can also act as a bridge between preschool and Kindergarten for those children who are too young to enrol in a school that particular school year but seek challenges beyond preschool programming.

## ENROLLMENT/REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Enrollment in Willow Park Preschool is open to all children ages 3 through 5.5 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 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 required fees (processing, first months tuition and cleaning deposit) have been paid. An email will be sent to confirm enrollment and parents will receive an email near the start of school informing them of class start time, first parent meeting and their volunteer position.

You will receive a Registration Check-List that streamlines all the registration information and required fees.

## REGISTRATION PROCESS

Registration begins in January and may be an ongoing process throughout the year, depending on class sizes. We prefer registration information to be submitted online. The link to complete required registration information can be found here: [2026-2027 Registration Form](#)

*If you would prefer to complete a paper registration form, please contact us, and we will send one out to you.*

## REGISTRATION FEES

*\*We prefer to receive all registration fees via e-transfer. However, if you prefer to complete cheques, please coordinate with us to arrange a drop-off.\**

There is a one time processing fee of \$75 that is due upon registering your child in the program. This fee is nonrefundable. We also require the first month's tuition fees, dated August 1st. This fee is also non-refundable unless a month's written notice is given. If you decide not to enroll your child at Willow Park Preschool we would need to be notified in writing by August 1st. **If notice is not provided, you are responsible for the first month's fee.** It is the discretion of the board to refund this fee if another student fills your child's space.

## CLEANING DEPOSIT

Part of registration includes a \$100 Cleaning Deposit to be returned upon completion of cleaning duties/time. Parents who are scheduled for a cleaning time and are unable to attend are responsible for finding a replacement. If your scheduled cleaning night is missed with no replacement schedule, your \$100 deposit will not be returned. If you do not intend to fulfill your cleaning duties, please let us know in advance so that we can make alternate arrangements. We will send out an email to sign up for monthly deep cleanings of the preschool closer to the start of the school year.

## LATE PAYMENT OF FEES

There will be a \$25 NSF fee charge for all NSF cheques or AFT.

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 when withdrawing a child from the program. If a child is withdrawn without advance 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 withdraw the October payment, and refund ½ of the amount once the payment 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 INFORMATION NIGHT

There will be a **mandatory** parent information night on Tuesday September 1<sup>st</sup> at 7 pm in the preschool. One person from each family **MUST ATTEND** to go over policies and procedures and to ensure all volunteer positions are filled.

## PRESCHOOL POLICIES & PROCEDURES

### DROP OFF/PICK UP POLICY

Parents are asked to email the preschool teachers – [willowparkpreschoolteachers@gmail.com](mailto:willowparkpreschoolteachers@gmail.com) - 15 minutes before class starts if their child is coming in late or will be absent for the day.

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 teachers (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 get your child.

If you are running late due to unforeseen circumstances (traffic/accident) please notify the school immediately to let the teachers know and to make other arrangements.

If a parent is late and the preschool has not received a phone call from that parent, the teachers/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. Late fees are payable through e-transfer and will be charged at the end of each month.
- d. After 45 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 email the schoolteachers ([willowparkpreschoolteachers@gmail.com](mailto:willowparkpreschoolteachers@gmail.com)) if your child will be away due to an illness.

Please note that children will not be accepted into care with symptoms of illness. Children are required to be healthy in order to participate in the program and to keep all others in the program healthy as well. This includes any child who is requiring greater care and attention than can be provided without compromising the care of other children in the program.

While the children are in attendance in preschool, the teachers will observe and monitor the children's health and wellness. If a child appears to be ill with any symptoms, the program will notify the parents and request that the child be removed from the program immediately. If the parent cannot be contacted, then an emergency contact person will be contacted.

#### SYMPTOMS INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:

- fever of 37.5C and/or chills
- vomiting and/or diarrhea
- lethargy
- onset aches and pains
- unexplained rash
- sore throat and/or swollen glands
- runny nose and/or congestion
- coughing and/or wheezing
- difficulty breathing

- headache
- ear pain
- itchy, pink/red, or painful eyes

If a child becomes ill with symptoms while at the program, the child will be taken to a separate space and the parent will be notified to come and pick up the child immediately. If a separate room is not available, the child will be kept distanced as much as possible from the other children. The teachers will continue to care for your child, until a parent or an authorized person is able to arrive at the program.

The program will refer to AHS and 811 for current information in reference to any common childhood diseases and/or communicable disease and carry out appropriate protocols as advised.

Once a child is removed from preschool due to illness, they will not be able to return until they are well and the program is satisfied that they do not pose a health threat to other children. **A child may return to the program after being completely symptom free for a minimum of 24 hours, without the aid of medications, or with a doctor's note.**

We are required to report suspected outbreaks to the Alberta Health Region. If you are notifying Willow Park Preschool 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.

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

### I. Evacuation

Children are familiarized with emergency evacuations procedures throughout the year through the practice of fire drills. In cases where the building needs to be evacuated, children will be directed to line up in single file in front of the classroom door. The teachers will lead the group in a calm and orderly fashion to exit the building. The teachers will ensure they have the attendance for the day, the portable emergency records for children, a first aid kit and any emergency medications. The group will meet at the Muster Point beside the skating rink. The teachers will perform regular headcounts and take attendance 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 a safe location, and parents will be contacted immediately. Parents will be given the location in their important information pack received at the first parent meeting.

### II. Injuries

If a student becomes injured while at school, the teacher will immediately assess the situation and treat the child's injuries, with basic first aid. 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 a teacher or parent helper. Parents will be notified as soon as the situation allows. Parents of the injured child will be responsible for any costs incurred.

## MEDICATION POLICY

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

1. Willow Park Preschool will only administer emergency medication (such as as needed inhalers, epipen, or other preventative/emergency medications). If your child requires medicine or has any medication in their backpacks, 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 child's teacher.
2. If your child's backpack contains medication, you must notify your child's teacher and hang the backpack above your child's cubby out of reach of all children.
3. **It is advised that if your child requires emergency medication parents provide additional medication that can stay at the Preschool with staff at all times.** This will be locked and inaccessible for children and only taken out in emergencies and on field trips.

**Commented [1]:** We are wondering if this is something we can update.  
Ideally, parents would provide emergency medication to us at the beginning of the year and it stays at the preschool in our emergency backpack. This ensures we always have it and there is never a risk of us forgetting to grab it in the case of an evacuation.

## BEHAVIOUR POLICY

Willow Park Preschool strives to provide a positive environment for the social and emotional growth of each child registered. Each child is an individual and the school program shall be planned with the flexibility to accommodate the individual needs of each child. A child cannot have a positive experience in an environment in which he/she feels threatened, it is the expectation that each member will remain with their child until that child is secure.

If the behavior of one child is interfering with the rights of others, any action taken will be of a positive nature. As such the following approach will be used if a child displays inappropriate behavior:

1. The child will be redirected from the situation until he/she is able to cope.
2. The child will be given a choice of calming measures to help assist them in coping.
3. Return to the regular class once they are calm.

For all instances of aggression in the classroom the previous noted behavior strategy will be employed. This includes child-child, child-teacher, and child-self aggression.

## SCHOOL CLOSURES

If the preschool must close due to circumstances beyond its control (such as an ill teacher and no substitute), 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 requires 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 if they 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 bowel movement accident at school, you will be telephoned to come and clean them up before they can return to playing.

### **SNACKS**

We are a nut free facility, and you will be notified of any other allergy concerns in your child's class. Please bring a healthy snack for your child in a snack kit labelled with your child's name. Please ensure that this snack does not require refrigeration or reheating and is easy for the child to serve themselves. Labelled water bottles are also required to be brought by each student.

### **IN-CLASS EXPERIENCES & FIELD TRIPS**

We will aim to provide exciting in-class experiences and/or field trips for your child. This can range from anything such as a visit from Santa to the chance to see a firetruck up close, or a visit to the local library. Siblings may attend most of the experiences but again supervision is the responsibility of the parent, and we ask they not interfere with the learning experience of enrolled students. In the case of an off-site experience, transportation is the sole responsibility of the family. Events and outings will be communicated to families in advance and permission forms (for off-site) will be provided. Some in-class experiences may require a small fee depending on the activity.

### **SCHOOL CALENDAR**

Each month the teachers will send out a class calendar by email. 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 & BELONGINGS**

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. **In cold weather months, please ensure children have appropriate outerwear in case of fire drills and emergencies.**

In addition, we ask that parents send your child to school with a backpack that includes the following **clearly labelled** items:

- Indoor shoes (these can remain in the classroom)
- Extra clothes and underwear
- Any medication that is to be administered to your child. (Please ensure to hang your child's backpack above your child's cubby if it contains medication.)
- A water bottle. **Please no juice or milk.**

We respectfully request that toys and other special items remain at home to ensure they remain safe unless it has been communicated to be Show & Tell or other special day.

### **BIRTHDAYS**

You are welcome to provide a store bought, unopened special treat for 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.

## FUNDRAISER

Each year we do multiple fundraisers for the preschool. These fundraisers help enrich the classroom experience and provide additional learning opportunities for our students. Parent volunteers are required to organize the fundraisers. 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.

## PARENT COOPERATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

### PRESCHOOL POSITIONS

All parents are required to sign up for one or multiple duties that help the preschool run smoothly. To sign up for a role 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 at the first parent meeting. Below is a list of the different positions and their responsibilities.

### **BOARD POSITIONS** \*All board positions must be filled for the preschool to run\*

#### **President**

- Chair board and parent meetings
- Liaise with teachers regarding classroom needs
- Liaise with licensing regarding requirements
- Supervise teachers as per licensing requirements
- Answer school emails
- Oversee operation of preschool
- Sign cheques
- Arrange teacher evaluations
- Coordinate substitute teachers if necessary
- Liaise with parents as necessary
- Submit monthly government grants
- Review the school's financial statements for the year

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

- **Will become President in the next school year when child is in 4-year-old program)**
- Chair board and parent meetings that the President cannot attend
- Coordinate enrollment for the year in which you will be president
- Liaise with teachers regarding classroom needs
- Coordinate volunteers
- Supervise teachers as per licensing requirements
- Oversee operation of preschool

- Have signing authority
- Liaise with parents as necessary
- Assist President in submitting grant applications
- Review the school's financial statements for the year

#### **Treasurer**

- Attend all parent and board meetings
- Collect and deposit monthly tuition fees
- Maintain the bank account (ie: checking for NSF cheques)
- Contact parents for late payments
- Receive expense forms from the teachers/Shoppers/Board members/approved activities and write reimbursement cheques
- Liaise with the bookkeeper/accountant to give monthly receipts etc. for bookkeeping purposes
- Liaise with accountant for year-end statements
- Perform initial year-end review of financial statements
- Calculate and deliver payroll
- Review the school's financial statements for the year

#### **Secretary**

- Attend all Parent and Board meetings and take accurate, detailed minutes, regarding the meetings' events
- Send out notices of meetings times, book rooms
- Assist in the registration process
- Maintain preschool contact list
- Edit minutes as needed and send to the President in a timely manner, for distribution to necessary parties
- Assist President/Vice President with clerical duties (ie: scanning forms, photocopying as needed, etc.)
- Review the school's financial statements for the year

#### **Social Media / Marketing Coordinator**

- Handle marketing matters such as signage and marketing material
- Manage and run the social media accounts (ie. Facebook, Instagram)
- Manage and update the website as required (Wordpress)

#### **Fundraising Coordinator**

- Coordinate the school's annual fundraisers.
- Oversee planning of the Preschool Dance. The Preschool dance is our main source of fundraising and is a great chance to engage with our community at large
- Research and present fundraising choices by September or November parent meeting
- Report to the board for approval for reporting on fundraising activities
- Attend board meetings as requested to discuss fundraising initiatives
- Provide direction, communication and assignment of duties to the fundraising team

#### **VOLUNTEER POSITIONS** (Non-board positions)

##### **Classroom Substitute (2 required per class)**

- Help out as substitute teacher when one preschool teacher is ill
- Follow direction of preschool teacher
- Must be available to come in at short notice

**Deep-Cleaning coordinator and Playdough Maker (1 required; ideally one position is a returning parent familiar with deep cleaning routine)**

- Send out survey to all parents to create cleaning schedule
- Send out reminders to the team about their cleaning dates
- Help find substitute cleaners or hire cleaners if cleaning team is unable to make it to scheduled cleaning
- Let the cleaning team into the building/ coordinate key drop-off and pick up
- Show the cleaning team where cleaning supplies are and how to do deep clean
- Make play dough as per recipe upon teacher's request
- Play dough recipe is available online

**In-class Experience Coordinators (1 required)**

- Work with teachers to explore in-class experience ideas (visits from Santa, visiting "Mad Scientist," fire truck tours, traveling library, etc).
- Book in-class experiences and communicate with parents about upcoming in-class experiences

**Preschool Dance Organizers (3 required)**

- Work under the direction of the Fundraising coordinator to **prepare, advertise and implement** the preschool dance
- Organize extra volunteers as needed
- Arrange donation items for *silent auction*
- The preschool dance requires a theme, donations, decorations, DJ, equipment, etc. If there's a specific task you would like to do in regards to the dance, you can decide that with the other dance organizers and the fundraising coordinator

**Fundraising Team (3 required)**

- Work with the fundraising coordinator on the school's main fundraisers
- Must be available to assist with sorting and packaging fundraising items when they arrive at the preschool
- Required to help the preschool dance organizers as needed