

Crossroads Community Preschool
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Welcome to Crossroads Community Preschool. This will likely be your child's first experience in a school setting and we sincerely hope to make it a fun, enjoyable and rewarding experience for you both.

The Parent Handbook has been compiled to help familiarize you with the workings, rules and regulations of our preschool. This is meant to be a general guide. If you have specific concerns please contact the preschool teacher or the preschool director.

Revised April 2018

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Part I

Enrollment Requirements

General

- Crossroads Community Preschool will not assist children with toileting; therefore, it is preferred that children are toilet trained prior to entering the program.
- **Your child must be 3-years-old when they start preschool.** However, registration can take place before they are 3-years-old.
- Your child must be 4-years-old by February 28th to register in the 4-year-old program. If your child is going to attend ECS the following September, then it is recommended that your child enroll in the 4-year-old program.
- Parent participation is **MANDATORY**. The school operates with a ratio of one teacher and one parent helper per sixteen children. Each helper must be able to aid in the classroom and provide a nutritious snack for all the children. If this is not upheld, **a \$50 fee will be charged per class to a maximum of \$200 per year. If this occurs, registration for the following year will be nullified.**

*****Parent participation for our annual Death By Chocolate fundraiser is in addition to classroom volunteering.**

Registration Requirements

Registration is ongoing for the current academic year. Registration for the upcoming academic year (i.e., fall) is open to our current registrants first. The order of registrants is as follows:

1. Current 4-year-olds will be offered spots in the 4-year-old program first (in case any may be returning)
2. Current 3-year-olds will be offered spots in the 4-year-old program and 3-year-old program if they are attending 5 days per week.
3. Families residing in the Mayland Heights and Vista Heights areas.
4. Families residing in any area outside of the community.

If a child is in a morning 3-year-old class, they are **NOT** automatically registered in the morning 4-year-old class. The registration is open to all the classes and they are accepted into a class on a first come, first serve basis.

Parents can hold a spot for the fall by paying a \$30.00 registration fee and filling out all the registration forms. This fee is non-refundable and BINGO CREDITS CAN NOT BE USED TO PAY THIS FEE. All registration forms must be completed in full. As well, a copy of your child's birth certificate, Alberta Health Care Card and up-to-date Immunization Records will need to be provided.

Following the initial registration, each family who has preregistered will receive the current Parent Handbook with the Parental Agreement. As well, an interview time will be provided whereby payment will be collected. Payment can be made by **Visa, Mastercard, American Express, and Discover. There is a fee of 2.75% per transaction. Credit cards can only be used if you are paying all the fees at once. Automatic withdrawal on a monthly basis is the only other form of payment.** In order to set up automatic withdrawal, a VOID cheque must be presented AND an authorization form filled out at this time.

Payment Schedule

Payments will be withdrawn on the 1st of the month for the following amounts:

| | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| 2 classes per week | \$100.00/month |
| 3 classes per week | \$150.00/month |
| 5 classes per week | \$250.00/month |

NSF Payments

You are allowed only one NSF payment. Reimbursement of the NSF payment and the NSF charge must be paid in cash or with a money order. Your child will not be permitted to attend classes until the NSF payment and charge have been paid in full. Additional NSF payments will result in a required meeting with the teacher and the treasurer.

Refunds

No refunds will be given for days missed. This includes scheduled holidays, illness, or cancellation of classes. If you wish to withdraw your child from the program, one (1) month written notice is required otherwise you will be charged.

Extended Absences

If a child is away for more than a month (4 weeks or more) parents have two options:

Option 1: To hold their child's spot, parents can continue to pay the monthly fee.

Option 2: Parents can withdraw their child (one month advance notice is required). Re-admittance into the program will be based on availability.

School Calendar

In general, the preschool will be in session from September to June and will follow the Calgary Board of Education's vacation schedule or school closures.

Class Times

3-year-olds

| | | |
|----|-------------------------|----------------|
| 3A | Tuesday and Thursday AM | 9:00 – 11:30am |
| 3B | Tuesday and Thursday PM | 12:00 – 2:30pm |

4-year-olds

| | | |
|----|------------------------------|----------------|
| 4A | Monday, Wednesday, Friday AM | 9:00 – 11:45am |
| 4B | Monday, Wednesday, Friday PM | 12:15 – 3:00pm |

Part II

THE PROGRAM

Transportation

Parents are responsible for bringing their child to school, and for picking their child up at the appropriate time. No bus or car pool is provided by the school.

Parking may be limited at times due to community hall rentals. Parking is not always guaranteed.

Arriving and Departing from Class

You are required to bring your child into the entrance and get him/her ready to start class. (e.g., remove jackets and backpacks). **THE CHILDREN ARE NOT TO BE LEFT ALONE UNTIL THE DOOR IS OPEN.** Please remain in the hallway until the door is open.

Each child is to be signed in and out by the person dropping off the child and picking the child up.

“Kiss and GO” policy. Please drop your child off at the door, so that he/she can independently take part in opening procedures. The reason for this is to help with separation anxiety for parents and children. As well as to prepare for kindergarten.

Please ensure your child is on time for class. Punctuality is important! Tardiness disrupts the class and your child may miss important skills. All doors are locked during class time for safety purposes.

Please use the rear, far east door only.

When picking up your child, please wait in the back hallway until the teacher opens the door. At the end of class, children will remain on the carpet until they are called to the door once the parent/guardian has arrived. Please send your child back to the carpet if s/he has not yet been called.

If you are consistently late in picking up your child, a fee may be charged at the Pre-school Board's discretion; this fee must be paid in full before your child can resume classes.

Only those identified on the registration form will be allowed to pick up your child, otherwise identification may be required.

Preschool News

A monthly newsletter plus a weekly email will outline important dates, the helper schedule and any other pertinent information. A monthly calendar will be sent home in a paper copy. It is important that you take time to read the newsletter, as it will contain all the current preschool news. **The bulletin board, located in the entrance hallway, is also used to relay preschool news and happenings. Please take the time to check this area.** Translation information can be provided.

Preschool news is also available on the website www.crossroadspreschool.ca

Your Child's Progress

Please feel free to speak with the teacher about your child anytime except during class time. The end of class is always a good time or a prearranged time. Should a situation arise that cannot be resolved by either you or the teacher, the matter will be brought to the Board's attention. Children in the program who present a situation that cannot be resolved will be withdrawn from the program, subject to the Board's discretion.

Observational assessments of your child's progress will be provided twice a year and a formal assessment will be completed with your child and myself at the end of the year. Optional parent/teacher interviews will be offered three times a year.

Health

If your child has an allergy or a food restriction that seriously affects his/her ability to consume a variety of snacks, you must provide a snack from home.

The teacher can administer medication only if written permission and authorization by a physician is received.

Please do not bring a sick child to school. According to the Child Care Licensing Regulations, an ill child is defined as a child who:

- a) is vomiting, has a fever, diarrhea, or a new, inexperienced rash or cough;
- b) requires greater attention than can be provided without compromising the care of other children in the program; or
- c) displays any other illness or symptom the teacher knows or believes may indicate that the child poses a health risk to other children.

A child can return to the program when the child's parent provides written notice from a physician indicating that the child does not pose a health risk, or if the license holder/provider is satisfied that the child no longer poses a health risk to the other children or staff.

In order for the preschool to prevent the spread of germs, a weekly cleaning schedule is in effect whereby toys are cleaned on a rotation basis, large and major cleaning surfaces are disinfected, and all door handles or areas which are in constant physical contact with the children are sanitized. Hand washing is also encouraged as often as needed.

Emergency Procedures

In case of emergency (e.g., power failure, water main break, fire, etc.), the children will be taken to Belfast Elementary School, located at 1229 17A St NE. , the school directly to the south of the community hall. Children will be escorted to the school by the teacher and volunteer parent(s). You will receive a call from a parent to pick up your child from a designated spot at the Belfast Elementary School. The teacher will remain with those children whose parents cannot be reached.

Fire Drills:

Fire drills will be held at the beginning of the year and periodically throughout the year to acquaint children and volunteers with the procedures involved in an emergency evacuation. Children will line up at one of the four (4) exit doors quickly and quietly. Once they exit the building, they will make their way to the baseball diamond and line up at the far fence. At that time, attendance will be taken. Re-entry into the preschool will only occur after it is safe to do so. If the weather is too cold for children to remain outside, they will be taken inside Belfast Elementary School.

Lock-Down Procedure:

If there is a situation where a lock down procedure needs to be executed, all children, the teacher, and the parent volunteer will file into the furnace room where the door can be locked from the inside.

Medical Emergency:

In case of injury or required hospital or medical treatment, the teacher will call 911 and call parents immediately. The child will go with the paramedics and the teacher will remain with the rest of the children. **The preschool is not responsible for ambulance fees or Stars helicopter.**

Clothing

All children require a backpack with a complete change of clothes (including underwear and socks).

Children must be wearing shoes at all times. Easy on/off shoes such as slip-ons or those with Velcro fastenings are appreciated. If indoor shoes are forgotten, then outdoor shoes will need to be worn.

We recommend that school clothing be:

1. Labeled for identification purposes.
2. Easy to handle (large buttons and buttonholes, underwear convenient for toileting, loops on coats for hanging)
3. Washable, durable, comfortable. Please dress your child in clothing appropriate for the weather

Please dress your child in clothing that can get dirty. The preschool is not responsible for clothing that may get paint, food, marker, glue, etc. on it. The preschool does its best to avoid such situations from arising; however, the preschool is not responsible for replacing any clothing.

Special Days

The teacher makes special recognition of each child's birthday and there will be several holiday parties throughout the year. You will be informed as to when the holiday parties will take place and if any additional parent volunteers, snacks or special items are required.

Discipline Policy

1. Self Concept:
Discipline situations will direct the attention to the child's behavior and not the child as a person. The child will not feel "put down".
2. Limits:
Simple rules represent reasonable expectations of everyone's behavior. The rules will remain consistent.
3. Choices:
Children will always be given a choice, whether in activities or disciplinary situations. They will be encouraged to make positive choices that will benefit themselves and those around them.
4. Logical Consequences:
Logical consequences are predictable and consistent events that are an immediate result of breaking a limit. The consequence will be one that is understood by the child. The child will learn that certain behaviors have logical consequences.
5. Evaluation:
Every situation is unique and different. Each event will take into consideration the particular child's personality and age.
6. Positive Reinforcement:
Praise, affection and privileges will encourage and develop desirable behavior. A positive approach to problems will be taken.
7. Verbal Expression:
Children will learn how to express their feelings of anger and frustration with words instead of physical aggression.
For younger children, some physical acts will need to be interpreted as communication and will be guided within limits of "being kind and careful to people, things and yourself".
8. Redirection:
Children will be redirected, when undesirable behaviors occur. This may include limiting use of relevant equipment if other strategies have proven unsuccessful.

If disciplinary problems persist, they will be discussed with the parents and a plan of action will be put in place for the parents, child and teacher to follow together. This may involve having the parent attend class with their child.

Part III

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Happy Helper Scheduling

It is mandatory that parents involved with Crossroads Community Preschool volunteer in the classroom on a regular basis. There must be a 2:16 adult/child ratio in the classroom at all times. If this is not upheld, classes will be cancelled.

Each class will have a Class Coordinator who is responsible for ensuring that the classroom child/adult ratios are met. A monthly schedule will be on the website where you can sign up for your Happy Helper day (or days). Please sign up promptly so the Class Coordinators **do not** have to phone everyone in order to fill the calendar.

VOLUNTEER BOOKING INFO

Here is a little tutorial about how to book your volunteer day

1. Go to the preschool's website at crossroadspreschool.ca
2. Click on the Parent link in the top right hand corner
3. Enter the following password CRPHelper%*2
4. Choose the calendar for your child's class.
5. Click on the date that you would like to volunteer
6. Fill out the info below the calendar: Parent name, Child name, Email, phone number, and code
7. Wait for confirmation from your classroom coordinator.

SCHEDULING CONFLICTS

If you have a previous commitment or a problem on the day you are scheduled to volunteer, contact another parent and **switch your days or call the Class Coordinator to help you find a replacement. Please do not contact the preschool teacher.** Parents can also use grandparents or nannies as replacement volunteers. All replacement volunteers must sign a Crossroads Community Association Waiver form. Replacement volunteers are expected to be informed of the Happy Helper Duties, Child Security and Safety and Discipline Policy by the parent they are replacing.

If classes were cancelled because you are unable to provide a replacement volunteer, you will be charged a penalty of \$50.00 and your child will not be able to re-enter the program until this fee has been paid in full.

If you do not show up or find a replacement parent for your volunteer day, one warning will be given. If a second occasion arises, your child must leave the program.

HAPPY HELPER MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

| If your child attends: | You need to volunteer: |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 day/week | 3 times/school year |
| 2 days/week | 5 times/school year |
| 3 days/week | 7 times/school year |
| 5 days/week | 12 times/school year |

Happy Helper Duties

- Please expect to stay after class until the last child has been picked up.
- **Please do not bring siblings when you are the Happy Helper. This is against our licensing agreement.**
- Please supply a nutritious snack for all the children on your Happy Helper Day. **The snack should provide one serving from two or more of the basic four food groups.** (See Appendix for more information). Some snack ideas include yogurt, fruit and vegetables, crackers and cheese, muffins, fruit leather and granola bars.
- Cups, plates, napkins, spoons, etc. are provided in the preschool kitchen.
- The Happy Helper is expected to clean up after the snack and wash any dishes there may have been.
- Depending on class size, parents may be required to be Happy Helper more than once a month; however, Happy Helpers are only required to provide snack once a month.
- Please respect quiet times when the teacher is speaking to the children. The children are easily distracted.
- The teacher will inform you of what is required of you on your specific day. **Please check the duty list on the counter upon arrival.** This may include mixing paint, cutting paper, washing toys etc.
- During class time, the teacher will have you doing a wide variety of things. You will be setting up craft and snack materials, assisting the children if necessary, and cleaning up afterwards.
- Before snack, please wash tables with the bleach bottle solution in the kitchen.
- At class end, please sweep the floor and wipe down the placemats and table with the bleach solution,

Foods that are prohibited in the Crossroads Community Preschool are:

- Nuts and seeds
- Hard candies
- Caramels and toffees
- Chewing gum

Special Days

If you wish to bring a special treat on your child's birthday, please sign up to be the Happy Helper on that day or make arrangements with the parent who is scheduled for that day.

Child Security & Safety

Your child's security and safety is very important to Crossroads Community Preschool. For this reason, practices and guidelines have been implemented for staff, volunteers and parents to ensure that children are safe and properly cared for while at Crossroads Community Preschool.

Sign –In/Out Sheets:

Posted in the entrance of the preschool is a Sign-In/Out sheet. Please sign your child in when you bring him/her to school and sign your child out when you pick him/her up.

Staff Screening/Training:

The teacher at Crossroads Community Preschool is required to go through a screening process which includes a Police Security Check and a Child Welfare (Intervention) Record Check.

The teacher at Crossroads Community Preschool is also required to have current First Aid Certification.

Volunteering Guidelines:

Crossroads Community Preschool values “parents as partners” in your child’s first educational experience. No screening is necessary to be a volunteer. Family members may also volunteer if they have signed the parental agreement. Volunteering in the classroom helps to make the classroom a joyful and successful experience for all children at the Preschool.

There are many benefits to volunteering in the classroom

1. You will be able to observe how your child interacts in a group setting.
2. You will be able to observe what typical and atypical behavior looks like.
3. You will gain a better understanding of how the classroom flows.
4. You will be able to learn a language that is spoken at school that may be different than at home.
5. You will have fun!!!! And so much more!!!

Please read over the following guidelines carefully to ensure a successful volunteer experience.

Guidelines for helping children learn in the classroom:

- Be respectful of each child’s individual rate and style of learning.
- Use a soft, friendly voice when volunteering in the classroom.
- Encourage children to do as much of the work as they can. Assist only when you feel a child has done all he or she can, then provide the support the child needs to be successful.
- Give positive encouraging feedback. (see Appendix 1 – Language that Encourages Children)
- Please remember to focus on the children and save adult conversations for after class.
- Be respectful of the privacy of children and their families. Information about individual children is only discussed with the Teacher.
- Be enthusiastic and enjoy the children. Know that your work makes a difference in the lives of the children and adds to the richness of the classroom.

Another aspect of volunteering with young children is the issue of abuse and allegations of abuse. Crossroads Community Preschool does not want either scenario to affect the children or families involved with the preschool. The following guidelines are to protect both children and volunteers.

Guidelines for in the classroom

- Treat children of all races, religions and cultures with respect.
- Inside or outside - children must always be supervised by staff or volunteers.
- Volunteers are not to help children in the restroom. If a child needs assistance contact the teacher.
- No volunteer should ever be in a one-to-one situation with a child.
- First-Aid is to be administered by the teacher not the volunteer.
- Follow the discipline policy as outlined on page 9.
- If an accident occurs, report it immediately to the teacher.
- Question any unknown adult who enters the Preschool or is hanging around the children.
- If anything worries you about the treatment of a child, their behavior or anything else please talk to the teacher.

Thank you for your cooperation in providing a safe environment for the children and families of Crossroads Community Preschool.

Other Expectations

Crossroads Community Preschool is run entirely by the parents of the children attending the school. The only individual in the organization with a salary is the teacher. The success of the school and its program depends on you, the parent. Therefore, we ask that you get involved in any of the following areas.

Administration

We have no paid administrative position in the school. It is run completely by the parents through a Board of Directors (who are volunteer parents). The Board is guided by the Constitution and By-laws provided by the Crossroads Community Association. Any parent, whose child is registered, can volunteer for a position on the Board and as a result, have a voice in the policies of the school.

We have a few different positions available on the Board, most of which require less than 10 hours of work a month. The Board meets once a month to discuss problems, plan the year's events, and implement improvements. If you are unable to fill a position, your support at the board meetings would be appreciated. As a parent run preschool, we greatly depend on your support and welcome your constructive feedback to improve our programming.

Death By Chocolate

Death By Chocolate is an immense fundraiser that the preschool hosts once a year, usually in the Spring. Death By Chocolate was initiated because it was difficult for parents to have many little fundraisers throughout the year, especially for those that have fundraisers for older children in school or sports.

The evening itself requires numerous volunteers, but there are also volunteers needed leading up to the night. We ask that each family commit to some aspect of the fundraiser, big or small. Some examples of ways to get involved are making baskets for the silent auction, being on the Death By Chocolate committee, cleaning tables the night of the event, and prepping the food for the event. Information will be communicated regarding this fundraiser closer to the event. Should you neglect to sign-up for a volunteer position, you will be assigned a duty. If this is not adhered to, a \$50 fee will be added to June's fees.

In previous years, we have raised up to \$15,000. These funds go directly to the preschool for things like classroom supplies, field trips, concerts, graduation, and artists in residence.

Preschool Parent Board Positions

Administrative Director:

This person works closely with the teacher, solving problems and delegating responsibilities to the other Board members. This person also ensures that materials and equipment are available and in good order. The Director will preside at all the Preschool meetings and is also the Preschool official representative in the community and for other situations that may arise. The Administrative Director is required to attend all Preschool Board meetings and Community Association meetings. This position sometimes requires 5+ hours per month.

Creative Director:

This person also works closely with the teacher and the administrative director. This person makes sure all supplies and props are purchased for concerts and other special occasions. The Creative Director is required to attend all Preschool Board Meetings. This position sometimes requires 10+ hours per month.

Secretary:

This person records the minutes of the monthly meetings and he/she is responsible for any other correspondence that the Board may require. The secretary is required to attend all Preschool Board meetings. This position requires about 2 hours per month.

Treasurer:

This person collects and receives all the money for the preschool. The treasurer handles both the monthly fees and the fundraiser account. All deposit and disbursements required by the Board will be handled by the treasurer. This person will keep records of the income and expenses, and will prepare the financial statements. This person will also be responsible for dealing with NSF payments. The Treasurer will attend all Preschool Board meetings. This position may require on average 5 hours per month.

Death By Chocolate Director:

This person oversees our annual fundraiser in the spring. This person coordinates the entertainment, the food, the silent auction and the events of the evening.

Field Trip Coordinator:

This person will organize and implement all field trips and special in-classroom guests that the Board recommends. Planning and booking these special events will be required throughout the entire school year. The Field Trip Coordinator is required to attend all Preschool Board meetings. This position requires on average about 2 hours per month.

Class Coordinator (One per class):

This person will be the liaison between the teacher and their designated class. They will be responsible for making sure their class has a full Happy Helper schedule. He/she will be required to approve bookings online. They will also be required to do fan out calls to parents if a class needs to be cancelled. They will also be required to assemble a basket for our annual Death By Chocolate fundraiser from funds designated by the preschool. These positions require 5 hours per school year.

Class 4A: crossroadspreschool4a@gmail.com

Class 4B: crossroadspreschool4b@gmail.com

Class 3A: crossroadspreschool3a@gmail.com

Class 3B: crossroadspreschool3b@gmail.com

Toy Steward:

This person will be required to once a month clean the toys in the preschool according to Alberta Health Services requirements. This position requires on average 3 hours per month.

Website Coordinator:

This person will be required to update the website on a regular basis with information provided by the teacher. This position requires on average 2 hours per month.

Convenor Writer:

This person will be required to submit an update on the preschool's events to the convenor editor in order to keep the community informed. This position requires on average 1 hour per month.

