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## Welcome to Playschool!

The Ottewell Community League is pleased that your child is registered with our Playschool program and we know that you and your child will have many rewarding experiences while participating in our cooperative Playschool.

The primary purpose of the Ottewell Community League Playschool (OCLP) is to contribute to the development of three and four year old children by providing opportunities for the child to develop socially, physically, mentally and emotionally in an atmosphere which is interesting, stimulating and fun.

## Hours of Operation

The Playschool year begins in September and continues through to mid-June. A morning class will operate from 8:40 a.m. to 11:10 a.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays. New children will be accepted in September and January as space permits. Pre-registration is accepted throughout the year for the upcoming term, if space is available.

OCLP follows Braemar's School Calendar; accordingly, operating hours are subject to school closures as scheduled (i.e., Christmas Break, Spring Break, Easter, etc.). Notice will be given to parents well in advance.

In the event of an unexpected situation, the President and Vice-President will determine if Playschool classes are required to be cancelled (i.e., bad weather, facility problems, etc.). Our cold weather policy is that we will evaluate the operation of the class when the temperature reaches -22 degrees Celsius (including wind chill). Please be prepared on these days for class to be cancelled. Parents will be contacted immediately by phone via the Phoning and/or Executive committee's members.

## Registration Fees

Please refer to the Playschool Registration Guide.

## Playschool Preparation

- **VISITS** – Arrangements can be made with the Registrar and/or Teacher to sit in on a class in progress prior to the school year to acquaint the child with the Teacher and what they might expect in the classroom.
- **TALK** - Explain to your child about what to expect at Playschool during the summer and help keep enthusiasm high!
- **SLEEP & EAT** - Ensure your child has a good night's sleep and balanced meals.



- **REMAIN POSITIVE & PATIENT** – As with any new situation, the first few days of Playschool may bring a feeling of uneasiness to the child (or Mom and Dad!). Some pre-schoolers will find saying good-bye fairly easy while others will not be so sure.

## **Probation Period**

An adjustment period may be necessary for some children to deal with the anxieties of being away from their parent(s). Children will have until the last class in September to adjust to their new environment. Of course, there will be consistent communication regarding a child's progress throughout the probation period between the teacher and a child's parent(s). We believe, in all fairness, if your child has not made significant inroads towards gaining the confidence he/she needs to feel comfortable in our program by the last class in September, that the family will be asked to reconsider their enrollment in the program.

## **Playschool Supplies**

**DRESS FOR THE WEATHER** - Please ensure that your child is properly dressed for indoor/outdoor activities - pre-schoolers may be taken outside for a nature-walk, etc. if the weather is cooperative (i.e., pack warmer sweaters/pants, rubber boots, sun hats, etc.).

**CLASSROOM SHOES** - Shoes that can be left at school are required to be worn inside the school (i.e., runners, non-slip shoes). Braemar maintains a "two pair policy" - outdoor shoes are not worn inside.

**SCHOOL BAG OR KNAPSACK** - To hold extra change of clothes (for spills, warmer clothing, sun hats, etc.) and to fill with crafts, newsletters.

**LABELS** - Clearly label your child's clothing and articles accompanying them – especially her/his shoes.

**TOYS** - Our classroom is well equipped; however, if your child wishes to bring something special to "share", please make sure that she/he understands that it is her/his responsibility to take care of it and that it must be put away after free play time. We ask that violence-oriented toys remain at home.

**NO VALUABLES** - Pre-schoolers are discouraged from bringing valuables to Playschool that may be damaged or lost. Parents are asked to supply only those items recommended on the "Supply List". The Playschool Program cannot be responsible for the loss of, or damage to, any personal valuables.

Our teacher will distribute a list in the fall of additional supplies as required.



## Arrival & Departure

**PLEASE MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO BE ON TIME!** This is a small but significant adjustment period for your child as they begin their transition into their preschool day. A lot of action is going on before class as excited pre-schoolers arrive and parents/guardians organize. *Your child must remain under your supervision until school starts.*

In the hallway there are several details to attend to. You will find your child's name on a locker (to hold shoes, crafts, newsletters, jackets and knapsacks). There will be a Sign-in & Sign-out sheet that a parent/guardian must initial when your child arrives and departs from the classroom.

Prior to the start time of class, Playschool members who require early access to the Classroom are the Duty-Parents, their pre-schoolers and the Teacher. There are many busy tasks to attend to prior to class (please refer to the "Duty-Day" section). Exceptions may occur upon request of the Teacher.

**PLEASE BE PUNCTUAL** when picking up your child at the end of class. Pre-schoolers become upset when a parent/guardian/care-giver is not on time to greet them as the class empties. This can be a traumatic experience for a child. The Teacher and Duty-Parents are not responsible for the pre-schoolers after class.

## Transportation & Parking

We are able to park along 67A Street and 94 Avenue near the school's front entrance. Please do not park in the 5 minute loading zone in front of the school, and please be mindful of neighbourhood houses and leave room for residents to park in front of their homes.

## Identification of Guardians and Care-Givers

For security reasons, the Teacher must be provided with an authorized list of individuals who may be responsible for taking your child to and from Playschool – even if it is just on a casual basis. In the event that you are unable to manage and someone is assisting your child on a particular day, please ensure that this individual is aware that they will be approached for identification purposes. Please understand and cooperate with this safety procedure.

## Child Management Policy

The emphasis of this Playschool will be on taking a positive approach to resolve any inappropriate behavior. "Natural Consequences", "Re-Direction" and in some cases a "Time Out" of two minutes are the accepted methods of dealing with any inappropriate behavior. There will be no physical punishment, verbal, or physical degradation. As well, emotional deprivation is not allowed in this Playschool. No child will be denied any basic necessity and neither will the threat to deny any basic necessity. We do not permit the use of any form of physical restraint, confinement or isolation.



Our methods for handling inappropriate behavior are communicated directly to the children in the classroom and to the parents in this handbook. In the event of a behavior problem with a child, there will be ongoing communication between the teacher & family to resolve the inappropriate behavior.

In order to ensure a positive and safe environment for all the pre-schoolers in the Program, they must be able to cooperate in a group setting. If at any time during the school year a child exhibits repeated aggressive behavior, the child will not be permitted to continue to participate in the Playschool Program.

### **Child Illness**

Please be aware that we follow Alberta Health Services's Immunization Policy. We ask that pre-schoolers have her/his immunizations up-to-date prior to the commencement of Playschool.

Please do not bring sick pre-schoolers to Playschool. In the event that a child begins to feel ill during class, the Teacher will contact a parent/guardian to come and pickup the child. Please ensure that a family contact person (at the phone number given) is available during class hours in the event a phone call home is necessary.

Should a child become sick during the class period, the sick child will be directly supervised by the teacher and will be kept as far away as is practicable from the other children.

Please notify the Teacher at once if your child has contracted a communicable disease (mumps, chicken pox, etc.),

### **Child Medication**

If your child is to receive prescription medicine during the class period, please make the necessary arrangements with the Teacher prior to the commencement of class.

Upon registration, it is required that a written consent form be signed by the Doctor and at least one parent providing the teacher consent to administer the medication. The medication must be provided in its original labeled contained and will be administered according to the labeled direction.

The teacher will ensure that if medication is administered that the following information is recorded: name of medication, time of administration, amount administered, and the initials of the person who administered the medication.

All medication on site will be kept in a locked container that is inaccessible to the children. Emergency medications (for example, EpiPens) will be readily available, but out of reach of the children.



## **Emergency Evacuation**

There are a number of causes that could potentially lead to the evacuation of the school buildings – a major gas leak, a fire, or a total loss of utility services. In the event of an evacuation, the students and staff would relocate to the Ottewell Community League Hall (5920 93A Avenue). We would then allow students to go home provided that a parent or guardian was available to pick them up. This would be verified by telephone. The teacher will take the portable attendance record book during any emergency evacuation. Fire drills will be practiced during the year.

If an emergency evacuation were to occur, the following procedure would be followed.

- The teacher will stand at the front of the classroom and hands raised ask that all children line up single file. Duty Parent(s) will then stand by the door in front of the children.
- The teacher will retrieve the travelling first aid kit, the portable record, and the key to the Community Hall.
- The classroom will be emptied by the teacher holding the door and counting the children as they follow the Duty Parent(s) and head out the emergency exit doors. The teacher will follow out of the classroom and leave the door closed but unlocked.
- The class will continue to the grass and a roll call will be taken using the sign in sheet. Weather permitting; the class will remain outside until given the all clear to return. In incimate weather, the class will immediately relocate to the Ottewell Community League Hall.
- Parents and caregivers will be immediately contacted and the children will be dismissed to their caregivers.
- If any parent is outside the classroom (in the gym or bathroom) with a child or children, they will not return to the classroom they will not return to the classroom but will immediately exit the building via the emergency exit doors. Likewise, if the teacher is out of the class with a child or children, they will immediately exit the building via the emergency exit doors and the Duty Parent(s) will assume the role of the teacher in the classroom evacuation.

## **Accident / Incident Policy**

If an accident were to occur during Playschool hours, the following procedure would be followed. The severity of the situation would dictate the appropriate method of approach.

- Accident requiring immediate medical attention – the teacher or a parent helper and the injured child would proceed to the emergency room until the parent / emergency contact arrives. If an ambulance is required, costs incurred will be the responsibility of the injured child's family.



- Accidents not requiring medical attention – the teacher, trained in First Aid, will attend to the problem. Parents will be notified.
- Accidents causing bumps, bruises, etc. – the teacher will inform a parent / guardian of any accident causing a bump, bruise, etc. upon that parent's arrival.

Should an emergency evacuation, program closure due to an emergency, an intruder on the program premises, a child removed from the program by a person without parent/guardian consent, an injury requiring medical attention, a lost child or a child left on the premises after operating hours will be reported to licensing staff. The incident will be reported within 2 working days.

### **Membership Withdrawal Policy**

Parents who wish to withdraw their child from the program once the term commences must provide the Teacher and/or Registrar with written notice confirming the withdrawal date. This withdrawal notice must come 30 days prior to the first day of the month in which the child will not be in attendance, or a monthly program fee will be applied.

### **Newsletters to Parents**

Our Parent Newsletter is our prime instrument in keeping parents informed about school events. We emphasize to parents/guardian the importance of bringing home the newsletters that are placed into pre-schoolers' mailboxes. The newsletters are sent out on a regular basis. Supplements may be circulated on special occasions (i.e., prior to Christmas, Spring Break, Easter, etc.). We strongly recommend keeping the newsletter on file as a reference.

### **Recycle Policy**

We acknowledge our responsibility to the environment and take steps to reduce, reuse and recycle all materials, especially paper. With cooperation and participation we can maintain an environmentally friendly Playschool.

### **Field Trips (Off-Site Activities)**

In addition to local nature walks, playground time, etc., there will be a number of trips to a variety of interesting and exciting places in Edmonton organized by our teacher. You will receive in advance all details about the Field Trip Day. Pre-schoolers cannot take part in a field trip unless a Release Form has been signed by a parent/guardian. A Release Form will be available on the sign in table the week prior to the field trip. Depending on the distance of the field trip site, transportation will be arranged by yellow school bus (across town) or parent-drivers (nearby).

A sign-up sheet will be posted for parents/guardians to confirm their availability as parent-helpers during an upcoming field trip. Please ensure that your child is suitably dressed for field trips. If last minute changes occur, the executive committee is in place to ensure all families are contacted with the necessary updates.



The teacher will take the portable attendance record book on all off-site activities.

## **Special Occasions & Parties**

Pre-schoolers must be accompanied by a parent/guardian while attending special events (i.e. Christmas Party). Special events are considered everyone's "duty day". It takes co-operation and participation from every family to make these events fun and special for each pre-schooler. Details for these events will be outlined in advance.

## **Birthdays**

Birthdays are treated as special days. Our birthday child receives a small gift and has Happy Birthday sung as she/he blows out candles on our pretend cake. We do our best to coordinate the Duty-Day roster around the birthdays. Normally, the Duty-Parent scheduled that day brings in something special for a snack.

The Duty-Roster Parent will arrange to have a child's birthday (or the nearest possible date) coincide with her/his parent/guardian's duty-day. Should your child's birthday occur during school closures (i.e., Christmas, spring and summer), please arrange an alternate date with the Teacher and Duty-Roster parent.

## **Playschool Executive Committee**

The mandate of the Ottewell Playschool Executive Committee is to oversee all aspects of the Playschool Program's management and administration. The Executive works closely with the Playschool Teacher to ensure that our Program goals are successfully met in the consideration of all members involved.

As neighbors housed within Braemar School, we enjoy a good-working relationship between Executive members and the School Administrators and Support Staff. It is the Executive Committee who will act in the best interest of all members of our Program.

Concerns or issues that arise are asked to be brought to the attention of the Executive Committee for discussion and action as appropriately required. Parents are welcomed to all Executive Committee meetings. Members of the Executive are expected to attend monthly meetings.

As a cooperative, OCLP relies on parents to form the Executive Committee (the administrative guide for the Playschool)

**President:** Liaise between the OCLP Executive Committee, Edmonton Public School Board, Braemar School, and parents. Oversees program operations, licensing, memberships, fundraising, ongoing communications with teacher and parents, assists with determining class schedules, program fees. Chairs all meetings and is co-signer of OCLP accounts.



**Past-President:** Provides continuity between past and current Playschool executives, serves in an advisory capacity, provides historical information and policy interpretation to the Executive Committee.

**Vice-President:** Assists President and Registrar, responsible for cleaning bee schedule, bingo volunteers, ensures parent resource positions are full and operating. Attends Ottewell Community League meetings as 'Program Liaison'. Co-signer of OCLP accounts.

**Treasurer:** Responsible for Playschool funds and program fees, issuing of cheques for Playschool business, balancing OCLP bank statements, keeping a ledger, collecting NSF cheque fees, preparing monthly budgets and an annual budget for the following year. Co-signer of OCLP accounts.

**Registrar:** Arranges registration procedures, compiles and maintains accurate class lists, ensures all required cheques are received, assists in class scheduling, handles all Playschool registration inquiries by phone or in-person and at meetings. Responsible for program advertising.

**Secretary:** Responsible for meeting minutes of OCLP executive meetings and distributing same. Provides clerical support to Executive Committee.

**Fundraising Coordinator:** Responsible for organizing fundraising activities with the help of a fundraising assistant(s), keeps a record of all monies raised, communicates to executives and membership regarding fundraising initiatives.

## Parent Resources

This is a successful parent co-operative Playschool Program. Parents are actively working together and sharing skills to create the best possible experience for the pre-schoolers. To help achieve these goals, each parent is depended upon to assume a role in the Program's operations. This would involve volunteering to *fulfill either an Executive Committee position or a Parent Resource Position* (see below). Other smaller time commitments requested of parent(s) involve:

- duty-days (as scheduled)
- classroom cleaning bee (one per year)
- participation in fundraising projects and special events (seasonal)

NOTE: There are several fundraisers held annually which require the participation of the Playschool's membership to be successful. Mandatory fundraisers have included chocolate almond sales and Christmas raffle tickets. Optional fundraisers may include magazine



sales and catalogue purchases. There will be plenty of planning, involvement and creativity by the fundraiser to ensure that these activities run smoothly and effectively – and remain fun!

- working a community league Bingo (one per year)
- attending OCLP Orientation Meeting (August)

### **Summary of Playschool Class Parent Resource Positions**

These cooperative positions are identified by the Teacher, and will change from year to year as required. If you have a special interest or skill, please make mention of it to the Teacher.

**Craft Cupboard (1 person)** - Maintain the craft supply area.

**Field Trips / Special Events (1 person)** - Works with the Teacher on the scheduling and organizing of field trips; coordinating class & child photos.

**Fundraising / Fundraising Assistant (1-2 persons)** - Responsible for organizing all fundraising activities; keeps accurate records of all monies raised; ensures families are meeting fundraising obligations.

**Help-The-Teacher (1-2 people)** - Cutting, room theme changes, etc.

**Laundry (1 person)** - Launders dish towels, field trip shirts, etc.

**Library (1 person)** - Responsible for withdrawing and returning library books from the Edmonton Public Library according to theme changes.

**Party Planning (1-2 people)** Assists the Teacher with arrangements for special parties/events.

**Phoning (1 person)** – Makes phone calls to parents as required.

**Photo Album (1 person)** – Captures memorable moments during the year, catalogues, and organizes the photos into an album.

**Play Dough (1 person)** - Makes play dough at Teacher's request (recipe will be provided!).

**Recycling (1 person)** - Takes recycling blue bag home to put out, returns containers for deposit money.



**Roster Scheduler (1 person)** - Prepares duty day calendars; works with the Teacher and fieldtrip person re: scheduling; prepares and posts a date schedule for duty parents (date schedule includes specifying one food group for snack for each duty day) and maintains a copy for reference.

**Shopping (1-2 people)** - Buys supplies for Playschool at Teacher's request; retains receipts and submits to Treasurer for reimbursement.

## **Duty Parent Day**

Depending on the size of the Playschool class, a parent's name may appear on a roster every five to six weeks. Parents should make every effort to be on-hand to fulfill as many duty-days as possible. It is exciting for a child to have their parent/guardian be a "Duty-Parent", not to mention there are special little "perks" to be enjoyed by the pre-schooler that day. It is also special to your child to feel that she/he is contributing to the snack or juice on the duty-day.

### **The Duty Parent Must**

- ARRIVE FIFTEEN MINUTES PRIOR to the start of class and be prepared to stay approximately fifteen minutes after class
- encourage and assist pre-schoolers in picking up toys after playtime and participate in activities
- help maintain silence while Teacher directs class (during story-time)
- help prepare and assist with crafts and play materials
- help distribute, supervise and clean up snack as per Health guidelines
- record snack and beverage served to pre-schoolers on posted Snack Chart
- vacuum and sweep room after pre-schoolers have left the classroom
- other small tasks as requested by the Teacher that may arise
- *wear comfortable, washable clothing and bring a smile!*

Unfortunately, due to family illness or an emergency, you may be unable to fulfill your duty-day (or Cleaning-Bee day). If this occurs and a duty-parent is unable to arrange for a suitable replacement (i.e., another parent, guardian/care-giver) the Teacher and Duty-Roster parent *must be notified immediately*. The OCLP will hire an individual to serve as an alternate. These "Ghost parents" are available for these emergency situations at a **fee of \$25.00**, paid by cashing that child's undated ghost parent cheque (refer to "Fees" in Registration Guide).



## Smoking Policy

There is no smoking permitted on the program premises. Neither the teacher nor the duty parent(s) shall smoke at any time or place where child care is being provided.

## Snack Policy

We promote a snack policy based on a relaxing, enjoyable snack break for the pre-schoolers. Children will remain seated while eating and drinking their snack. Duty parents provide the juice/water and snack (as specified by the roster person on the duty-day calendar). When preparing your snack item, be aware of any allergies. **OCLP is NUT-FREE**. In accordance with Capital Health Authority Regulations, the procedures outlined are to be adhered to. In this regard, it is important to arrive early on your duty-day as it is difficult to be preparing food while class is going.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES shall be brought in WHOLE, then washed and cut-up in the Playschool by a person who has scrubbed with soap and water. PACKAGES OR CONTAINERS of block cheese, cheese whiz, dip, etc. shall be NEW AND SEALED when brought in. Partially used containers are prohibited.

## Helpful Snacking Hints

In order to maintain a good variety of nutritional snacks for the pre-schoolers we follow the five basic food groups (breads, meat and/or alternative, fruit, vegetables, dairy products). As per Capital Health, we must include at least two of the groups at each snack time, one of which is specified by the roster person on the duty-day calendar. We request that portions are small, snack-sized and from our experience, we have found that the pre-schoolers seem to like the simple as opposed to the fancy!

## Snack Ideas

Just to get you started – remember “NUT-FREE”.

### ***BREAD (\*\* ALL BAKED GOODS MUST BE STORE-BOUGHT ONLY \*\*)***

- 1/2 large muffin or 1 small (think "kid", bran muffins are not always a hit)
- raisin bread
- crackers & cheese/meat
- pita pockets
- oatmeal cookies
- granola bars



- loaves – zucchini, banana, carrot
- granola cereal & raisins

### ***FRUIT***

- canned fruit cocktail (including bowls & spoons)
- apple wedges & cheese cubes
- applesauce & biscuits or
- graham crackers
- fruit chunks, watermelon, cantaloupe, etc,
- raisins

### ***VEGETABLES***

- veggies & dip – carrot sticks are a favorite!
- celery & Cheez Whiz
- carrot or zucchini cake, muffins or bread

### ***MEATS***

- rolled lunch meat
- ham sliver wrapped around a cheese cube
- crackers & sliced sausage

### ***DAIRY***

- yoghurt
- cheese slices
- cheese & meat/fruit kebobs
- vanilla instant pudding with banana chunks
- celery & Cheez Whiz
- cheese cubes or slices with dill pickles & crackers

***UNPOPULAR ITEMS we've learned are:***

- cottage cheese, cottage cheese & pineapple
- jellied salad
- tuna/salmon sandwiches
- chocolate milk
- vegetable juices (tomato or V8)
- custards
- canned chicken spread

