



PARENT HANDBOOK 2019-2020

Ottewell Community League Playschool

Located in Braemar School:

9359 – 67A Street

Edmonton, Alberta

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Introduction

The Ottewell Community League thanks you for registering your child with our playschool! We know that you and your child will have many rewarding experiences while participating in our parent cooperative playschool program. This handbook provides information regarding playschool procedures, the playschool executive committee and parent participation requirements. The playschool is a not-for-profit program of the Ottewell Community League. The goal of the Ottewell Community League Playschool (OCLP) is to foster the social, emotional, physical and mental development of three and four year old children in an atmosphere that is safe, interesting, stimulating and fun.

Program Details

Working in Partnership

The mandate of the OCLP 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 administration and support staff. Please bring and concerns or issues that arise to the attention of the executive committee for discussion as it is the executive committee who serve to act in the best interest of our membership. Parents are welcomed to attend monthly executive committee meetings.

Hours of Operation

The playschool year begins in September and concludes at the end of June. Both two-day and three-day options are available and classes operate from 8:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. New students will be accepted in September and January as space permits.

OCLP follows Braemar's school calendar and therefore the number of operational days in any given month is subject to access to the facility. Furthermore, the operational calendar of the Edmonton Public School Board and Edmonton Catholic School Board influences the calendar as well.

In the event of an unexpected situation, the Director will determine if playschool classes are to be cancelled (bad weather, facility problems etc.). Our cold weather policy is that if the temperature reaches -20 degrees Celsius (including wind chill) the children will not be permitted to go outdoors at any point during class time.

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 children arrive and parents/guardians organize. Your child(ren) must remain under your supervision until classes start. Outside the playschool door is a sign-in/out sheet that a parent/guardian must initial when your child arrives and departs from the classroom. There is also a parent information board that is updated with newsletters, reminders and other important information.

Access to Braemar School and the playschool classroom is through the front doors of the school. Be aware that these doors are locked at 9:00am and to access the school for pick-up you need to ring the office, there is a doorbell/buzzer located to the right of the front doors.

At pick-up time please wait outside of the classroom for your child to be dismissed. It is imperative that you contact the teacher if you are running late for dismissal times. The teacher and duty-parent are not responsible for your child after class has been dismissed.

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 be mindful of parking in front of driveways.

Identification of Guardians and Care-Givers

For security reasons, the teacher must be provided with an authorized list of individuals who may pick up your child from playschool, even if it is just on a casual basis. In the event that someone other than a parent/guardian is dropping or picking up your child, please ensure that this individual is aware that they will be required to show identification for safety purposes.

Outside the playschool door is a sign-in/out sheet that a parent/guardian must initial when your child arrives and departs from the classroom. There is also a parent information board that is updated with newsletters, reminders and other important information.

Fees

- Proof of community league membership is required.
- The non-refundable \$25 registration fee, which guarantees your child's placement in our program.
- Participation commitment fees:
 - \$50 ghost parent cheque
 - \$75 cleaning bee cheque
 - 2 x \$100 bingo/casino cheque

***The commitment cheques are only cashed if you do not fulfill your parent volunteer commitments. Un-cashed cheques will be returned at the end of the year.*

- The monthly enrollment fees are withdrawn the first week of the month. Alternatively, you may pay the entire amount at the beginning of the school year or two equal installments in September and January.
 - Two-day program: \$90/month, two \$450 installments or \$900/year
 - Three-day program: \$135/month, two \$675 installments or \$1350/year

Required Supplies

- **Outdoor clothing-** Weather permitting the children may be outside on any given day.
- **Indoor shoes-** Children are required to have a pair of indoor shoes (with non-skid soles left in the classroom), outdoor shoes are to be taken off and left on the mat outside the classroom door.
- **Extra changes of clothes- Please ensure** there is an extra change of clothing (shirt, pants, underwear & socks) in a labeled Ziploc bag in your child's bag.
- **School bag/backpack**
- **Toys and valuables-** On a rotating basis every child has the opportunity to be special helper for a day and is able to bring a toy or item on this day for show and share. Otherwise, children are discouraged from bringing toys or valuables to playschool that may be damaged or lost. The OCLP is not responsible for damage or loss of any personal belongings.

Clearly label your child's shoes, clothing and any other articles accompanying them

Program Withdrawal

Many circumstances may result in the need to withdraw a child from playschool and the OCLP would like to make the transition as smooth as possible. Parents who wish to withdraw their child from the program once the term commences must provide the Director with written notice confirming the withdrawal date. Adequate notice allows time to fill the vacant spot left by a student's departure. 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; fees for the remaining months will be refunded.

Playschool Readiness

The OCLP strives to create an environment where all children succeed and understand some children will require more time to adjust to their new learning environment. During this adjustment period the teacher is committed to working with all children to facilitate a smooth transition. However, the Director, in consultation with the teacher, reserves the right to ask a parent to withdraw their child from the program if they are found to be unprepared for the routine or behavioural expectations of the OCLP.

Parent Participation

In order for OCLP to be a successful playschool program we need parent involvement and cooperation. Parents are required to participate in a variety of ways, including:

- Volunteer in the classroom for duty parent days
- Participation in two classroom cleaning bees
- Participation in fundraising projects
- Supporting the community league by working 2 bingos or 1 bingo + casino/year
- Attendance at OCLP Orientation Meeting in August (**MANDATORY**)
- Volunteer for one parent resource position per child attending
- Volunteer for off-site field trips when able

*Failure to participate in these duties may result in forfeiture of roster participation, cleaning bee and/or bingo cheques.

Duty Parent

All families are required to assist in the classroom every 5-6 weeks, depending on the class size and two day/three day program enrolment. The duty parent schedule will be organized and distributed each semester, if you are unavailable on your assigned duty day you **MUST** find a representative to cover your commitment or swap with another parent. Please communicate any changes in the duty parent schedule to the Duty Parent Coordinator and Director so a change can be made to the master schedule. Unfortunately, licensing regulations do not allow unregistered siblings to accompany parents on duty day.

If a replacement cannot be found the OCLP will hire an individual to fill the role and your \$50 ghost parent cheque will be cashed to cover the cost. Licensing requirements stipulate that class cannot be conducted in the absence of a duty parent.

On your duty day please arrive 15 minutes prior to the start of class to prepare the snack and be prepared to stay until all the children have been collected and the classroom tidied. Parents are also responsible for providing a healthy snack to the class on their duty day. Keep in mind that the classroom is a NUT FREE ZONE in order to protect children with allergies to these products. Due to licensing requirements, snacks need to be recorded on the clipboard kept on the kitchen counter.

Playschool Class Parent Resource

These cooperative positions may change from year to year according to need.

<p>Craft Helper (2 people): Buys supplies for the playschool at the teacher's request. Assists the teacher in preparing supplies for crafts, typically take-home work including cutting, gluing, etc. Retains and submits receipts to the treasurer for reimbursement.</p>

<p>Librarian (1person): Responsible for withdrawing and returning library books to the Edmonton Public Library.</p>
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Party Planning (2 people): Assists the Teacher with arrangements for special parties and events.

Play dough (1 person): Makes play dough at the teacher's request, usually every 1-3 weeks.

Field Trip Coordinator (2 people): Works with the teacher to plan & coordinate off-site field trips. Responsible for ensuring parents are provided with a field-trip form, including all necessary trip details, and that forms are signed and returned. Communicate any changes in field-trip details to parents.

Toy clean coordinator (1-2 people): Scheduling toy cleans throughout the year, ensures parents have signed up. Attends and manages all toy clean, including removal of damaged toys and rotating toys as requested by the teacher.

Laundry (1 person): Responsible for weekly laundering of dishcloths, towels and any other linens used/needed for the playschool.

Duty Parent Scheduler (1 person): Responsible for developing a schedule for the duty parent and providing to the Director, Teacher and Parents.

Executive Positions

The Ottewell Community League oversees all OCLP operations through its Director. The Director is appointed by the OCL Executive and reports to them on Playschool operations. All other Executive Level positions hold a higher responsibility level, however the ultimate decision making authority is with that of the Director.

Director: Liaise between the OCL Executive and the Teacher,, 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.

Past-Director: Serves in an advisory capacity to provide continuity between past and current playschool executives, provides historical information and policy interpretation to the current executive committee.

Treasurer: Responsible for assisting the OCL Treasurer with finances including collecting of tuition and other checks, issuance of Teacher's pay, developing of budget, and

Registrar: Arranges registration procedures, compiles and maintains accurate class lists, ensures all required cheques are received, handles all playschool registration inquiries by phone, e-mail, in-person and at meetings. Responsible for program advertising as needed.

Fundraising Coordinator: Organizes bingo and casino volunteers. Responsible for organizing fundraising activities with the help of the executive, keeps a record of all

monies raised, communicates to executive and membership regarding fundraising initiatives.

Snack Policy

The duty parent provides the snack and the playschool encourages healthy choices following Health Canada's Food Guide. Keeping allergies in mind please remember **OCLP is NUT-FREE**. In accordance with Alberta Health Services, the snack must include at least two food groups at each snack time, one of which is specified by the roster person on the duty-day calendar. Licensing requires that Alberta Health Services regulations be followed when preparing food:

- Wash hands with soap & water prior to food preparation
- Fruits and vegetables must be brought in whole, then washed and cut-up in the playschool.
- Packages and containers must be new and sealed, partially used containers are prohibited

Behaviour Management Policy

The emphasis of this Playschool will be on taking a positive approach to behavior management. Discipline methods will be developmentally appropriate and reasonable in the circumstances. Some examples of acceptable methods include natural consequences and redirection.

OCLP will ensure that child discipline methods utilized in the program will NOT inflict or cause to be inflicted any form of physical punishment, verbal or physical degradation or emotional deprivation, deny or threaten to deny any basic necessity, or use or 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 and family to resolve the inappropriate behavior.

In order to ensure a positive and safe environment for all the children in the program, students 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 as previously discussed.

Child Medication

It is not the responsibility of the teacher to administer medication; the only exception is in the instance an Epi-Pen needs to be used in an emergency situation. If your child is scheduled to receive medication during the class period, please make the necessary arrangements to do so yourself. All emergency medication on site will be kept in an unlocked cabinet, which is inaccessible to the children.

Child Illness

Please be aware that we follow Alberta Health Services' Immunization Policy. We ask that each student's immunizations are up-to-date prior to the commencement of Playschool.

Please do not bring sick children to playschool. In the event that a child begins to feel ill during class, the Teacher will contact a parent/guardian to come and pick up 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. Please notify the teacher and executive committee at once if your child has contracted a communicable disease (mumps, chicken pox, lice, etc.) so we may notify the OCLP parents.

Emergency Evacuation Procedures

Playschool licensing requires an emergency evacuation plan be in place and communicated to parents, and fire drills be conducted monthly. The following procedures are in place in case of fire:

- The teacher will call 911 immediately if smoke or flame is detected.
- The children will be assisted in lining up at the door.
- The teacher will hold the door open for the children as they exit the classroom and perform a head count.
- The duty parent will lead the children out into the hall, through the library and out the emergency exit door at the SOUTH END of the library.
- The teacher will check the room to ensure no children are left behind.
- The teacher will retrieve the travelling first aid kit, the portable attendance record book and the key to the Community Hall (5920 93A Avenue).
- The teacher will close the doors if able and follow the children out the emergency exit.
- Once out the emergency exit the class will proceed to the designated meeting area.
- Attendance will be taken using the sign in sheet.
- Weather permitting; the class will remain outside until given the all clear to return.

- In inclement weather, the class will immediately relocate to the Ottewell Community League Hall (5920 93A Avenue).
- If the fire department deems it safe to return, children will be assisted back into the classroom.
- If not deemed safe the children will remain at Ottewell Community League Hall, and parents or emergency contacts will be notified immediately
- The teacher will remain until all children have been picked up

**If any parent is outside the classroom (in the gym or bathroom) with a child or children, 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 will assume the role of the teacher in the classroom evacuation.

Should there be an emergency evacuation, program closure due to an emergency, an intruder on the 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, it will be reported to licensing staff as soon as it is safe to do so. The critical incident report will be submitted within 2 working days.

Accident / Incident Policy

If an accident occurs during playschool hours, the following procedure would be followed. The severity of the situation would dictate the appropriate method of approach.

- Accidents/incidents requiring immediate emergency medical attention – 911 will be called and the injured child, accompanied by the teacher or duty parent, will proceed to the emergency room and stay with the child until their parent or emergency contact person arrives. The parent or emergency contact person will be notified immediately. Costs incurred will be the responsibility of the child's parents. All critical incidents will be reported to licensing staff as soon as it is safe to do so. The critical incident report will be submitted within 2 working days.
- Accidents not requiring immediate emergency medical attention – the teacher, trained in First Aid, will attend to the problem. The injured child's parents will be notified.
- Accidents causing minor injuries – the teacher will inform a parent / guardian of any
- accident causing a bump, bruise, etc. upon arrival.

Field Trips (Off-Site Activities)

In addition to local nature walks and playground visits, there will be opportunities for the students to enjoy developmentally appropriate activities off-site. Typically there are 4-5 off-site field trips organized by the teacher and/or executive throughout the playschool year. Field-trip consent forms with trip details (address, date, site info, etc) will be distributed in advance and must be signed and returned prior to the off-site activity.

Children will not be permitted to attend an off-site field trip if a signed consent form is not returned.

Parents are required to provide or arrange transportation for their child(ren) to and from the field-trip location and inform the teacher if any arrangements have been made. As a licensing requirement there has to be a 1:8 adult to child ratio for field trips, so typically 2-3 parent volunteers are needed for these trips. However, the number of parent volunteers may be greater if the facility requires it. The teacher will take the portable attendance record book on all off-site activities.

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 childcare is being provided.