



THE PARENT HANDBOOK

2023 - 2024

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INTRODUCTION

Riverbend Playschool is a community owned and parent operated co-operative playschool for children 3 and 4 years of age. We are a non-profit organization that has been primarily funded by tuition and casino proceeds, with all our funds put back into the playschool program.

We run four licensed programs. The 3-year old AM program and 3 and 4 year old PM program on Tuesdays and Thursdays have a maximum of 16 children per class. The 4 year-old AM and 4 year old PM programs on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday have a maximum of 19 children per class.

Children enrolled in the program must be toilet trained at the time playschool commences in September. The playschool's operating license prohibits the school from accepting children in diapers. Special circumstances may be considered on an individual basis, such as a child with special needs who is not toilet trained. This situation would require approval by the teachers and executive.

To enroll children in one of the Riverbend Playschool classes they must be the following age for their respective program:

- Registration for the 3 year old AM class will be open to parents of children who will be 3 years old on or before December 31st of their attending school year.
- Registration in the 3 and 4 year old split PM class will be open to parents of children who will be 3 years old on or before December 31st of their attending school year.
- Registration in the 4 year old AM and 4 year old PM classes will be open to parents of children who will be 4 years old on or before December 31st of the attending school year.

The school year runs from September to May, observing all statutory and Public School holidays. The morning classes run from 9:00 am to 11:30 am and the afternoon classes run from 12:45 pm to 3:15 pm. To help in the child's initial adjustment, the playschool practices staggered classroom entry for children at the beginning of the year. The registrar will provide the detailed staggered entry plan for your child in the week leading up to the first day of school.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Riverbend Playschool acknowledges the traditional land on which we reside, is in Treaty Six Territory. We would like to thank the diverse Indigenous Peoples whose ancestors' footsteps have marked this territory for centuries, such as nêhiyaw (Nay-hee-yow) / Cree, Dené (Deh-neyh), Anishinaabe (Ah-nish-in-ah-bay) / Saulteaux (So-toe), Nakota Isga (Na-koh-tah ee-ska) / Nakota Sioux (Na-koh-tah sue), and Niitsitapi (Nit-si-tahp-ee) / Blackfoot peoples. We also acknowledge this as the Métis' (May-tee) homeland and the home of one of the largest communities of Inuit south of the 60th parallel. It is a welcoming place for all peoples who come from around the world to share Edmonton as a home. Together we call upon all of our collective, honoured traditions and spirits to work in building a great city for today and future generations.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

Riverbend Playschool aims to enhance the overall development of children, contribute to the development of a positive self-concept, encourage a love of learning, to develop the skills to play, and interact cooperatively in a group setting. These objectives are fulfilled through a 'learning through play' environment with an emphasis on the social, emotional, physical, creative, and intellectual development of each child. Each developmental element is important, and all are required to build a child's positive self-esteem and his or her unique personal attributes. Within a 'learning through play' environment each child can learn and develop at an individual pace while still benefiting from being part of a group.

We believe that play is central to a child's learning and therefore is an essential component of our program. Through the use of themes, activities, songs, books, crafts and field trips, your child will learn by active participation, experimentation and experience. A love of learning will be inspired by presenting information through the children's interests and ideas. We believe that the children should be free to explore craft materials and to express themselves freely without adult expectations placed on their work. We focus on the process rather than the final product. Learning can be fun and we hope to bring about this in the children. This attitude will serve them well throughout their schooling as well as throughout their lives.

A child's education is the cooperative responsibility of many people in the community. The interaction between teachers, classmates, parents and the community play an important role in the development of your child. Each can encourage a child's creativity and learning, as well as intellectual, emotional and physical development. We believe that cooperation between parents and teachers in reinforcing common goals is an unbeatable combination in nurturing young children. Teachers provide educational expertise, objectivity and experience; parents provide knowledge of the child acquired through their loving and caring relationship. Together, they can strengthen and enhance the quality of the child's playschool experience. When parents are involved in their child's education, the entire family benefits and the specific child's achievement levels tend to rise.

As a cooperative, Riverbend Playschool works in partnership with the parents to enhance the children's growth and development, and provide a safe learning environment. When a child feels secure, they can learn to take risks and open their minds to the world around them.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION STATEMENT

Riverbend Playschool is committed to ensuring our policies and practices promote a safe and inclusive climate for all students, families, and staff. We believe that when our students can see their families, customs and uniqueness as welcome and valued they are each able to develop a positive self concept and a love for learning. We strive to embrace each child's individuality to create a respectful community in which all children have equal opportunities to learn and grow.

PROGRAMS, ELIGIBILITY, AND TIMES OFFERED

Classes and times for the programs are as follows:

Two day per week programs: (16 children/class)		
3 year old AM class	Tuesday and Thursday	9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
3 & 4 year old PM class	Tuesday and Thursday	12:45 p.m. to 3:15 p.m.
Three day per week programs: (19 children/class)		
4 year old AM class	Monday, Wednesday, Friday	9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
4 year old PM class	Monday, Wednesday, Friday	12:45 p.m. to 3:15 p.m.

To enroll children in one of the Riverbend Playschool classes they must be the following age for their respective program:

- Registration for the 3 year old AM class and the 3 and 4 year old split PM class will be open to parents of children who will be 3 years old on or before December 31st of the attending school year. ***(Please note our licensing agreement states we are limited to taking a maximum of 6 children who are under three at any point in time. In the event that during registration we register 6 children under the age of 3, the next child under three to register will have to wait until one of the other children turns 3 before they can commence classes. The option to pay to have a spot held in the class will be available to these families.)***
- Registration in the 4 year old AM and 4 year old PM classes will be open to parents of children who will be 4 years old on or before December 31st of the attending school year.

MEMBERSHIP

The members of Riverbend Playschool consist of all parents and/or guardians whose children attend Riverbend Playschool or whose children are registered to attend Riverbend Playschool.

The purpose of the Membership shall be:

1. To affirm decision making, in the form of voting regarding changes to the playschool bylaws and policies.

2. To support day to day operations of the playschool through parent jobs, resources and volunteer activities.
3. To meet the challenges of playschool education with ideas and meaningful discussion with the teachers.
4. Uphold the confidentiality and dignity of the program, students, members, and staff.

If you have any concerns regarding your child or the program, please bring them to the teachers' attention by appointment or at a mutually agreed upon time for a phone discussion. Please refrain from discussing concerns with the teachers while class is in progress or while children are in the room. The teachers will be better prepared to devote their full attention to the discussion and a workable solution. If the problem is unable to be solved with the teachers it should be brought to the attention of the executive. Please remember confidentiality when dealing with these issues and use the protocol outlined in our policy section.

Members are required to provide one volunteer to work a casino in our casino year and attend all annual, general and special meetings held during the playschool year. They are entitled to vote at these meetings. Members will choose or be assigned a mandatory parent job to be performed during the playschool year. A duty bond (refundable deposit) will be collected from all members to ensure mandatory duties are performed during the year. The bond will be cashed by the playschool in the event that duties are not performed. If a member continues to fail to carry out his/her responsibilities (i.e. volunteer job, duty days), the member may be required to withdraw his/her child from the program. We operate as a parent cooperative and as such it is necessary that we receive everyone's assistance.

The success of a cooperative is dependent on its members. The benefits of parental involvement far outweigh the time commitment required. Many parents have found the cooperative experience to be very rewarding. Please remember that the time you spend here is an investment in your child's education.

Parent Cooperative Exemption Fee

Riverbend Playschool provides families the option of a Parent Cooperative Exemption fee. This is an optional fee to opt out of parent cooperative duties for the specific year. The fee for opting out of the cooperative experience will be a one time fee of \$500, per child enrolled in the school. This will only be for the in-class duties as it is not an option to opt out of Casino obligations. Again, this is a non-profit organization that relies on casino proceeds to support the running of the program.

MEMBER VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

Executive Committee:

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Registrar
- Casino Chair
- Job Coordinator
- Newsletter
- Website Maintenance Coordinator
- Public Relations
- Licensing Oversight / Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Role

The executive membership is responsible for the affairs of the playschool and will be elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). The executive serves in an advisory/consultative capacity to the teachers. The executive is accountable to the Membership. Changes in these guidelines, program decisions, and policies may be made by a majority vote of the executive at an executive meeting. The parent group will be informed of any changes through written notice.

Any proposed bylaw changes will be presented to the members and held for vote at an annual, general or special meeting. These meetings may be held in-person or presented electronically.

Classroom Job Assignments:

- Class Representative
- Cleaning Bee Committee
- Cleaning Bee Coordinator
- Laundry Person
- Sewing/Mending
- Supplies/Shopping
- Sharing Day/Roster Administrator
- Scholastic Coordinator
- Memory Book
- Memory Book Coordinator
- Photo Developer
- Craft Preparation
- Fundraising support person

An email will be sent out with instructions on how to choose your playschool job. Job selection is on a first come, first served basis. Any families that register after the job sign up is sent out, or families who fail to choose a job, will be assigned one of the remaining jobs by the job coordinator.

Complete job descriptions are available on the website. A confirmation email will be sent out one week prior to school starting to confirm the job chosen or assigned by the job coordinator.

Parent Helpers: In - Class Volunteers

The Riverbend Playschool is a cooperative playschool. We provide the opportunity for parents to volunteer in the classroom, right as the magic is happening! If any parents are interested, please contact your classroom coordinator.

Emergency Back-up Classroom Support

The teachers request two volunteer parents per class who can be available on short notice. This parent will be requested in the classroom if the second teacher is required to be away due to unforeseen circumstances, illness, etc., and the third staff teacher is also away due to illness, etc. Childcare must be arranged for any other children if needed as additional children will not be allowed in the classroom. If, in the unlikely event that only one teacher is available, the classroom support parent will be called to come in to support the primary staff member. This allows the school to fulfill the playschool licensing requirements of adult to child ratios so that we don't have to cancel a class.

The volunteer parent will be required to obtain a criminal record check, including a vulnerable sector search, dated not earlier than 6 months prior to the date of commencement of the school year. The playschool will cover any associated fees for this. As this parent role will only be utilized in unforeseen circumstances, it will be a volunteer role in addition to the parent classroom job assignment. This role does not fulfill your volunteer commitment to the playschool. If you are interested in this, please let the job coordinator know at the start of the school year.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Admission and registration

Online Registration for the upcoming year will be open to all groups in late January/early February and can be accessed by clicking the Online Registration link on our website, www.riverbendplayschool.org. To make the registration process more efficient you may create an account prior to the registration period. Playschool registration takes place online and registration dates will be announced on the website in advance.

Priority will be given to the following groups on a first come first served basis within each group:

- 1) **Current members of Riverbend Playschool**, defined as children **currently** enrolled in the program and have been for at least 30 days within the date of registration.
- 2) **Alumni of Riverbend Playschool**, defined as:
 - a) Child, previous children/siblings have attended the program
 - b) A parent who has attended Riverbend Playschool in the past (proof of attendance may be required, in the form of a school picture, memory book, or memorabilia).
- 3) New registrants who are Riverbend Community League Members of Rhatigan Ridge, Ramsey Heights, Brookside and Brander Gardens with proof of residency. At least 50% of the available spaces will be offered to Riverbend Community League Members after the first two priority groups have been registered.
- 4) New registrants who are members of any community.

Families who have *applied* for playschool will receive an email confirming that the application has been received. A \$50 non-refundable application processing fee will be required at this time to

complete your application. **This is not confirmation that the registration is complete or that your child has been accepted into your class of choice.** After reviewing the application, the registrar will notify families by email within 48 hours if the child has been accepted and placed in a class, or added to a waitlist.

Once accepted, you will need to complete your online registration within 24 hours. We also require you to submit the first month's tuition within 14 days to confirm your child's spot in the playschool.

A Registration Night will be held in conjunction with the AGM for those who have received confirmation of their placement in a class. The following items will be required to finalize registration:

- Proof of age and birthdate of your child will be requested to be shown prior to the school year commencing (such as certificate of birth, passport, Alberta Health Care card).

And

- A Duty Bond Cheque, which will only be cashed if you fail to perform your parental duties. Please note: if your duty bond cheque is cashed, you will still be required to fulfill your parental duties for the remainder of the school year. Duty bond cheques are \$500. If you fail your parent duties after your duty bond has been cashed, you may be asked to withdraw from the program.

OR

- Parent Cooperative Exemption Fee. This \$500 fee will exempt a family from having to complete parent duties for that school year. Note the fee is per student if more than one student is enrolled per family. ***Opting out of the casino is not an option for any families.***

If the registrar does not receive these items from you on or before the AGM, your place in the class may be lost. Dishonest or fraudulent information provided on member documents will result in dismissal from the playschool.

Registrations will continue to be accepted until classes are filled, at which time a wait list will be started and the Wait List Policy will be in effect.

Wait List Policy

We maintain and strictly adhere to an ordered waiting list. When the registrar contacts you from the waiting list either by phone or by email in order to determine your availability to fill a vacancy in a class, you will be given a 48-hour period to provide a response to the registrar. If the registrar has not heard a response from you within 48 hours, the registrar will contact the next family on the waiting list. The waitlist response period will drop to 24 hours effective the date that public and separate elementary schools commence (typically just after the September long weekend). Once playschool classes begin, internal class moves may be given priority over the waitlist.

Please ensure you give the correct contact information you would like used throughout the summer and school year. It is your responsibility to check for messages in case a spot becomes available. **The registrar is not responsible for holding a spot if your voicemail is full or emails bounce back and a message cannot be left.**

If you would like to update your contact information on the waitlist or be removed from our waitlist at any time, please email the registrar at registrar.rbps@gmail.com.

Please note that once a playschool year has started, no open spaces in a class will be filled after the end of February of the current playschool year.

Registration Fees

Each year of attendance, at registration there is an application processing fee due at the time the application is submitted online. The first month tuition will be due at this time as well. These fees are both non-refundable. Fees must be paid to secure your child's spot in the program.

Monthly Fees

Monthly fees are set in accordance with the needs of the program. Monthly tuition is \$121 for two day a week classes; \$153 for three day a week classes. The Government of Alberta subsidized the 2023 3% tuition increase, and also offers a grant of \$75/month for each child attending the Playschool. As a result, families pay \$43 and \$74 per month for two days and three days weekly, respectively. If your child registers after the school year has commenced, the remainder of the monthly fees are due at the time of registration upon discussion with the registrar.

Fees for the year are collected as follows:

***Initial Payment:* \$50 non-refundable application processing fee + \$20 Health and Safety fee + September Tuition**

- Paid by electronic money transfer at the time of registration.
- September tuition is due after receiving a confirmation of a spot in the program by the registrar.
- Tuition due: \$43 for two day a week classes; \$74 for three day a week classes

Tuition for the Year

- Due by October 1st and to be paid by electronic money transfer
- Tuition due: \$344 for two day a week classes; \$592 for three day a week classes

Parent Co-op Option

- Option A:
- \$500 Duty Bond Cheque**
- Leave date blank

- This cheque will only be cashed if you fail to perform your parental duties: sharing day/duty parent job.

OR

Option B:

\$500 Parent Cooperative Exemption Fee

- Electronic Money Transfer due September 1st
- This is non-refundable once received but does exempt the family from in-class parent duties for the current school year per child enrolled in the playschool; families are not excluded from casino duties.

It is the responsibility of the parents to ensure that the fees are paid. A charge of \$20.00 will be levied for any cheques not honored by the bank.

If your family needs to make different payment arrangements please contact the Treasurer at treasurer.rbps@gmail.com

Community League Memberships

Our playschool requires that every child's family must obtain a valid community league membership for every playschool year. Families will be asked to provide their membership information no later than September 30th of each playschool year. If members fail to obtain a community league membership by this date, they may be asked to withdraw from the program.

Memberships may be available for purchase at the general meeting in the fall and can be purchased online at Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues website: <http://www.efcl.org/>. It is not a requirement that this membership be purchased from the Riverbend Community League, members are to purchase their memberships from the communities they reside in.

Membership Withdrawal/Refund Policy

The teachers, parents of the child and/or the executive may remove a child from the program upon recommendation. Members wishing to resign must tender their withdrawal in writing to the Registrar at least one full month prior to their resignation to receive a refund. If received late the executive reserves the right to keep the fees for that month.

Monthly fees will be refunded accordingly. There will be no refunds after March 31st of the current school year.

Probationary Period

Each student will be subject to a six-week probationary period. This period will begin on the first day the child attends playschool. A child's continuation in the program is at the discretion of the teachers and the executive.

Medical Problems

If your child has health problems, you as a parent/guardian are responsible to inform the teachers. In some cases, it may be necessary to provide the playschool with a signed waiver of responsibility, absolving the playschool, its staff and the parent helpers from legal responsibility.

Incidents/Accidents Involving Children During Class Time

The teachers will utilize the Child Guidance Policy when solving incidents between children. The teachers will document any incident causing injury or emotional stress. All accidents will be documented indicating injury and any first aid given.

The incident report forms are provided with our license to operate. The form allows for accurate descriptions of an incident or accident that occurred during class time. The form will be given to the parent(s) to read and both teachers and one parent are required to sign it. The original will be kept with the child's file and parents can request a copy if they choose. The executive will review incidents/accidents that occur and make recommendations to ensure the safety of the children, if warranted. As required by licensing, all incidents will be reported to the Regional Child Care office.

Team Teaching

We are excited to offer a 'learning through play' program that is delivered through a team teaching approach. Essentially two teachers will work together to jointly design and implement a program for each class. This collaborative effort gives each class the combined expertise of two educators in and out of the classroom. We believe that learning begins with what the children know, and grows from there. Having two teachers in the room allows time to encourage child initiated and directed activities. A team teacher approach provides greater opportunity for observation and one on one interaction with the children, enabling the teachers to provide a program that meets the needs of the children as a group and individuals. With two sets of trained eyes working together, we increase the opportunity for children to be met at their own level and be challenged accordingly, and risks to be assessed earlier and ultimately all children gaining the most from their playschool experience.

Staggered Entry

To familiarize your child with their teachers, classroom setting and help with their transition into our program the playschool practices staggered entry. During the first week of classes, students will be introduced into the classroom in smaller group sizes. Classes may also be shortened to help with the transition and independence. The teachers and executive board will confirm a plan for staggered entry based, which will be communicated closer to the start date of classes. The smaller child/teacher ratio for the first classes allows the children and teachers to get acquainted, as well as to introduce your child to both the classroom and playschool routines.

Illness Screening and Enhanced Cleaning Practices

Our school prioritizes a healthy environment by continuing to use enhanced cleaning and screening practices introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to class each day, the teachers must complete a self assessment and be free of any signs or symptoms of a new respiratory or gastrointestinal illness before entering the classroom. After each class, the entire playschool space (counters, tables, chairs, shelves, floor, etc.) will be cleaned and disinfected. This includes the time between morning and afternoon classes. Masks for children are optional and may be used if a family wishes. Each class will receive dedicated toys that are assigned to their class/cohort. These toys will be cleaned and disinfected regularly.

Our teachers go above and beyond what is recommended by Alberta Health. Illness are reported as necessary and any communications from Alberta Health are shared with the affected parents. For more information please visit:

<https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/a38f9231-886c-4364-93b1-e57869301c80/resource/61da2fc2-f11d-4142-bba4-cb6c58d2b183/download/covid-19-guidance-preschool-daycare-childcare-2022-03.pdf>

Arrival and Pick Up

Make sure your child gets the most out of the school day by helping him/her to arrive at school on time, in good health and properly dressed. Each class will have a 15 minute drop off window (5 minutes before and 10 minutes after the start of class to arrive). This will minimize bottlenecking or clustering of families at the doors and enable social distancing. A boot rack has been conveniently located in the front door of the building to place soiled or wet footwear.

Please help your child prepare for the day: hang up their coats and knapsacks, help them put on their indoor shoes and greet their classmates. As part of our pandemic response plan, each child's temperature will be taken at the door prior to entering the classroom. Parents/caregivers will also be asked to answer health / travel screening questions for their child each day. Children will only be permitted to enter the playschool if they have no risks identified on the screening questionnaire and are free of signs and symptoms of illness. Children will be asked to sanitize their hands with hand sanitizer upon entering (after this point, the use of soap and water will be

encouraged in the classroom as needed). Parents are asked to wait until the screening has been completed and your child has entered the classroom prior to leaving.

At the end of the day, your child will be excited to see you and tell you about the events of the day. If your child's outdoor footwear (ie. boots) are still on the boot rack, please grab these prior to lining up for pick up. Please allow space between families to ensure social distancing can be maintained. Markers have been placed on the floor to help facilitate this. The teachers will sign out each child and you will be asked to exit through the back door. Please note: If any person other than the expected parent/caregiver is to pick up the child, please inform the teachers prior to pick up so they can be added to the approved pick up list.

After outside play, the teachers will ensure that as a group, the children walk around the parking lot safely. In keeping with the school's policy of safety first, parents are asked to wait at the community league building when the children are at the playground to avoid children rushing off and crossing the parking lot to greet their parents.

Things to Bring to School

- Indoor Shoes – your child must wear shoes at all times due to health and safety regulations. Please check that your child's shoes still fit on a regular basis.
- Nutritious Snack - Send a small healthy snack and drink (no pop/candy bars/cupcakes/etc.) with your child to each class. The playschool is a nut free zone; check your labels, products that "may contain nuts" or where "this product was made in a facility that produces other nut products" are not acceptable. Read all labels to ensure that your child's snack is completely nut free!
- Backpack - to carry home your child's school related items. Also include an extra set of clothing in your child's backpack (i.e. shirt, pants, socks, underwear).

IMPORTANT: Please label all your child's belongings.

Parking

Parking is available directly outside the front doors of the community league, facing the building, and in the clearly marked visitor stalls. Two stalls have also been reserved for the teachers. Other parking stalls are designated for Earl Buxton School Staff. Please **DO NOT** park in the Earl Buxton stalls, even if you think it will be for just a minute. The staff of the school may need their stalls at any time during the day. Please note "no parking" and 'school bus' signs.

POLICIES

Illness Policy

Children will not be permitted to attend class if they have any signs or symptoms of illness. The child will be isolated in a safe and comfortable setting as far away as practicable from the other children, under supervision, until the parent arrives. If the parent is unable to come and pick up the child in a timely fashion, the teachers will request that the emergency contact come and pick the child up.

Please note, that in addition to the above, children are too sick to be at playschool if they have any of the following symptoms:

- fever of 38 degrees Celsius, or higher
- diarrhea
- vomiting
- an undiagnosed rash skin condition
- a communicable disease such as chicken pox
- an obviously infected lesion with a thick or colored discharge (green or reddish brown)
- persistent pain or persistent cough.

The teachers have the right to refuse a child's admittance to class when in doubt about the child's health. They also have the authority to request a written statement from the child's doctor indicating a clean bill of health before the child returns to playschool.

If your child contracts a communicable disease such as mumps, chicken pox, lice, whooping cough, red measles, scarlet fever, etc. your family doctor or public health nurse should be contacted and their recommendations be followed regarding return to playschool. The incident must be reported to the playschool teachers and the Department of Health.

All staff of Riverbend Playschool are trained in first aid. Provision of health care to a child will occur only if a) the written consent of the child's parent has been obtained, or b) the health care provided is in the nature of first aid.

Where a staff member has reason to believe that a child or staff member is infected with a notifiable communicable disease as defined by the regulations related to Sections 22(1) and 26 of the *Public Health Act*, he/she must immediately notify the Medical Officer of Health. Direction will be provided by the Health Authority about how to proceed. The playschool may need to close until further direction is received in order to ensure the safety of all children, staff and families.

Medication policy

Only medications deemed for 'Emergency Use' (such as an epi-pen or inhaler) will be given while a child is at playschool. If your child has emergency medication, please record this on the registration form. The playschool requires a signed request from the parent and physician indicating the type of medication to be administered, and required dosage and action to be taken in the event of possible hazards or side effects. The parent is required to provide this request before the child starts playschool. The playschool is not responsible for any complications in this regard. Forms are available from the teachers and must be completed each year. The teachers can be made aware of any other medical conditions on a one to one basis (there is an associated form required to be completed).

It is the parent's responsibility to ensure the emergency medication is given to a teacher before each class, although we strongly encourage that emergency medication be left at school for the full year so it will always be available should it be needed. Teachers will work with the parents to ensure expiring medications are replaced on time. If medication is to go home after each class, then the parent/guardian is responsible for picking up the medication at the end of class. Under no circumstances will the teachers give out any medications that do not have signed consent forms for and clear guidance for use while a child is at playschool. All medication must be clearly labelled and contain the original pharmacy label (with the prescribing Doctors name and dosing information) if a prescribed medication (Eg. an epi-pen is a physician prescribed medication and would have a label stating such, physician recommended Benadryl would not have this same label).

The teachers will ensure medication is not accessible to the children in the classroom, but quickly accessible by the teachers in an emergency situation. All medications will be stored in an upper level shelf, clearly labeled by the class and child's name for quick identification. The medication must also be portable to bring along on off-site trips.

Child Guidance Policy

The Playschool maintains a positive approach in problem solving. Negative forms of discipline are not permitted.

1. Set Clear Expectations

The teachers will develop and share with the children positive expectations that are age and developmentally appropriate, ensuring the safety of all children, adults and materials in the program.

2. Redirection

If the teachers see a potential problem they will try engaging one or more of the children in another activity.

3. Giving Choices

When difficulties arise children will be given choices for alternative activities.

4. Problem Solving

The teachers will apply problem-solving approaches, which encourage children to resolve conflicts with others.

5. Time Outs

If the actions of a child put themselves or others at risk of injury the child will leave the play area with an adult for a short time to calm down. When the child is ready he/she will return to play.

6. Teacher/Parent Meetings

When there are continued difficulties within the classroom, the teachers will meet with the child's family to develop goals and strategies to deal with the situation. When necessary, with written (parental/guardian) permission, the teachers may access community resources for consultation or referral.

7. Executive/Teacher/Parent Meetings

If the teachers feel that a child is disruptive to the point that the safety, learning, and enjoyment of other children is being affected on a recurring basis, after the actions of clause (g) above, the teachers will continue as follows:

Arrange a meeting with the parents (without the child present) and three independent executive members, normally the President, Secretary (takes minutes) and an executive member in the same class.

A situation may arise where it may become necessary for helper parents to become directly involved. The children are allowed to work out the problem on their own with assistance, if necessary, on verbalizing their feelings and with suggestions on non-destructive problem solving alternatives. It is important to keep in mind that problems within the classroom are to be kept in confidence. This will ensure the self-esteem of the child or children in question is kept intact.

Cold Weather Policy and Playschool Closure

Classes will be cancelled if the temperature reading is colder than -40°C, including wind chill as reported by Environment Canada at 07:30h: 780-468-4940 or on the website: https://weather.gc.ca/city/pages/ab-50_metric_e.html. The playschool Registrar will send an email out to all families notifying of the closure due to the extreme temperatures. A message indicating the school closure will be left on the playschool voicemail as well. Please check one of these methods of communication to determine if the school is closed. Please note - if the playschool is closed, it will remain closed for the entire day (both am and pm classes will be cancelled). We understand that this can be frustrating for some who go about their day despite the cold. The biggest reason for closing the doors during extreme cold weather is in case of an alarm or emergency situation which requires building evacuation. We need to safely get out and

are not prepared to have your children out in extreme temperatures without appropriate winter attire. Frostbite can occur in minutes at these temperatures, and children are particularly susceptible as they lose heat from their skin faster than adults. There will not be refunds offered if the playschool needs to close due to cold weather.

Also, as St. Mary's elementary school is our evacuation location, if there is ever a situation where St. Mary's is closed, the playschool must be closed as well. Again, a message will be left on the Playschool voicemail.

In addition, should a situation arise where all teachers are ill and unable to come to class, the playschool will be closed. An email will be sent to the parents, and the executive will arrange for someone to be present at the start of classes to ensure that everyone is informed. Every effort will be made to give as much notice as possible.

Late Pick Up Policy

It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to ensure the child is picked up after class. The teachers are not responsible for the children after class. If 10 minutes after class, no one authorized has arrived to pick up your child the following actions will be taken:

- The following people will be contacted from the child's registration form in the following order until someone is reached to come and pick up the child.
 1. Parents
 2. Authorized persons to whom the child may be released
 3. Emergency contacts
- If no one is reached the teachers are required to call the police to arrange safekeeping of your child until you do arrive.
- If someone other than the parent is reached to pick up the child, a phone message (if possible) and a note on the front door of the Community League will be left to advise the parent(s) of the child's location.

DO NOT BE LATE. Both the teachers are detained until all children are picked up. There is a \$25.00 fee if you are unreasonably late in picking up your child. This \$25 fee is applied by the executive. For repeat offenders, the executive also reserves the right to withdraw the child from the program.

In the case of an emergency, you may be late picking up your child. Please call the teachers **(PH: 780-988-0704)** to inform them why you will not be there and your expected arrival or what other arrangements you have made for your child's pick up.

Smoking Policy

No person is permitted to smoke on the program premises. No staff member or helping parents will smoke anywhere near the program premises.

Medical Emergency policy

Please ensure that the child's registration form is properly filled out indicating the doctor's name, health care number, emergency contact, and allergies for the use in the event of an emergency. If an accident or medical emergency occurs at school that requires the child to be rushed to the hospital, an ambulance will be called. It would be the responsibility of one teacher to accompany the child while the other teacher and sharing day parent will remain with the other children.

The parents, and family doctor if necessary, will be contacted immediately. If parents cannot be reached, a message (if possible) will be left and the emergency contacts will be called. The teachers, duty parent or emergency contact will continue to try to contact the parent(s). The cost of an ambulance will be the responsibility of the parents.

Snack Policy

WE ARE A NUT FREE SCHOOL. In compliance with Public Health and Licensing Regulations, each parent will be responsible for preparing a nutritious snack for their child including a drink to be consumed during class time. This snack must include choices from at least two food groups. (As per the Canada Food Guide) The playschool is a nut free zone; check your labels, products that "may contain nuts" or where "this product was made in a facility that produces other nut products" are not acceptable. Read all labels to ensure your child's snack is completely nut free!

The teachers will provide suggestions on desirable snacks and prohibited foods. During special celebrations when snacks may be shared, all snacks must be store bought. Due to Health Regulations foods cannot be prepared at members homes.

Supervision Policy and Practises

Riverbend Playschool ensures that the primary staff observes children's play and behaviour both indoors and outdoors by implementing the following:

- Sign in/sign out sheet used for every child at every class.
- teacher led activities with constant interaction and supervision of all activities
- implementation of head counts before, during and after all on and off site activities including park visits, walks and field trips

- children are required to wear fluorescent green vests over their jackets so as to be readily visible by both teachers and the helper parent.
- children are paired up with a helper parent on field trips and helped off the bus at destination
- first aid bag and portable attendance records accompany children when leaving the classroom
- teachers sit with children during snack time

Staff is kept aware of the program's indoor and outdoor physical environments by frequent safety checks of the intended place of play. The children are constantly supervised to ensure that their social, physical, emotional, creative and intellectual minds are developing in a safe and positive atmosphere amongst their peers.

Protocol For Handling Issues or Concerns

We want your playschool experience to be a happy one for both your child and your family. If you have concerns or issues regarding your child, the teachers, or the program, please bring them up for discussion by following the outlined protocol.

1. Make an appointment to meet with the teachers when children are not going to be around. This way the teachers can devote all their attention to the discussion of the problem or concern. Work together with the teachers to develop goals, strategies and possible solutions.
 - Express issues or concerns respectfully while keeping confidentiality in mind.
 - The teachers may be able to provide another view to a situation. Remember, they are the 'expert' in child development and the playschool environment.
 - Remember to look towards the policies and guidelines of the program. Perhaps they can be of assistance.
2. If things are unable to be resolved between parents and teachers, please contact the President for assistance. Again, a meeting may be necessary to help generate strategies and solutions.
 - Inform the other party before involving the President.
 - The president will look to both parties involved for information and act to help mediate the problem solving process.
3. If the problem is still unable to be solved, the President will need to take the situation to an executive meeting for resolution.

- Both parent and teachers will be informed before this action is taken.

This protocol is in place to help maintain a positive and respectful environment in our program even during times of conflict. We also want to ensure the confidentiality of the children and their families is maintained at all times.

Privacy Policy

Riverbend Playschool considers issues relating to your and your child's privacy to be a serious matter. At the same time, Riverbend Playschool needs to collect, store, use, and disclose personal information to enable it to operate the playschool.

Riverbend Playschool has created and implemented a privacy policy so that you understand what Riverbend Playschool may and may not do with your and your child's personal information. Riverbend Playschool encourages you to review the Privacy Policy located on the website.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Fire Safety

In the event of a fire in the Playschool or Community Hall facility, the following procedure is to be followed:

1. Alert everyone by pulling the fire alarm.
2. When the fire bell rings, children are lined up quickly and quietly in front of a teacher.
3. One teacher leads the children out of the room, choosing the door, which she/he feels provides the safest exit. If applicable, The Sharing Day Parent will follow the group.
4. The other teacher checks the washrooms and closes doors taking the daily attendance sheets and emergency records with him/her.
5. Everyone meets to the south of the community hall.
6. Teachers take attendance.
7. A teacher will call the Fire Department. (911)
8. Proceed with relocation procedures.

Fire drills will be held once a month, although the children may not actually go outside during the cold weather.

Relocation Procedures

1. Teachers escort the children to St. Mary's School.
2. Parents will be phoned to pick up children. If they cannot be reached the Emergency Contacts will be phoned to pick up children.
3. When possible an Evacuation Notice will be posted on the outside door to notify parents if the teachers are unable to reach them.
4. The Teachers will remain with the children until all children have been picked up.

SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD'S LEARNING

A Typical Day

A typical playschool day includes the following activities, not necessarily in this order. Activities are planned around themes. A monthly calendar is prepared by the teachers to keep you informed of the day's events and to request any special items the children may need to bring which will be emailed out with the monthly newsletter.

Circle Time:

- greet the children as they arrive and check attendance
- show and tell
- variety of songs or rhymes
- talk about the day - themes, special events - combined with a short lesson

Free Play Time:

- free to play at any of the various centers around the room
- craft table - crafts related to the day's theme
- rotating activity table – featuring math, science, writing or listening activities
- water table and sand table - activities may be planned to coincide with theme
- games, books and puzzles
- playhouse, doll house, blocks, building toys, vehicles and animal toys etc.

Clean-Up Time:

- children are encouraged to help put toys and the day's activities away

Story Time:

- story book is read
- music or quiet group game may be played

Snack Time:

- say "thank you" before eating
- talk about food groups and table manners

Movement Activities:

- indoor activities to include games, music and movement, parachute games
- outdoor activities include playground or tobogganing

Transition Time:

- to ease flow between activities, teachers often sing songs, play group games or do finger plays. This tends to help children move from one activity into the next.

NOTE: Most of the Arts and Crafts the children do will be described as “open ended” because the result is a creative expression of the individual child. The artwork or craft may not look like anything to you but what is important is the process and act of doing. The finished product must only meet the approval and satisfaction of the child, done at their own level of interest and ability. Please allow them this freedom; avoid insisting that a project look a certain way. This is tempting for us to do especially with your own child. If you do the work for them, then it will be your picture not theirs.

Sharing Bears and Show and Share

The sharing day roster indicates the ‘Sharing bear’ children for each class day. There are two sharing bears at each class. The sharing bears are the primary helpers in the class for the day - they ring the bell for clean up, are first in line for washing hands, complete the cleanliness check after playtime etc. They are also the focus of the show and share that day. Each sharing bear brings an item from home to share with the class. This gives the children in each class an opportunity to come to class and talk about a favorite item.

Scholastic Book Orders

The playschool will be providing you the opportunity to order from different catalogues throughout the school year. This is not a fundraiser, however, the playschool is rewarded for the orders we place. The playschool can earn several free books as well as several dollars in coupons the

teachers can use to order items for the classroom. Your child and playschool can both benefit from this opportunity. Please note that this is an option to you. You do not have to place an order.

Field Trips

Field trips are planned in keeping with the themes in the classroom that are run throughout the year. Due to the restrictions of COVID-19, the playschool remains unsure if field trips will be occurring in the current school year. If we are able to offer a field trip, parents must provide written approval and releases for both regularly scheduled activities that occur off the playschool premises, such as walks and going to the playground, and for specific activities such as field trips. The permission slip will indicate the purpose and requirements for the field trip. Only those children with permission slips will be permitted to go.

Extra help is needed on field trips to ensure a safe adult to child ratio. Please let the teachers know if you are available to attend. Children are either bused or dropped off and collected from the venue by their parents or caregiver. If transported by bus, children will leave from the playschool and return to the playschool. Please take note of altered class times for some of these field trips.

Cubbies

Your child has been assigned a coat hook and shelf space to store his or her crafts and artwork. Newsletters from the teachers and information from the executive may be found above your child's coat hook. Be sure to take all of these belongings with you at the end of the day, as these spaces are shared between classes.

Clothing

A clothes hook has been assigned to your child, for their coats & knapsacks. It is located outside the classroom. Please clearly mark all removable clothing with your child's name.

Backpacks are handy to store extra clothes, weather specific items (i.e. hats, mittens & scarves), indoor shoes that are taken home daily, and to take home crafts, books, etc. at the end of the day. **IMPORTANT:** Outdoor shoes are to be removed and placed on the boot rack, upon entering the building.

Birthdays

Birthdays will be acknowledged as close to the child's actual birthday as possible. You may wish to provide your child with a special treat in their snack bag for their day. Unfortunately, at this time we are not able to have snacks brought in to share with class friends.

Going Outside

When the weather permits, the class will go outside for the physical activity portion of their class (approximately the last 30 minutes of class). Please ensure that your child has the appropriate clothing and footwear for the current weather and that all items are LABELED (i.e. ski pants, parka, hat, mittens, boots, etc.). The children will engage in staff led activities with ongoing headcounts before, during and after, and all children will wear fluorescent green vests to be easily identified.

Purpose of the Outdoor Policy:

1. Playground activities assist the children in developing their large motor skills and helps in teaching good playground manners and safety.
2. Learn to appreciate and enjoy nature.
3. Encourages independence in preparing to go outside. The teachers will ensure that all children are dressed appropriately before leaving the building.

PHONE DIRECTORY: EXECUTIVE MEMBERS AND TEACHERS

The executive and teachers would like to hear from you if you have any questions, comments, concerns or suggestions. Please feel free to contact the teachers directly to discuss your child and his or her progress. Open communication is the key to a successful year for both you and your child. An executive contact list will be posted in the classroom once school commences.

The executive can also be reached by message or by email at:

Riverbend Playschool
258 Rhatigan Road East
Edmonton, Alberta T6R 2H7
Telephone: 780.988.0704

www.riverbendplayschool.org

The teachers may be reached by telephone or at their playschool email:

riverbendplayschool@gmail.com

All executive members may also be reached at their playschool email:

President:	president.rbps@gmail.com
Vice President:	vp.rbps@gmail.com
Treasurer:	treasurer.rbps@gmail.com
Registrar:	registrar.rbps@gmail.com
Secretary:	secretary1.rbps@gmail.com
Job Coordinator:	jobs.rbps@gmail.com
Casino Chair:	casino.rbps@gmail.com
Newsletter:	newsletter.rbps@gmail.com
Public Relations:	pr.rbps@gmail.com
Website Coordinator:	webmaster.rbps@gmail.com
Licensing/DEI Rep:	DEI.rbps@gmail.com

The Riverbend Playschool is a registered Society. A copy of its bylaws is available upon request. Although we do try to keep this handbook up to date, any policy changes will be noted in the executive meeting minutes that can be located in the Parent Handbook binder that is in the classroom.

Thank you for choosing Riverbend Playschool and sharing in your child's continuing growth and development.