



# PARENT HANDBOOK 2021/2022

## Ottewell Community League Playschool

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Located in Ottewell Community League Hall:

5920 93A Avenue NW

Edmonton, Alberta

T6B 0X2

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## **Introduction**

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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 policies & procedures, as well as the ottewell executive committee. 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.

In addition to the Parent Handbook, a comprehensive Policy and Procedure Manual exists as required by the Alberta Child Care Licensing Act and Regulation. That comprehensive Manual is available to parents upon request. It is summarized in this document.

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## **Program Details**

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### **Working in Partnership**

The mandate of the OCLP Director is to oversee all aspects of the playschool program's management and administration. The Director works closely with the playschool teacher(s), Ottewell Community League Executive, and parents to ensure that our program goals are successfully met in the consideration of all members involved.

### **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 11:15 a.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. New students will be accepted in September and January as space permits.

OCLP follows closely the operational calendar of the Edmonton Public School Board and Edmonton Catholic School Board as many families in the area have other children enrolled with those school boards.

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. The teacher will sign students in and sign students out on the appropriate log.

Access to the OCL Hall will be via the main door at the south side of the Hall. The door will be open from 8:30am to 9:00am to allow for parents to drop off their children. The door will be unlocked at 11:10am. Parents are encouraged to wait outside the hall for pickup to allow for social distancing as the mudroom/main foyer of the hall does not allow for social distancing.

It is imperative that you contact the teacher if you are running late for dismissal times. The teacher(s) are not responsible for your child after class has been dismissed.

## **Transportation & Parking**

Parents are able to park in the OCL Hall's parking lot, as well as on 93A Avenue. There are 2 designated parking stalls as indicated by the playschool parking signs. Bike racks are also available at the front of the OCL Hall for use at the owner's own risk.

Children participating in field trips may travel via public transit or private charter. Parents will be required to authorize this transportation by way of a permission slip/form.

## **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.

## **Playschool 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:
  - 2 x \$100 bingo/casino deposit cheques

*\*\*The deposit 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: \$120/month, two \$600 installments or \$1200/year
  - Three-day program: \$180/month, two \$900 installments or \$1800/year

## Required Supplies

- **Outdoor clothing-** Weather permitting the children are likely to 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**
- **Lunch kit & water bottle**

*\*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 that 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.

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## Parent Participation

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This year, with the addition of a second teacher in class the parent volunteer requirements have been substantially reduced. The following is a list of volunteer requirements that continue to be required:

- Supporting the community league by working 2 bingos or 1 bingo + casino/year\*
- Attendance at OCLP Orientation Meeting in August (**MANDATORY**)
- Volunteer for off-site field trips (if applicable)
- Participation in fundraising projects (if applicable)

\*Failure to participate in the bingos will result in loss of the bingo deposit

## **Playschool Director & OCL**

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

The role of the Director is to liaise between the OCL executive, teachers, and the parents. The director oversees all program operations including licensing, memberships, fundraising, class schedules and program fees. The director is assisted by a registrar who arranges registration procedures, compiles and maintains accurate class lists, and collects fees and deposit cheques. The registrar also handles all playschool registration inquiries by email, phone, in-person and at meetings.

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## **Snack Policy**

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In compliance with AHS students are required to bring their own snack & water bottle to the Playschool. Parents are encouraged to provide a snack that is nutritional and supports their child's dietary needs. **The OCLP is a Nut-Free Playschool.** Snacks will be kept in the student's lunch kit until snack time. Snack time will be conducted at the discretion of the Teacher during the playschool program schedule, however it shall be conducted no later than 10:30 am to allow for sufficient time to eat and clean up.

The Teacher(s) may assist students in opening containers/packages for snacks. Prior to "Snack Time", students, the Teacher(s) will conduct appropriate hand hygiene.

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## **Behaviour Management Policy**

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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, Director and family to resolve the 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.

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## **Child Medication**

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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.

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## **Child Illness**

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**\*\* Please refer to COVID-19 Playschool Relaunch Parent Resource Document \*\***

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 show signs of illness 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. Signs of illness include, but are not limited to:

- Fever
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- New and unexplained coughing or sneezing
- New and/or unexplained rash

Please notify the Teacher and Playschool Director at once if your child has contracted a communicable disease (mumps, chicken pox, lice, etc.) so we may notify the OCLP parents.

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## **Emergency Evacuation Procedures**

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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 main hall door.
- The teacher will hold the door open for the children as they exit the classroom and perform a head count.
- The assistant teacher will lead the children out into the playground/splash pad area.
- The teacher will check the hall to ensure no children are left behind.
- The teacher will retrieve the travelling first aid kit and the portable attendance record book.
- The teacher will close the doors if able and follow the children out the emergency exit.
- 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 attend St. Brendan School (9260 58 Street).
- If the fire department deems it safe to return, children will be assisted back into the Hall.
- If not deemed safe the children will remain at St. Brendan School and parents notified by the Teacher to pick students up.
- The teacher will remain until all children have been picked up.

\*\*If either teacher is outside the classroom (ie. in the bathroom) with a child or children, they will not return to the classroom area but will immediately exit the building via the nearest emergency exit doors with those children and the other teacher will evacuate the remaining children from the classroom.

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.

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## **Accident / Incident Policy**

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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 a teacher, 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.

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

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At this time it is unknown whether there will be opportunities for field-trips in the 2021/2022 school year. The following is an outline in the event that field trips do proceed.

In past years there were typically 4-5 off-site field trips organized by the Teacher and/or Director 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 may be 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.

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## **Smoking Policy**

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There is no smoking permitted on the program premises. The teachers shall not smoke at any time or place where childcare is being provided.