



2016/2017
INFORMATION
BOOKLET

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BEARSPAW PRESCHOOL

The Bearspaw Preschool is a not-for-profit society that offers both morning and afternoon programs for three and four year old students. The school is operated by a five member executive board, all of which are comprised of elected parent volunteers. The Bearspaw Preschool is committed to providing a rich and exciting play environment where your child can learn, play, make new friends, discover and create in a positive and fun way.

Children are taught by a qualified Teacher as well as a Teacher's Aide. There is also a parent volunteer present for every class. Our Preschool relies heavily on our parent volunteers. Each year we look forward to working closely with parents to ensure this first school experience is the best possible for your child.

Your child's educational and social experience will include circle time, playtime, learning centers, science, Arts and crafts. Additional activities involve time in the Bearspaw Lifestyle Centre's gym, outdoor activities on the playground, field trips and special guests to further enrich and diversify the program's offerings.

Please visit our website at www.bearspawpreschool.com.

PRESCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

At Bearspaw Preschool we construct an inclusive environment that will teach to the whole child. There is a balance between structured and play based activities that will support the children in their social and academic development. The play based learning experiences will encourage the physical, social, emotional and cognitive growth in all children. In our classroom your child will engage in many learning opportunities that will enable the students to explore, create, imagine and play.

A balance of theme related and inquiry based activities will provide an authentic and meaningful first school experience for all children. There are many special guests and field trips that will enhance our program. By the children being immersed into an environment of "question" and "discovery", they are provided with the opportunity to learn "how to learn". Our program not only benefits and challenges the child intellectually, but also promotes a spirit of respect and co-operation among the children when dealing with their peers.

Each child develops at their own pace and we are here to facilitate and encourage each individual as they set out on the life-long journey of learning.

In preparation for Kindergarten, the four-year program includes an extra half hour of instructional time each day to allow for increased opportunities to focus on early literacy and early numeracy skills.

We recognize that parents are the child's first teachers. Children learn best when parents are involved in their education program. The primary bridge between home and school is the involvement of family and community.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Class Times

3 Year Old Program

Tuesdays and Thursdays

Mornings: 9:00 - 11:00 am

Afternoons: 12:30 - 2:30 pm

4 Year Old Program

Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays

Mornings 9:00 - 11:30 am

Afternoons: 12:30 - 3:00 pm

The Classroom door will open no sooner than five (5) minutes before the start of class. It is important that you pick up your child on time. Please be as punctual as possible when dropping off and picking up your child. In the event that unforeseen circumstances prevent you from arriving on time to pick up your child, please call your child's classroom, and notify one of the teachers or leave a message on the answering machine. After all other students are dismissed the teachers will remain in your child's classroom with them until you arrive.

If your child will be absent or if a different person will be picking him or her up after class please notify the classroom teacher.

Classroom A (located inside the Bearspaw Lifestyle Centre)

403-239-4441

Classroom B (located in the Portable)

403-208-9339

- Please send a backpack with your child to school each day.
- Children are required to leave a pair of non-marking shoes at the school. Both indoor and outdoor footwear should be done up with Velcro or zippers rather than shoe laces.
- Please keep a change of clothes and a plastic bag in your child's backpack, in case of spills or other accidents during the school day.
- Students are required to wear a helmet on bike days. Please watch your calendar for scheduled bike days and send your child's helmet to school.
- Each child is required to bring their own healthy, nut-free snack to class. The recommended snack is one serving from two food groups, as well as 100% fruit juice or water. We strongly encourage all students to use re-usable food and beverage containers. Our goal is to have a litter-less snack. All juice boxes and Zip-lock bags will be returned in your child's backpack for recycling at home.

*If your child suffers from any allergies, please inform the teacher.

TEACHERS



Kristine Chamberlin – Teacher Classroom A

It is with great enthusiasm that I introduce myself as a preschool teacher at Bearspaw. I have taught at the preschool for several years and I am very excited to return to my position this year.

I obtained a Bachelor's of Education degree from the University of Saskatchewan and have taught at the Kindergarten and Elementary levels. I believe in creating an exciting and educational environment for children, to encourage development in all areas. My program encompasses a wide variety of themes and activities for children to explore all aspects of the world around them.

We will have a fun-filled year with lots of smiles and laughter. I am looking forward to meeting each of you and be sure to drop by and join in the activities.



Michelle Corey – Teacher Classroom B

I have been very fortunate to have had the opportunity to learn from and work with children over the past ten years. The majority of those years have been working as part of the Bearspaw Preschool teaching team. I have also worked in the elementary and middle school environment as a Program Assistant working with special needs children. While working at the preschool, I have furthered my education (Bachelor of Business Administration) and received my Early Childhood Education Certificate from Mount Royal University.

After having children, I decided to take a leave from my profession and began to volunteer in their elementary school. This is where I discovered my passion for working with young children and helping them learn, develop and grow. My Work, education and life experience has given me the wonderful opportunity to assist many children in developing their physical, cognitive, social and emotional skills. I have a genuine interest in helping children learn, succeed and be happy and I look forward to continuing to "learn as we play" with your child at Bearspaw Preschool!

TEACHER AIDES



Jodi Lindsay (Aka) Mrs. Lindsay
Classroom A



Janette Solecki (aka) Mrs. Solecki or Mrs. S
Classroom B

CLASSROOM ROUTINE

The following is an outline of our general classroom routine.

1. **Welcome** - Before entering the classroom, the students will hang up their belongings and put on their indoor shoes. They will be greeted by a teacher and move directly to the circle area.
Note: Classroom A students put their snack into cubbies inside the classroom and classroom B students leave snacks inside their backpacks.
2. **Circle Time** - Calendar activities, games, stories, songs and discussions promote development in language, number skills and social interactions.
3. **Centers** - Children are free to circulate among the choice of centers and activities set out for them. They are encouraged and guided in cooperative play throughout this time. Art is an integral part of an early childhood program and a specific art project will be offered each day. Students will be given a variety of materials, and instruction on how to use those materials appropriately, but there will be very little emphasis on the finished product. Rotating centers such as the sand/water table, dramatic play areas, science and discovery, building, puzzles and games, and the story corner will provide rich opportunities for global development.
4. **Snack** - Please ensure that your child has a nutritious snack each day. This is an important social time where quiet conversation and polite table manners are encouraged.
5. **Gym or Outdoor Play** - Physical education is a fun and busy time! There will be a combination of instructional time and free play with the equipment provided. There will be scheduled days for bike riding (bring your helmet!).
6. **Class Meeting** - Each class will wind up with a short discussion of the day's events and plans for the future. At dismissal time the children will stay in the classroom or gymnasium with the teacher until an adult arrives.

7. Class Dismissal – students will normally be picked up at their classroom (if they are in the Classroom A) or the gymnasium (if they are in Classroom B – Portable). The pickup location may vary occasionally, if a special event is occurring, or at the teacher’s discretion. When you arrive to pick up your child, please wait until the aide releases your child to you. Please do not attempt to enter the classroom or gymnasium until all students are released to their caregivers. If you wish to speak with the teacher or aide after class, please wait until all students are released. For student safety, staff members will not engage in conversations with parents during dismissal while there are still students in their care.

Newsletters will be sent home each month with your child. A calendar of the upcoming month will highlight important events.

Toys from home will not be allowed in the classroom but can be left in the coat area. The exception to this rule is if a child has a security item that he or she would like to hold onto during class time. Please let the teacher know if this is the case for your child.

Separation: It is very natural for some young children to feel apprehensive about new situations. Please be assured that your child will be treated with gentleness and respect, and given the time that he or she needs to adjust to preschool. Parents are welcome to stay at preschool for the first month, by midway through the second month parents are asked to make the transition to leaving their child at the beginning of class. Remain cheerful and positive about school, and trust that your child will be able to handle this challenge. If you have further questions or need guidance please talk to your teacher.

VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering is an integral part of the Bearspaw Preschool program. Our governing board is made up entirely of parent volunteers such as yourself. Families are strongly encouraged to volunteer in the classroom and expected to volunteer within our program in the following ways:

- Class Field Trips & Special Events
- Classroom Cleanup

Classroom Volunteer Days

Families are strongly encouraged to volunteer within the classroom. A volunteer schedule will be created by the classroom coordinator and distributed to parents. The schedule will be made up for 2-3 months at a time. If you have any special requests, such as a preferred day of the week, notice of family holidays or any other accommodations, please notify your classroom coordinator.

The volunteer schedule will be emailed to each family, and a copy will also be posted by the classroom. The posted copy is a reference for the teacher, so parents are expected to document

any volunteer changes on this calendar. Remember that non-enrolled children (such as siblings) are not permitted in the classroom on helper days.

We believe involving parents through classroom volunteering is an integral part of the program that gives your child the opportunity to share his/her school experience with you. There is no special training needed - all we need is your extra pair of hands and your big heart. We encourage parents, grandparents, caregivers or any other special person to share this time with the children. Volunteer days are your opportunity to see what a typical school day looks like and share some special time with your preschooler. You can expect to spend some wonderful one-on-one time with your child, meet and assist other students, and lend a hand with classroom activities and cleanup. Please help to ensure cooperative play at all times and refer any problems to the teacher.

Your child will be the "special helper" on your scheduled volunteer day. He/she is welcome to bring a favorite toy for show and share on that day. We ask all families to respect the preschool's policy of keeping violence out of the classroom (i.e. weapons).

Field Trips and Special Events

Families are expected to provide transportation to and from field trips and remain on-site to assist with supervision. Often siblings are welcome to attend field trips as long as they are supervised by a parent. If there is a situation when you are unable to accompany your child, please contact your classroom teacher ahead of time to make alternate arrangements. We would not want any child to miss out on these events.

Families may be asked to volunteer for special events throughout the year. This may include providing food, helping to set up or clean-up for an event or assisting with fundraising projects.

Classroom Cleanup

A representative from each family is expected to participate in up to two classroom clean-up evenings throughout the school year. These clean-ups entail a thorough cleaning of the entire classroom and all of the toys (which is required by our licensing board). You may be wondering why you need to help clean. Alberta Health Services our licensing board requires that all toys and surface be cleaned/sanitized thoroughly to prevent the spread of harmful germs and bacteria to our children. The teachers do a daily cleaning of all the hard surfaces but sometimes the little things can get overlooked. You will find that this is a great time to chat with other parents in your child's class or meet some new faces that you haven't seen in a while. You will be wiping down books, play centres, sanitizing and disinfecting toys etc... Each family will be responsible for helping with one to two of the 8 clean up days each year. Your class coordinator will give you your scheduled cleaning day at the beginning of the school year so you can plan ahead and will remind parents of the dates leading up to the actual day. Parents meet in the classroom at 7:00 pm and typically finish up 1 to 2 hours later. Children are not permitted in the classroom during classroom cleanup.

If you are unable to attend it is your responsibility to find another person to fill your position.

COMMUNICATION

Communication is the cornerstone of any good relationship. To facilitate communication between parents, the Board and the staff, a Classroom Coordinator is assigned to each class. Any issues, questions, concerns or suggestions about the program should be first brought to the attention of the teachers. If your concerns are unresolved, please feel free to bring them to the attention of the Board through contacting a Board Member, attending a General Meeting and/or writing to the board (see Staff and Board Members list on page 9).

The Preschool also maintains contact with the parents through: parents' attendance at general meetings, posting all meeting minutes on the school bulletin board, weekly emails from the teachers and Classroom Coordinators and monthly newsletters from the teachers. We welcome your feedback and the opportunity to have open discussions about the program offerings.

*As the majority of classroom and Board correspondence is sent electronically, please make sure your contact information (including your email address and phone number) is always up-to-date with your classroom coordinator.

GENERAL MEETINGS

There are three general meetings scheduled for the 2014/15 year:

Tuesday, October 14, 2014	7:00 pm
Tuesday, January 6, 2015	7:00 pm
Tuesday, May 5, 2015	7:00 pm (Annual General Meeting)

All parents are invited to attend these meetings. It is a forum to learn more about the running of the Preschool and bring forth any questions, comments or concerns. Minutes from all meetings will be posted in the Preschool for all to see. Questions and comments are always welcome; please contact any member of the Board (see Staff and Board Members List on page 9).

SCHOOL CLOSURES

School closures may happen due to inclement weather or any other unforeseen problems associated with the safe operation of the classroom (mechanical, plumbing, or water failures). The Preschool has the authority to cancel classes under these circumstances. In general, the Preschool follows the Bears paw School with respect to closures in the winter. In the event of any closure, Classroom Coordinators will be contacted as soon as possible and asked to initiate an emergency fan-out to families.

Should the Teacher deem it necessary to cancel a class already in progress, the school will notify

parents of the shortened class and parents/emergency contacts will be required to pick up their children. If the emergency contact cannot be reached, the Teacher will stay with the child until the child can be picked up by the appropriate parent/caregiver.

SAFETY AND SECURITY / EMERGENCY

The children will be instructed on our fire drill procedures on a regular basis. The Bearspaw School has been designated the meeting place if an emergency should occur. Please check the bulletin board for Fire Drill dates and dress your child accordingly.

If there is an emergency in the classroom requiring evacuation, children will be safely escorted from the building and parents/emergency contacts will be notified by school staff immediately. Children will remain at the Bearspaw School until parents/emergency contacts are able to pick up their children. We rely on the emergency information on your registration form. If contact names change during the year, parents are responsible for notifying the Teacher of these changes to keep our records current.

Students will only be released from the classroom to an authorized adult (as designated on the Child Release Waiver). Families must notify the teacher if alternate arrangements are necessary. The person picking up your child may be asked to show identification.

INJURY

The Teacher and Aide are required to have a First Aid Certificate. Should an accident or injury occur, the following steps will be taken;

1. **Minor** - Treated by the Teacher, Aide or parent volunteer (i.e. bandage on a cut). Incident is reported to the parent.
2. **Serious** - The Teacher, Aide, or parent volunteer will contact the parent or the emergency contact person. If unable to contact a parent, the child will be taken to the nearest medical clinic or hospital, that is: Ranchlands Medical Clinic, the Children's Hospital or the Foothills Hospital. The child will be accompanied at all times by a Teacher designate until the child's parent arrives. The Teacher will make the decision as to whether or not an ambulance must be called. Any fee incurred is the parent's responsibility. The incident must be documented on an injury form. Two adults must remain with the class while the injured child is attended to.

ILLNESS AND MEDICATION PROCEDURES

We expect parents to responsibly evaluate their child's health before sending them to school. If your child exhibits any of the following symptoms, please DO NOT bring them to school:

- Diarrhea and/or vomiting within 24 hours of class time
- Nasal discharge that is NOT clear
- High Fever (with or without medication)
- ANY communicable disease (i.e. pink eye, foot and mouth, strep throat)

If your child is ill and will be absent from school, please notify the classroom teacher:

Classroom A (located inside the Bearspaw Lifestyle Centre)	403-239-4441
Classroom B (located in the Portable)	403-208-9339

If the Teacher feels your child is not well enough to attend class, you will be asked to take him/her home. If your child develops a communicable disease (i.e. chicken pox, whooping cough, impetigo, etc.) the parent is expected to inform the school.

Medications will not be administered to children unless the appropriate medication form has been completed and signed by the parent, and provided to the Teacher.

ALLERGIES

Please ensure that the Teacher is aware of any allergy your child may have. All allergies are posted in the classroom to help ensure the safety of every child. We have information sheets on each child with allergies which specifically outline what the child's reaction looks like and if and when any intervention (like an EpiPen) is needed.

DISCIPLINE

The Teacher is responsible for setting clear expectations and consequences with respect to acceptable and not acceptable behavior in the classroom. The Teacher and the Teacher's Aide will work together to encourage and enforce these expectations in appropriate ways.

Discipline will be administered through a series of escalating actions as follows:

1. Allow the children a reasonable length of time to solve the problem on their own, with zero tolerance for violence (hitting, kicking, scratching, etc.).
2. The Teacher will talk to the children regarding the incident, guiding them to consider the

rights and feelings of others and assisting with finding a solution.

3. Teacher intervention may involve distraction, redirection or separation of the children, if necessary.
4. For unmanageable disruption or incidents that interfere with the well-being of others, the Teacher will contact the parents of the child (ren) involved, as well as the President, to discuss the behavior problem(s) and what actions may be taken to remedy the situation. The Teacher will document the behavior in an incident report and an action plan may be formally written up.
5. An action plan defines:
 - a. observed (unacceptable) behaviors of the child;
 - b. method(s) of approach to deal with the concern(s);
 - c. indication from all parties of their support of the approach;
 - d. A schedule for follow up meetings.

If an action plan is created, teaching staff will write down a simple log of observations (positive and negative) on a regular basis so that the situation can be more objectively assessed.

6. If, after reasonable efforts on the part of the teaching staff and parent, a child cannot cope within the guidelines of the program, he/she will be asked to leave the program. This will be evaluated by both the Teacher and the President, based upon the written action plan and the observations/evaluations with respect to the child's behavior since the creation of the action plan.

Feedback/Communication Guidelines

If a parent has a concern or issue with the Teacher, the Teacher's Aide or the running of the classroom, the first step is to seek clarification from the teaching staff. If this does not address your concerns to your satisfaction, you should inform the President.

It is at the discretion of the President to consult with the executive Board Members if necessary.

PHOTOGRAPHY/VIDEOGRAPHY POLICY

Public Events

The Preschool hosts a few public events throughout the year that are open to all family members (for example, Holiday Celebrations and 4 Year Old Graduation). The Preschool welcomes families to record these special events, and as they are public events, no parental consent for recordings is required under the FOIP Act.

Private (In-Class) Events

Regular classroom days are not open to the public. The Bearspaw Preschool Society recognizes that parents and caregivers may want to record their child's special helper day and the Teachers will allow cameras in the classroom. However, the policy of the preschool is that parents/

caregivers may only photograph their own child and that no media recorded in the classroom may be published to a public forum including social media sites (Facebook, YouTube, etc.).

WITHDRAWAL / CANCELLATION POLICY

Cancelled registration at any time will result in forfeiture of the non-refundable registration fee.

After school begins, notification of withdrawal must be made in writing to the Registrar of the Board no later than 30 days prior to withdrawal. If timing is an issue, a telephone call to the Registrar followed by a letter will be accepted. Failure to provide sufficient notice will result in forfeiture of the next month's tuition.

The Bearspaw Preschool Society reserves the right to discontinue a child's involvement in the program for reasons of non-payment of fees or the inability of a child or parent to adjust to the program (please refer to the Discipline Policy for further details). If a child is discontinued by the Board, the parent will not forfeit the next month's tuition.

If a child is withdrawn for any period of time (vacation or sickness) fees must be paid to maintain the child's place in the program.

