

**RIVERBEND
PLAYSCHOOL**

The Parent Handbook
2008 - 2009

**Riverbend Playschool
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Table of Contents

	<u>Page No.</u>
Introduction.....	3
Our Philosophy	4
Programs, Eligibility, and Times Offered.....	4
Membership	5
Member Volunteer Positions	6
Phone Directory: Executive & Teacher(s).....	6
Administrative Matters:	
Admission	7
Registration Fee	7
Monthly Fees	7
Registration Forms.....	7
Community League Memberships.....	8
Sharing Day Parents and Roster	8
Membership Withdrawal	9
Probationary Period	9
Medical Problems	9
Incidents/Accidents Involving Children during Class Time	9
Team Teaching.....	9
Staggered Entry.....	10
Arrival and Pick Up	10
Things to Bring to School.....	10
Parking	11
Policies:	
Illness Policy.....	11
Medication Policy	11
Child Guidance	12
Late Pick Up	13
Medical Emergency	13
Snack Policy	13
Protocol for Handling Issues or Concerns	14
Emergency Procedures:	
Fire Safety.....	15
Relocation Procedure	15
Supporting Your Child's Learning:	
A Typical Day.....	15
Busy Bear and Buddy Bear.....	16
Show and Share.....	17
Library	17
Scholastic Book Orders	17
Field Trips.....	17
Cubbies	17
Clothing	18
Birthdays.....	18
Going Outside.....	18

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 funded by tuition and casino proceeds, putting all our funds 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 18 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 March 1st 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 September 30th 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 March 1st of their 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. During the first two days of attendance, only half of each class will attend during a shortened class time. We also schedule two sharing day parents in our 3-year-old classes for the first six weeks (transition period) since experience has shown that it often takes the children and their parents about that time to adjust to playschool. Thereafter, one sharing day parent will be present each day. If needed, we will schedule two sharing day parents in our 4-year-old classes for the same transition period. However, this is usually unnecessary since most children are returning. These classes generally make out fine with one sharing day parent from the start.

As your child grows and becomes more aware of the surrounding world, he/she will enjoy the benefit from socialization with his/her peers. Riverbend Playschool meets the needs of socializing by allowing children in the community to meet play and learn together.

The playschool aims to be a fun and happy place for your child. We want him/her to be comfortable here, making Riverbend Playschool a positive experience for both your child and you.

Our Philosophy

Riverbend Playschool aims to enhance the overall development of children and contribute to the development of a positive self-concept, encourage a love of learning, and 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. By providing 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.

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 and 4 year old PM class	Tuesday and Thursday	12:45 p.m. to 3:15 p.m.

Three day per week programs: (18 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** will be open to parents of children who will be 3 years old on or before March 1st 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 September 30th 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 March 1st of their 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 cooperate with and support the teachers and the playschool program.
2. To support playschool activities with manpower. (Resources, helpers, etc.)
3. To meet the challenges of playschool education with ideas and meaningful discussion with the teachers.
4. To volunteer and be responsible for playschool jobs.
5. Uphold the confidentiality of the program; its members and staff.

If you have any concerns or worries regarding your child or the program, please bring them to the teachers attention by special 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 more able 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 and periodic classroom roster duties (sharing day parents) 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.

Member Volunteer Positions

Executive Committee:

President
Treasurer
Casino Chair

Vice President
Registrar
Secretary

The executive membership is responsible for the affairs of the playschool and will be elected at the time of the Annual General Meeting. 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 by law changes will be presented to the members and held for vote at an annual, general or special meeting.

Classroom Job Assignments

Administrative Assistant	Field Trip Coordinator
Craft Preparation	Laundry
Class Representative	Librarian
Sharing Day Administrator	Memory Book
Photographer	Paint
Cleaning Bee Committee	Play Dough
Cleaning Bee Coordinator	Recyclable Products
Fundraising Committee	Sewing/Mending
Theme Changer	Toy/Puzzle Sorter
Web Page Manager	

During registration nights master lists of all jobs required will be available. On your registration night, after registering your child, you will choose your playschool job. This means that job selection is on a first come first serve basis. Any families that register after the registration nights or fail to choose a job will be assigned one of the remaining jobs by the job coordinator. A copy of your job description will be given to you on the first day of playschool class in September. If your job requires that you come into the school before the first day of classes the Job Coordinator will contact you by phone.

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 Co-operative Playschool
258 Rhatigan Road East

988-0704
www.riverbendplayschool.org.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

1. Admission

Admission is accepted on a 'first come, first served' basis, within the following priorities:

- The First registration is limited to current members of the playschool and conducted through a pre-registration in February.

- The Second registration is open to alumni members of the playschool conducted through a pre- registration night in March.
- The Third registration is open to new registrants conducted through a registration night in March. At least 50% of the available spaces will be offered to the Riverbend Community League Members of Rhatigan Ridge, Ramsey Heights, Brookside and Brander Gardens only with a proof of residency. The remaining spaces will be available to members of any community.
- Dishonest or fraudulent information provided on member documents will result in dismissal from the school.
- A copy of the child's birth certificate is required during registration.
- 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 do maintain and strictly adhere to an ordered waiting list. When the registrar contacts you from the waiting list either by phone or by email (as indicated by you) 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 in 48 hours the registrar will contact the next family on the waiting list.**

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@riverbendplayschool.org.

- Please note however that once a playschool year has started no open spaces in a class will be filled after February of that playschool year.

2. Registration Fee

There is a set registration fee every year due at the time of registration. This fee is non-refundable. The registration fee must be given to the Registrar with the registration forms to secure your child's spot in the program. Also due at this time are the first month tuition fees.

3. Monthly Fees

***** Please ensure you have cheques on your person, where the date is numerical as neither the playschool, nor its bank will accept the previous style where the date is written. The date needs to be numerical for the registration to be accepted *****

Monthly fees are set in accordance with the needs of the program. Cheques must be made payable to Riverbend Playschool. All cheques for the school year (September – May) will be collected at the time of registration. Fees are collected as follows:

- Cheque #1** Registration + September tuition
 - use the current date
- Cheque #2** \$100 Duty Bond Cheque
 - leave date blank
 - **this cheque will only be cashed if you fail to perform your parental duties**
- Cheque #3** October/November/December Tuition
 - post-dated **October 1**
- Cheque #4** January/February Tuition
 - post-dated **January 1**
- Cheque #5** March/April/May Tuition
 - post-dated **March 1**

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.

Our program qualifies for subsidy from Alberta Children's Services. If you would like to apply for the program, additional information is provided at <http://www.child.alberta.ca/home/710.cfm>. Certain subsidy limits may apply to the application with respect to amount and/or the eligible period of time. As the school is not required to know the personal information related to a subsidy application, it is our policy the parent is obligated to apply for this subsidy and to ensure the school receives the applicable funds. Member's tuition cheques will be cashed as they come due. The school will refund any subsidy funds to the member, upon receipt from the funding program, for the applicable month(s).

4. Registration Forms

Registration forms and release forms are to be filled out entirely to complete your child's registration prior to the playschool commencing in September.

To ensure a 'first come, first served' process; only one registration package per person will be accepted, except for families registering more than one of their own children.

Completely fill out the attached registration forms and submit it together with all required cheques to the registrar in order for your registration package to be accepted.

Please update any information that may change throughout the year on your child's registration form located in the classroom and initial and date all changes. Parents may be asked to update information on the registration form twice a year.

5. 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 will 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 the Riverbend Community League website. (<http://www.riverbendonline.ca/index.php?memberships>) It is not a requirement that this membership be purchased from the Riverbend Community League, we encourage members to purchase their memberships from the communities they reside in.

6. Sharing Day Parents and Roster

Parents are an integral component of the Riverbend Playschool. Their support and interest in the well being of their child and the school is invaluable. As a cooperative, the parents take an active role in the classroom by assisting the teachers in carrying out the daily activities. For the first six weeks (transition period) two helper parents are present each day in the classroom. Thereafter, one helper parent will be present each day. They are required to arrive 15 minutes early with their child to discuss with the teachers the activities of the day and how they can help. They are also asked to stay behind an extra 15 minutes to ensure the children are discharged safely and the room is clean for the next playschool session.

There are many benefits to being a helper in the classroom. First and foremost, your child is given special recognition. For example, they can bring in a show-and-tell item, they are asked to be a special helper to the teachers, and they are first in line to go outside. Your child can also share experiences with you throughout the day. As a parent, you can observe first hand how your child interacts with their classmates and teachers. As well, you are able to personally share your enthusiasm, expertise and skills with the class. Moreover, you have an opportunity to meet your child's classmates and the other parents, and to work with the teachers and build relationships with them all. It is a partnership that will prove invaluable to you, your child and the community at large.

Because of the important role helper parents play in the smooth operation of the classroom, a roster will be posted on an ongoing basis indicating which days you have been assigned to attend (generally once every four to six weeks). If you cannot make the scheduled day, it is your responsibility to switch with another helper parent, or send a substitute person (who must be 18 years of age or over) such as the other parent or a grandparent. Please be sure to keep the teachers and other parents informed of any changes by marking them on the master roster copy posted in the classroom.

Emergency parents are available in case a parent is unavailable and a replacement cannot be found. The emergency parent is to be used in exceptional situations only. If the emergency parent is utilized you automatically assume that parents next scheduled duty day.

Please note: There is a \$100.00 duty bond collected with the registration. This will be deposited if a member fails to work his or her sharing day without finding someone to work in his or her place or if other member duties are not fulfilled. If a second fine is incurred, the member may be asked to withdraw his or her child from the playschool.

7. Membership Withdrawal

Once the program has started, 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.

8. 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.

9. 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.

10. 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.

These 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. Both teachers and parent are required to sign it. The original will be kept with the child's file. 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.

11. Team Teaching

We are excited to offer a 'learning through play' program which 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.

12. 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 two days of

attendance only half of each class will attend during a shortened class time. The smaller child/teacher ratio for the first class allows the children and teachers to better get acquainted.

This first class will be organized to introduce your child to both the classroom and to the playschool routines. **You are required to accompany and remain with your child on their staggered entry day.** Please participate with your child in the activities that the teachers have planned. Being with your child this first day will help them feel more comfortable when they attend school without you. **It is expected that you make child care arrangements for any siblings.**

13. 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. Arriving five minutes early for class allows your child time to prepare for the day: hang up their coats and knapsacks, put on their indoor shoes and nametags, and greet their classmates. Parents should wait to ensure the child is in the classroom and greeted by the teachers prior to leaving. A boot rack has been conveniently located in the front door of the building to place soiled or wet footwear (both yours and your child's).

At the end of the day, your child will be excited to see you and tell you about the events of the day. Parents are asked to wait patiently until the class is over prior to entering the room. The teachers will wait with the child until the parent is there before letting the child leave their care. The parent or caregiver must sign a sign-out sheet. If any person other than the expected parent/caregiver is to pick up the child, please inform the teachers.

A playground between Earl Buxton School and St. Mary's School is often used. Although its location is convenient, it places the parking lot between the playground and the community league building. Teachers ensure that, as a group, the children walk around the parking lot. 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.

15. 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 healthy snack and drink (no pop/candy bars/cupcakes/etc) with your child to each class. This snack must include choices from at least two food groups. 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.

14. Parking

Parking is available directly outside the front doors of the community league and in visitor stalls 36, 37, and 38. Three stalls have also been reserved for the teachers and sharing day parent. Other parking stalls are designated for Earl Buxton Staff. Please note 'no parking' and 'school bus' signs.

Sharing day parent may park in stall number 34.

POLICIES

1. Illness Policy

If you have a sick child, please keep them home from playschool. If a child becomes sick while at playschool, the parent will be contacted to pick up their child. The child will be isolated from the other children until the parent arrives.

Children are too sick to be at playschool if they have any of the following symptoms:

- fever of 38 degrees C, 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.

2. 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, 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 done each year. Any other medical conditions need to be dealt with the teachers on a one to one basis.

It is the parent's responsibility to ensure the emergency medication is given to a teacher before each class. The teachers will ensure it is not accessible to the children, but quickly accessible by the teachers in an emergency. The parent is responsible for picking up the medication at the end of class and will always ensure the medication has not expired. **Under no circumstances will the teachers give out any other medications while a child is at playschool.**

3. Child Guidance Policy

The Playschool maintains a positive approach in problem solving.

a. **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.

b. **Redirection**

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

c. **Giving Choices**

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

d. **Problem Solving**

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

f. **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.

g. **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.

h. **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.**

4. 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:

1. 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.
 - a. Parents
 - b. Authorized persons to whom the child may be released
 - c. Emergency contacts
2. If no one is reached the teachers are required to call the police to arrange safekeeping of your child until you do arrive.
3. 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 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. (PH: 988-0704)

5. 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.

6. 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. 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 snack may be shared, all snacks must be store bought.** Due to Health Regulations foods cannot be prepared at members homes.

7. 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.
 - a. Express issues or concerns respectfully while keeping confidentiality in mind.
 - b. The teachers may be able to provide another view to a situation. Remember, they are the 'expert' in child development and the playschool environment.
 - c. 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 parent and teachers, please contact the President for assistance. Again, a meeting may be necessary to help generate strategies and solutions.
 - a. Inform the other party before involving the President.
 - b. 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.
 - a. 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.

8. Privacy Policy

The executive has recently adopted a privacy policy to explain to parents how the personal information of parents and their children will be used, collected and disclosed.

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 which is included with the registration package.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

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

1. 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. 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. The Sharing Day Parent Calls the Fire Department. (911)
8. Proceed with relocation procedures.

2. Relocation Procedures

1. Teachers and Sharing Day Parent 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 and Sharing Day Parent will remain with the children until all children have been picked up.

Supporting Your Child's Learning

1. A Typical Day

A typical playschool day includes the following activities and not necessarily in that 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.

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
- paint center, play dough table
- 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.

2. Busy Bear and Buddy Bear

The sharing day roster indicates the 'Busy Bear' and the 'Buddy Bear' children. Busy Bear is the child whose parent is helping that day. The Busy Bear is the primary helper in the class for the day - they bring a show and share, ring the bell for clean up, are first in line for washing hands, etc. Buddy Bear is the child who needs to bring only show and share for the day. This gives the children in each class more opportunity to come to class and talk about a favorite item. They are identified with a special bear pin.

3. Show and Share

Your child will have a lot of interesting and special things that they will want to share with their teachers and classmates. Special days will be set aside throughout the year for them to bring in ONE show and share item. The teachers will help the child to share these items with the class by asking questions to help draw them out. The day coincides with the parent's sharing day to provide the opportunity for parents to watch their child share the item. Encourage your child to wait until those special days to bring toys into the classroom.

4. Library

A love of books is an important element in life long learning. In addition to the variety of books, stories and poems shared with the class on a daily basis, the children can access the playschool's library at any time during their session. In fostering this love of books, and in preparing them for a school setting, each child may take home a book to be returned within one week. Look for the library borrowing system inside the classroom.

5. 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.

6. Field Trips

In keeping with the themes that are run throughout the year, a variety of field trips may be taken in and around Edmonton. 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, so please let the teachers know if you are available. A ratio of one adult for every two or three children is required, depending on the age group.

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.

7. **Cubbies**

Your child has been assigned a “cubby box” to store his or her crafts and artwork. Newsletters from the teachers and information from the executive may be found in this box. Be sure to empty your cubby box at the end of each day, as children’s cubby boxes are shared with other children in other classes.

8. **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.

9. **Birthdays**

Birthdays will be acknowledged as close to the child’s actual birthday as possible. You will be placed on the Sharing day roster as close to your child’s birthday as possible. On that day, you may bring a special snack (rice crispy squares, cupcakes, etc) for your child to share with the rest of the class. During special celebrations when snack may be shared, all snacks must be store bought. Due to Health Regulations foods cannot be prepared at members homes. Please keep in mind that we are a nut free school. We will have a birthday party near the end of the school year when we will celebrate all of the summer birthdays.

10. **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 (i.e. ski pants, parka, hat, mittens, boots, etc.).

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 and Sharing day parent will ensure that all children are dressed appropriately before leaving the building.

Riverbend Playschool

The Riverbend Playschool is a registered Society. A copy of it's 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 growth and development.