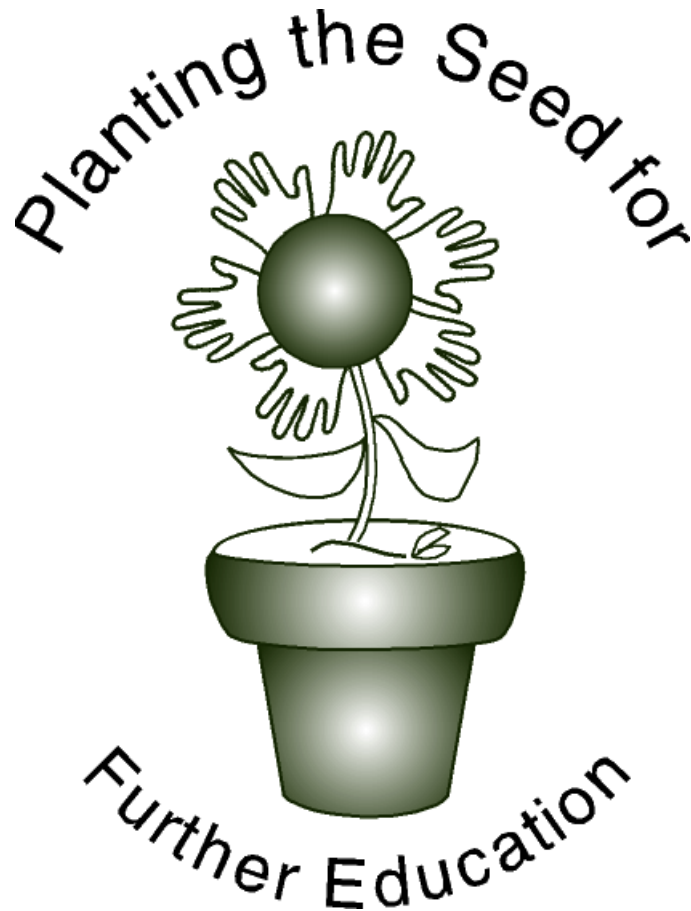


CREATIVE KIDS PRESCHOOL

PARENT HANDBOOK



"EVERYTHING A CREATIVE KID PARENT
SHOULD KNOW AND MORE!! "

www.creativekidspreschool.ca

PHILOSOPHY

At Creative Kids Preschool, we are dedicated to providing highly qualified teachers, fun, social and stimulating academic programs, and a creative, artistic environment to help each child develop to his or her maximum potential.

Working closely with parents through a happy, fun and unhurried atmosphere, we strive to develop an interest in learning. The aim of our preschool is to provide early learning skills, appropriate social skills and let each child explore, play and be as creative as they want to be in a safe, loving environment.

At Creative Kids Preschool, our programs are designed to provide an emotional, social, physical, and intellectual foundation for further learning, as we call "**Planting The Seed for Further Education™**".

OUR GOALS FOR EACH AND EVERY CHILD AT CREATIVE KIDS

- ∞ **Emotional Maturity** - Is the child independent, self-motivated, able to make choices, happily involved in the setting?
- ∞ **Social skills** - Is the child able to get along with others, make friends, and take part in conversation?
- ∞ **Listening skills** - Is the child able to listen to stories, follow directions, and focus on activities?
- ∞ **Oral/expressive skills** - Is the child able to express his wants and needs, repeat rhymes, songs and stories, contribute ideas?
- ∞ **Self-help skills** - Is the child responsible for her personal belongings and her personal needs, does she clean up after herself, dress herself?
- ∞ **Learning skills** - Is the child able to find solutions, solve age-appropriate puzzles, and repeat age-appropriate sequences and patterns?
- ∞ **Positive self-esteem** - Is the child growing more confident in what she can do, developing friendships, feeling good about herself?
- ∞ **Creative thinking skills** - Is the child able to think divergently (see more than one solution), share new ideas, and be inventive in his thinking process?
- ∞ **Physical skills** - Is the child able to play action games, do simple exercises, and participate in small and large motor activities?
- ∞ **Creative music and movement experiences** - Is the child able to think of new ways to move, sing new words to songs, design and implement new ideas?
- ∞ **Artistic Ability** - Is the child able to draw a human figure with a head, body, arms and legs? Can the child use scissors and cut on a line? Is the child able to follow directions and independently complete an artistic task to the best of their ability?
- ∞ **Print Awareness** (concepts of print, language awareness) – uses of writing and reading, what print looks like, ways stories begin and end, left to right direction of writing and spacing of words, relationships between printed letters and speech sound and awareness of sound elements in language, such as rhyme, beginning sounds, syllables, and phonemes.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Creative Kids Preschool! We have been in the community since 1996 and we are celebrating our 13th year anniversary! We look forward to getting to know all the children, their families, and caregivers.

Our school has been licensed by the Community Care Licensing Board, for an enrolment of twenty children and two teachers per class.

My name is **Mrs. Sandra Christian**. I am the Owner and Director of Creative Kids, **Mrs. Becky Roosdahl** teaches the Ready to Read Program and the three's program. She is also the senior teacher of the centre. **Miss Leeah Bond** teaches both the three's and four's program. **Mrs. Debbie Back** teaches the four-year-old program with Miss Bond.

We feel it is important that the children call their teachers by their last names: Mrs. Christian, Mrs. Roosdahl, Miss Bond and Mrs. Back.

We hope you will take the time to read this handbook to familiarize yourself with our policies and aspects, that will help make your child's year or two an enjoyable one. We hope your child's years at Creative Kids Preschool will be a fun, social time as well as an educational one.

Each month you will receive a newsletter to keep you up-to-date on our monthly program plans, special dates to remember, and any items we may require for certain projects. Please read them carefully and keep them handy.

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

Here at Creative Kids Preschool we employ three staff. I, **Mrs. Sandra Christian**, am the Owner and Director. My qualifications are 18 years teaching in licensed preschool centres, E.C.E. diploma, yearly lecture series, extended child-related courses, Food safe course and current First Aid certificate. I have also completed Post Basic courses, which includes Before and After School Care, Sign Language, Speech and Language Therapy, Behavioral Management and Fun Family Phonics/Ready to Read Tutoring program. I also have two children of my own.

Mrs. Becky Roosdahl has been teaching at Creative Kids Preschool since January 2003 and is the Supervisor of the centre and also teaches our popular Ready to Read program. Mrs. Roosdahl is E.C.E qualified receiving top honors and marks in her graduating class. She is fluent in Sign Language (successfully completed mastery exam), has a current First Aid Certificate and has completed the Food Safe course. Post Basic courses completed include Addressing Challenging Behaviour, Autism and ADD workshops, Fundamentals of Supervision and Management and Life Threatening Allergies in Child Care Centres. Mrs. Roosdahl also has completed The Fun Family Phonics program and has her Ready to Read tutoring certificate. Mrs. Roosdahl is heavily involved in her community, on the parent board of her local elementary school and has three children of her own; two of them attended Creative Kids Preschool.

Miss Leeah Bond has been a part of our teaching team since 2005. Miss Bond teaches both the three's and four's program and is our fulltime teacher. She is E.C.E qualified and has been teaching at various center's since 2002. Miss Bond also has her current First Aid certificate, has completed the Food Safe course and also successfully completed The Fun Family Phonics program, receiving her Ready to Read tutoring certificate. Miss Bond has also recently completed her sign language course.

Mrs. Debbie Back is the newest addition to our teaching team as of September 2008. Mrs. Back teaches the four's program with Miss Bond. She has been working in the Early Childhood Education field since 1992 and was teaching at a Preschool in Australia while studying for her diploma. Mrs. Back is trained in first aid, has her food safe course and has completed the Fun Family Phonics program, receiving her Ready to Read tutoring certificate. She has owned and operated a very successful family child care center in her home while raising her two small children. Both of Mrs. Back's children also attended Creative Kids Preschool

NOTE: Creative Kids take pride in being highly involved with the E.C.E. (Early Childhood Education) Program through various colleges. We support this program by having practicum students (male or female) join our centre for two or three weeks at one time. These students learn and practice skills through various teaching methods that will enable them to graduate from their E.C.E. Program. You will notice different faces in our centre from time to time. Introductions of each student will be posted on our PARENT BULLETIN BOARD at the beginning of each practicum. Please be aware that all students have gone through an intensive interview process with us and have had a criminal record check through the R.C.M.P.

FEES

Please take note that our class times for our three year olds are 2 ½ hours and our class times for our four year olds are 3-hour classes. The monthly fees are **\$135.00** for the three-year-old classes (Tuesdays and Thursdays), and **\$160.00** per month for the four-year-old classes (Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays). There is also a **\$20.00 registration fee**. All fees (except registration) are payable by **post-dated cheques for September to June**. There will be no refund on monthly fees or any portion thereof, regardless of sickness, school holidays or family vacations. Our fees are based on a twelve-day month (eight days for three-year-olds) and because some months are longer, these extra days cover the public school holidays during Christmas and Spring Break. **** One full month's written notice must be given for withdrawal of your child before the 1st of the following month**. After receiving notice, all remaining post-dated cheques will be returned to you. The \$20.00 registration fee is not refundable. **Deadline for September withdrawal is July 31.** **There will be no withdrawals after March 31.** Pre-school will be closed during all public holidays, which include Christmas and Spring Break. If there are two siblings attending this Pre School, there will be a reduction of \$10.00 for one child each month. **** There will be a \$20.00 charge for all returned cheques.**

**Creative Kids believes in fair, competitive fees for all the families attending the school. We also believe in fair wages for our amazing, highly qualified teachers. In order to make sure that we always ensure endless quality supplies for each of our programs, healthy foods for the snacks we provide and quality equipment inside and out we will make small changes to our fees every two years.

DAILY SCHEDULE

The schedule can vary from class to class, depending on different activities introduced that day!

Three Year Old Program (two and one-half hours)

- Morning Classes: 8:45 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.

- Afternoon Classes: 12:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

All classes follow the same schedule.

- 8:45 - 9:10 Table Toys Time (fine motor activities, playdough, puzzles, colouring and creating, water play, sand play, painting, etc.). Computer time, art collage.
- 9:10 Clean up. (Children are encouraged to help and be responsible for what they are working on).
- 9:20 – 9:50 Learning Circle (greeting, attendance, sharing, science, counting, introduction of themes, songs, etc.).
- 9:50 - 10:25 Free Play and Art / Crafts Time. Computer time.
- 10:25 Clean up.
- 10:35 – 10:55 Music & Movement circle (songs, games, exercise, musical instruction etc.) Show and Tell Bag.
- 10:55 Hand washing and Snack time (hot and cold nutritional snacks).
- 11:15 Goodbye Circle (time to go home).

Four Year Old Program (three hours)

- Morning Classes: 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

- Afternoon Classes: 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

All classes follow the same schedule.

- 8:30 – 8:55 Table Toys Time (using fine motor skills; i.e. puzzles, manipulative activities, coloring and creating, collage, playdough, sand and water play, painting, etc.). Computer time.
- 8:55 Clean up. (Children are encouraged to clean up and be responsible for what they are working on).
- 9:00 - 9:50 Learning Circle (greeting, attendance, Fun Family Phonics, counting in French and English, calendar in French (Jan.) and English. Pre school level sign language, introduction of themes, age appropriate science experiments, songs, exercise, games, sharing, etc.).
- 9:50 - 10:35 Free Play, Art / Crafts Time, Computer time and work on Phonic skills.
- 10:35 Clean up.
- 10:45 -10:50 Show and Tell Bag.
- 10:50 -11:05 Hand washing and Snack time (hot and cold nutritional snacks).
- 11:05 – 11:30 Music & Movement circle (songs, games, stories, exercise, musical instruction etc./Good bye time).

FUN FAMILY PHONICS

In September our **four-year-old classes** will be introduced to the Fun Family Phonics Program. All teachers at Creative Kids have taken the four-week course and have their tutoring certificate on teaching the program. We are very excited about this program and know that each child will benefit greatly. Our goals at Creative Kids Preschool have always been PLANTING THE SEED FOR FURTHER EDUCATION and we strive to always find ways to extend our great program to benefit the children even more. Please keep in mind that this program is a fun, interactive, stimulating program that the children find very enjoyable.

The Fun Family Phonics Program has been implemented in a handful of preschools and the teachers and parents have found their students to be very successful and confident as they learn the concepts, shapes and sounds of the alphabet and beyond.

What is Phonics? Phonics is a way of teaching reading and spelling through letter-sounding relationships. Letters are abstract symbols. Children have difficulty puzzling them out and distinguishing between them, as long as they remain abstract. This unique method of teaching early phonic skills was invented to give life to these symbols and to provide a memory hook between the symbol and the sound that the letter makes in a word. The stories in the Fun Family Phonics Program (1st book) center on the lower case letters because these are the ones that children find most difficult. Upper case letters are included in the text and each story begins with the capitalized form of the target letter. Please keep in mind that this entire program is based on fun, implementing, songs, games, creative stories and is very age appropriate.

An important aspect of children's literacy development is learning about the purposes of reading and writing and how the written language works. This knowledge is widely known as "print awareness" (concepts of print and language awareness). A good grasp on print awareness is necessary before children move onto phonic skills. All these skills are built in to our program over the two years your child shares with us.

Print awareness includes a number of concepts, such as:

- Functions, or uses, of writing and reading.
- Visual features - what print looks like.
- Language structures - such as the way stories begin and end.
- Procedures - such as the left to right direction of writing and spacing between words.
- The symbolic nature of writing – that writing can represent spoken words and ideas.
- The alphabetic principle – that there is a relationship between printed letters and speech sounds.
- Phonological awareness – awareness of sound elements in language, such as rhyme, beginning sounds, syllables, and phonemes (the smallest unit of sound in speech).

When working with your child at home, it is very helpful to please encourage them to write using "lower case letters" and "upper case letters" only at the beginning of their name or a sentence. Also, when writing with your child, start "left to right", starting at the top left hand corner of the page. This concept will help your child as they start to learn to read. Reading to your child daily and incorporating open-ended questions will also benefit them greatly at this age as they are learning print awareness.

READY TO READ PROGRAM

The Ready to Read Program is designed for **Kindergarten and Grade One students** who have successfully been through the Fun Family Phonics. The Fun Family Phonics (print awareness and onto phonemic awareness) is taught in our four's program. The children will follow through to our Ready to Read Program after having a strong knowledge of the names, sounds and shapes of the letters in the alphabet and be able to write them with some confidence. Your child should also be interested in learning to read.

This reading program is designed to make the experience of learning to read very enjoyable. The children will have fun and find that they can read each book with confidence, fluency, meaning and expression.

PHILOSOPHY

“A child’s attitude to reading is of such importance that
More often than not it determines his/her **scholastic fate**.
Moreover, his/her **experience** in learning to read may decide
How he/she feels about learning in general, and even
Himself/herself as an individual”.

PHONEMIC AWARENESS – Throughout learning the correct sounds of each letter in the alphabet and feeling comfortable expressing them, children should be able to divide a word up into sounds, e.g. **cat**. This process starts early reading by being able to recognize the words by sounding them out. Also, being able to put the sounds in correct order as read from a word.

The Ready to Read Program classes are on Tuesday and Thursdays from 3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. The ratio is 12 children to one teacher. The program runs from September to June, as the school system. All children will receive their own binder and pocket pal (to hold supplies and books) to bring to school and home each session. All children finishing the four's program will receive more information on our reading program near the end of the school year.

REGISTRATION FORMS

When you register your child at Creative Kids Preschool, you will receive a detailed registration form outlining all-important information about your child. **Please fill out all areas**. Immunization dates are especially important as the Licensing Board comes to our centre regularly to ensure children's forms and immunizations are up to date. It is also important to have all areas filled in as best to your knowledge, so the staff at Creative Kids Preschool can make your child's experience at preschool fun and enjoyable. Please also fill out all areas of the Emergency Card, as these cards will accompany us on all nature walks and field trips.

CHILD RELEASE POLICY

Children will be released only to parents or to people stated in writing on their registration form.

Children will not be released to people who are not on the registration list unless staff, have written or verbal permission directly from a parent.

Please inform people listed on the registration form as “alternate persons to call in case of an emergency”, that they may be called if needed. These people would be called if a staff member could not reach either parent. An “emergency situation” could involve injury to the child, sickness/vomiting, parent is late and cannot be contacted past 20 minutes or an uncontrollable child who is putting staff or other children’s safety at risk.

If an individual who is under the influence of drugs or alcohol or who is incapable of providing safe care to your child comes into the Centre, the staff will recommend an alternate person to be called to pick up your child. If a parent or alternate refuses our request and we feel your child’s safety is at risk we are required by law to report the incident to the Ministry for Children and families or to the police if necessary.

ARRIVAL AND PICK UP

We ask that you please have your child to school on time. Please do not bring your child too early, as you will have to wait outside until the teacher opens the door to let you know that class is ready to begin. At this time, bring your child into the coatroom and help them with their coats, shoes, etc. Their slippers will be in their cubbies for the children to put on themselves.

Please realize we have a small coatroom as to enjoy more classroom space for our program. We encourage parents to have their children utilize their cubbie for taking their shoes on and off. This also frees up more space on the floor for others. The cubbies are to be used only for the children’s time at school. Please realize that three other classes also use these cubbies, so please empty them after each class. Thank you

At pick up time, again, please remain outside the school until the door is opened, so as to not disturb the end of class. **Please be on time to pick up your child.** This is very important as preparations for the next class must be done and the teachers have after-school obligations. In addition, it can be upsetting to a child if he/she is left waiting after the other children have gone. If occasionally, someone other than yourself will be picking up your child, please tell one of the teachers at the beginning of class, as we will not release your child to someone who is a stranger.

SNOWFALL AND POWER OUTAGE POLICIES

As we are all aware, we tend to get a few good snowfalls each year that make the roads unsafe to travel. Our general policy is, if the Surrey Schools close we will close too. Also, if our teachers are unable to make it to school that day, we will then make the call to close under those circumstances as well. The teachers will then personally call all of the families either the night before or that morning at 8:00 am to let them know of our school closure. If you do not receive a call and the Surrey schools are all open, you can trust that we will be open as well. Please know that if we are open but you do not feel comfortable driving, it is your choice to keep your family at home. We do not usually have full classes on snowy days. Safe families and our teachers are our number one priority.

In the event of a power outage, our policy is to call BC Hydro to see if they have an estimated time for the power to be reinstated. If the power will be on within the hour we will continue with our classes using the emergency lighting. If we cannot receive a confirmation from BC Hydro and the power has gone off within the first hour of class, we will call all families to come and pick up their children. If the power goes off within the last hour of class, we will finish our classes with our emergency lighting and call the next class about a closure (if we still have a second class to teach). Please know that our in school phone will not work in case of a power outage but all the teachers have cell phones to make outgoing or emergency calls.

PARENT OR CHILD VISITORS

Creative Kids Preschool policy is that we do not invite families into our classroom that are unfamiliar to our children during class time. We find that having parents/children coming into a classroom to “view” the centre for future registration can be quite disruptive to the children and teachers. It also diverts the teacher’s attention from the children and does not make the teacher’s available to answer new parents questions, explain our program, meet the child or show the centre as we would like to.

If you are a parent wanting to visit the school, we openly welcome you to come to the centre before or after class time. At this time we will welcome your family and answer any questions you may have. This will also give the new family time to ask other parents, who are already attending the school, about the program and their child’s experience. The only exception would be to have families in the classroom for the first 10 minutes, which is a quiet table toy time for the children as they start their class. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask. Thank you.

Due to licensing regulations and full enrolment, we are unable to accept occasional child visitors wishing to participate in our preschool program.

ILLNESS

If your child is ill, please do not send him/her to school. We realize it is often upsetting to the child to stay at home on a school day, but at this age, colds and flu are so easily transferred among children. If your child is away for more than two classes, please call and inform us at **604-594-8880**. Please ensure your child's immunizations are up to date before entering preschool. In addition, we must know if your child has been in contact with a communicable disease.

When Is a Child Too Ill To Attend Preschool?

There are four important things to consider if your child feels unwell:

1. The protection of your child. Without proper rest and recovery, they could have a more difficult time fighting the infection or be open to a new infection.
2. The ability of your child to function and learn at school
3. The school cannot care for a sick child and give them the emotional and physical support that they need
4. The protection of other children.

Please keep your child home if he/she:

1. Has a fever
2. Is too sick to take part in all normal school activities
3. Has a suspected or known communicable disease (1.e. strep throat, pink eye, chicken pox, or any other undiagnosed rash). Keep your child home until they are no longer infectious.

If you need more information you can call the 24 hour BC Nurse Line @ (604) 215-4700.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN THE CENTRE.

Creative Kids Preschool is not a parent- participation preschool. We do, however; have special days and events where parents are invited to our school. All days will be outlined in your monthly newsletter. We also have exciting monthly fieldtrips in our four-year-old program that we invite five or six parents from each class to supervise a group of children.

Our philosophy is that children's preschool experience should be an experience outside of their normal family routine. This is a time for your child to meet new friends, extend their own already flourishing personality, and have experiences with other adults that are not a part of their family.

Meeting new people and being able to socialize positively is something we all will experience our entire lives. We feel it is important for children to have their individual positive experiences in a social, healthy, fun and safe environment.

Elementary school can be overwhelming for most children and if we can give each child a good start with positive self-esteem, problem solving skills and a sense of their independent self, then we have reached one of our many goals.

TOILET TRAINING

Creative Kids Preschool policy is that all children need to be toilet trained before they start preschool. Please be aware that each class has 20 children enrolled with two teachers. We do not have the facilities, time or staff ratio to support children who are not toilet trained. However, we will at all times positively support a child who has the odd accident. We have extra clothes for those times and realize small children will be so engaged in play that they forget to use the washrooms. We also, in our three's program, remind children to use the washroom often. If your child has a bowel movement, we will try to call you to come and deal with the situation. This would be a situation that would take the staff member away from the ratio of children for too long and we feel this is a situation a parent would handle better. Please note being fully toilet trained for preschool also involves the children wiping their own bottoms. I'm sure you can appreciate that this would not be a situation that the teachers would like to find themselves in consistently. We realize that some parents are concerned that their child is not fully toilet trained and are anxious about them attending preschool. Please realize that the amount of time spend here at Preschool in a week is quite minimal. The odds of your child having consistent bowel movements or wetting their pants are occasional and should not be a major concern. Your children are of the utmost importance to us and we will assist in every way we can to ensure that your child is positively supported as they make the final leap out of diapers or pull-ups. If you have any questions pertaining to our philosophy, please ask.

CHILD ABUSE POLICY

Parents, please note:

- ∞ We are required by law to report suspected or disclosed abuse.
- ∞ Failure to report abuse can result in prosecution under the Family and Child Service Act.
- ∞ We are NOT permitted to contact the parent, unless specifically directed to do so by the Ministry of Social Services and Housing, or Police.
- ∞ Reporting procedures are designed to protect the child.
- ∞ Our responsibility is to report suspicious / disclosures, NOT determine if abuse has occurred.
- ∞ It is the responsibility of the Ministry of Social Services and Housing to investigate and decide if the child is in need of protection.
- ∞ Our concern is the safety and well being of the child.

GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE POLICIES

The purpose of guidance and discipline in this Centre is to provide a safe and healthy learning environment in which each child can feel secure. Each child will be encouraged and supported to develop positive relationships with peers and staff. Staff will strive to be appropriate behavioural models, showing respect for children, parents, co-workers and their environment. To this end, parents can expect that staff will:

- Demonstrate affection and caring to your child through appropriate forms of verbal and physical interaction.
- Maximize opportunities for appropriate and positive behaviors for your child through the program and activities.
- Provide clear, simple and consistent limits regarding appropriate behaviors within the Centre, such limits will be offered in a positive manner.
- We will not, at any time, use corporal punishment (spanking or hitting. No physical means). Harsh or belittling language will not be used at any time.
- Give verbal direction and redirection as the main means of guidance and discipline.
- Recognize and label your child's feelings in situations that may be difficult for him/her.
- Physically control your child only if he/she presents a physical danger either to him/herself or peers. This restraint will protect your child until your child feels he/she is again in control of him/herself.
- Supervise your child at all times and will not remove your child to an unsupervised area as punishment.

Parents are encouraged to question staff if they are unclear about the handling of any incident within the Centre.

As partners guiding your child through these important developmental years, it is desirable that staff and parents work closely and honestly together.

Staff will be pleased to discuss any questions you may have about any aspect of this guidance and discipline guideline.

SEPARATION

Upon arrival at preschool, please say good-bye (a hug and kiss in the coatroom) no matter how your child responds. Please do not peer through the windows, as this is very disruptive to the children and teachers. Children having a hard time separating find this very hard as you peer in their class and they are not able to go to you. Children are also very quick to pick up anxiety and ambivalence from their parent. The most important point is that you appear confident in your expectation that your child will stay at school.

September enrolment is the hardest time for children, parents and teachers to deal with separation anxiety. Please keep in mind that the teachers are very experienced in dealing with these situations and see the **same pattern every year.** You will receive an article in your September newsletter about dealing with separation anxiety as a parent and the teachers will help and give advice to every situation. The most important thing to remember is that your child will settle in and feel more comfortable and confident as time passes. Most separation issues only last three to four classes. This is the reason why the first two classes of the three-year-old program are gradual entry (one hour long).

We realize that children and parents may find it hard to be separated from each other, but we will try to make it an easy transition for everyone involved. Separation is a process we go through all our lives, but that does not necessarily make it an easy one! There are many ways children can respond to separation, but it has been our experience that children seem to take cues from their parents. If parents have a positive attitude about the separation and their child's experiences, then their children will sense this and it will help them adjust positively to school. Whatever the response is, we will work together to make you and your child feel more comfortable. Please realize each teacher at Creative Kids has had a lot of experience with children who have trouble separating. Working together with the teacher and her experience will benefit everyone involved.

INDOOR SHOES AND CLOTHING

Please bring indoor shoes to be left at school in the class assigned baskets, as soon as possible. Children like to spend a lot of their time on the floor, so this will keep the floors as clean as possible. In addition, the children need to have something on their feet at all times for safety reasons. We ask those parents coming inside the school to also remove their shoes for cleanliness reasons. Thank you for your co-operation. Please remember that your children are here to have fun and will be learning through play! Some activities are messy and we do not want the children to be worrying about their clothing, as they experiment with new and exciting activities. We hope to have the children outside as much as possible during nice weather, so appropriate outdoor shoes and clothing worn to school daily would be appreciated. Please save party shoes and expensive new clothing for special days and school functions.

SNACKS

The children are provided with a variety of hot and cold nutritious snacks each class. The children are respectfully encouraged to either eat fully or try the “healthy” foods made available to them.

“Eating occasions can become filled with tension, not enjoyment, when children are pressured to eat or when food is used to control or manage their behaviour. By promoting positive attitudes, rather than fostering negative associations with food and eating, parents and caregivers can enhance the child's enjoyment of food and promote a lifetime of healthy eating.”

Children will participate in special treat days, (birthdays, party days etc.) regardless of whether they ate the “healthy” food. Treats are served occasionally and are not considered a regular part of our nutrition plan.

“...Withholding a sweet dessert until all the vegetables are eaten may establish a preference for the dessert and a dislike for the vegetables; respect individual food preferences. Every child has different likes and dislikes.”¹

The centre promotes the use of “Dual Responsibility”

The adult(s) provide healthy food choices to the children. The children decide the amount of food they consume.

** Please keep in mind that the centre is serving the children a snack as opposed to a meal. If the child(ren) chooses not to consume the healthy snack provided, it should not be assumed that their nutritional needs are not being met.

Water is available to the children at all times during the class except during circles unless the child is suffering from a malady.

BIRTHDAYS

When your child is celebrating a birthday, we ask that you bring a snack for the whole class (20) to help celebrate with his/her friends. We would prefer items such as finger Jell-O, rice krispie squares, small muffins, fruit or veggie/dip plate or other relatively “healthy” snacks. Our experience has found that children tend to waste most cakes, cupcakes and sweets. In addition, many children tend to react to sugar and/or chocolate. **Please keep in mind we have at least one child with a severe PEANUT allergy every year. Please avoid sending nut products to school.** Children’s birthdays which fall during the summer will be celebrated at the end of the term, in June.

SHOW & TELL

Starting in October, we will be having “show and tell” for all classes. When it is your child's turn, he/she will bring home a special green frog bag to be returned the next class, with something of their choice (only one item please). We would prefer that it be something special that they can talk about, other than a toy, but the important thing is that we are “sharing and discussing”.

Please no other toys brought from home to school – there are too many problems with lost and broken toys. We would rather children keep their own toys at home to enjoy, thank you.

1. Canada’s Guide to Healthy Eating – How Preschoolers approach eating.

FUND-RAISERS

Throughout the school year at Creative Kids Preschool, we have fund-raising events every few months. All fund-raisers will be fully outlined in your monthly newsletter. Being a part of each fund-raiser is not an obligation, and your support is always appreciated. All monies raised from each fund-raising event goes directly into new equipment for the Centre. All profits and purchases will be outlined again in each newsletter. Thank you for your continuous support.

SCHOLASTIC BOOK CLUB

Each month, along with your newsletter, you will receive a Scholastic Book Club order form. If you are interested in purchasing any books through Scholastic, simply check appropriate boxes on the order form for the items you want and return the form to one of the teachers with payment (cheques written to Scholastic) by the 20th of each month. Please do not send cash.

Scholastic Book Club is not only a convenient way to purchase reading materials, but with every order you place; it enables us to acquire free books and materials for our classroom. Thank you. We look forward to help your children get excited about reading.

PLAY CLOTHES PLEASE

Parents, this is more important than you may know. We ask that you please do not send your child to school in any new, expensive, or special clothing. We cannot at anytime ensure that your child will go home looking as clean as when they arrived at school. Also, it is unfair to the children and the teachers when the parents get visibly upset when their child's clothes have paint, food or whatever on them that day. This seems to be an issue with a few parents every year no matter how many reminders we put out about playclothes and now it seems we need to be a little more direct. We will do our best to ensure that your child wears a paint smock, does not wipe their hands all over their clothes and washes well. With a ratio of 2/20 this might not always work the way we would like. As they say "Kids will be Kids" and we all know this is true, especially at Preschool.

Remember Preschool is the children's time to explore, create, investigate and solely indulge in what makes them have fun and learn.

We will not specifically ask your child not to paint, do artwork, engage in an activity or stop what they are participating in because of the outfit that they are wearing that day. What we do care about is that each child is able to meet their maximum potential here at Creative Kids and they do it without a care about their clothing and worrying that their parent will be mad at them.

Thank you very much and we hope you understand our position around this matter.

ART WORK

Children possess such great creative potential. They are naturally curious. They learn best by experience (don't we all?), and they benefit most when given the opportunity to experiment, discover, dream imagine, and express their original ideas in a free and open environment where the individual and his personal contributions are highly cherished.

In the world of creative expression, teachers and parents should never play the role of a critic. Rather, we are the child's promoters - his cheerleaders.

Our task is to help children become highly sensitive to the world around them.....Give them freedom.....Let them try.....Let them fail.....Let them succeed.....Encourage themRejoice with them.

A WORD ABOUT ART

I will be bringing home some artwork this year. Thought you might like to know some dos and don'ts about it.

Some things that are normal for my ages are a lack of proportion. I might put a real big head on a little boy and the ears may be bigger than the head. The people I draw might be lying flat and you will probably be able to see through the walls of my house. My birds might have four legs and no beak and sometimes a tree or sky might look like scribbles I made when I was young. There might be a pink cow too! Because I happen to think pink is pretty, just like our new curtains.

So, please do not laugh or tell me what is wrong with my pictures when I come home and present it to you. I hope that you will have time to sit down for just a minute and let me tell about it, but you will think it is anyway, won't you?

I'd like to have a place to keep the things I like and make, like a folder or a shelf, or a bulletin board. And then, could we hang up some of the very special ones so Grandma can see when she comes over?

If you could do these things for me, you will help me more than you know.

Artwork is usually sent home daily. Remember it is the learning process not the end product that counts. Please give your praise and approval - it will surely brighten your child's day. However, sometimes your child may not feel like doing arts and crafts. Please do not expect something home after every class. Your child may have had a good time engaging in other activities.

FIELD TRIPS
**EVERYTHING A PARENT NEEDS TO KNOW BEFORE VOLUNTEERING FOR A
FIELD TRIP AT CREATIVE KIDS**

At Creative Kids, we strongly believe in stretching the learning process as far as we can, and we do this by providing monthly fun and exciting “hands-on-field trips”. Field trips are a lot of work but we feel they are very beneficial to the children

In the four-year-old program (only), we average about one field trip a month, the first one starting in October. We have successfully had field trips at Creative Kids for many years (12 in total). We work hard to run our field trips with a lot of organization and fun. Most field trips require parents’ participation as a hands-on helper, supervising a group of children at all times. **WE CANNOT ACCOMMODATE ALL PARENTS ON EACH FIELD TRIP, NOR DO WE NEED THAT MANY VOLUNTEERS.** Please be aware that we ONLY ask five or six parents from each four-year-old class. Meaning there is only ten or eleven parents required to go on our field trip. If you are not needed to attend on one field trip, you can always volunteer on another. We try our best to rotate all parent helpers as to give parents a chance to enjoy a field trip with their child. PLEASE BE AWARE THAT YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ATTEND ALL OR MOST OF THE FIELD TRIPS AT CREATIVE KIDS. If you feel you need to be with your child, then we suggest your child does not attend the field trip with us but that you can go yourselves as a family at another time. We do not have parents follow behind us in their vehicles, as this is confusing to the other children, more adults then needed and extra, un-necessary work for the teachers. Again, if you do not feel comfortable with your child attending, just let us know before the field trip and we will count them as absent. We want this experience to be fun and beneficial to all that participate, not a stressful experience for the teachers, parents and children. Please note that parents who are participating in the field trips need to find other arrangements for siblings for that day, as they need to focus on their group of children.

We have all three teachers attending each field trip at all times. Mrs. Roosdahl supervises all field trips and does not have her own group of children, so she can be wherever she is needed. Keep in mind all fieldtrips have been visited by Creative Kids many, many times over the years. Please know that your child will be under **DIRECT SUPERVISION OF EITHER A PARENT OR A TEACHER AT ALL TIMES.** We will always be carrying each child’s emergency card, a cellular telephone and a first aid kit. All children will wear a yellow smock showing the school they belong to and therefore will be very easy to pick out of any crowd. There will be a designated meeting place explained to all teachers, parents and children at every destination. Roll call will be taken at each unloading and re-loading of all children at each destination. We will not leave any premises without ALL the children accounted for.

On each field trip we go to there is an extra cost involved (above monthly fees). You will also be asked to provide a disposable lunch packed in a knap sack for you and your child (if you are attending). Field trips that are out of our area require us to hire Thirdwave Bus Lines. Thirdwave has been our regular form of transportation for many years and is very reliable with professionally trained drivers. When field trips are in our community, we will meet at an assigned destination. All field trip details will be outlined in each monthly newsletter.

YOUR DUTIES AS A PARENT HELPER

- As a helper on a field trip you will be responsible for your assigned group during the outing. The teachers will already have the groups assigned prior to the trip and your child will always be in the group you are managing. Each group that you manage will have no more than three children in each field trip.
- When going to the washroom as a group on a field trip, we ask that you take the entire group together. Do not send any children into the washroom alone and unattended.
- We ask that you help your group with hand washing, their lunches and the disposal of their lunches.
- If you are having a hard time managing a child in your group, please let Mrs. Roosdahl know right away for she can help eliminate any situation.
- Please talk with your group about the field trip you are on and use open-ended questions to help stretch the learning process involved. Please do not rush through events and take every opportunity to see everything involved. Remember, some of these children have never been to this place and might never again.
- Please make sure that all the children in your group have their belongings at all times and that nothing is left behind.
- Please make sure you are prepared for the fieldtrip along with the children. Dress for rain or shine, pack a good lunch and be ready for a tiring day. The children will depend on your energy and enthusiasm!
- Please no smoking or chatting on your cell phone on any of our fieldtrips when supervising a group of children. Thank you
- Please be aware of all safety issues at all times and that each child in your group is no more than an arm's length away at all times.
- We want all parents to have fun experiencing field trips with their children. If you have any questions or concerns at any time, please address them to Mrs. Roosdahl.

PARKING FOR PICK UP AND DROP OFF

You are welcome to park in the church parking lot to drop off and pick up your child from preschool. Please realize that the parking lot is not for the sole purpose and convenience of Creative Kids. Other groups from the church use the parking lot regularly too. If there are no parking spots available you need to park on the road. Please DO NOT block other cars or park along side the parking lot in the emergency only zone. Please park only in the designated spots. We realize you are only here a short time but we need to respect the safety and rules of the church parking lot. We also ask that you please back into the designated area versus pulling into the spaces. Also, **SLOW DOWN** when entering and leaving the lot. The parking lot becomes very busy with families and children can bolt into the parking lot, so we know that you will have a better chance of visually avoiding accidents when driving out into the parking area versus backing out. Please let other family members know these rules if they are picking up your child. Thank you very much; safety of the children has to be the priority.

NATURE WALKS

As the seasons change, we try to take advantage of our wonderful neighborhood by going on local nature walks through the trails and fields of Panorama ridge. We start by walking through Joe Brown park trails, play games in the field, visit the local horses. We also end most of our walks with a warm fire in our outside fire pit roasting hot dogs and marshmallows. *On these days we ask that you please dress your child appropriately for the outdoors: hat, warm jackets, boots, etc.* we will continue our walks through mild rain, frosty cold and of course enjoying all the beautiful seasons in the meantime. The days we choose for walks will also be outlined in your monthly newsletter. Again, all children will be under direct teacher supervision at all times when off our school grounds. Keep in mind Joe Brown Park is beside us in the neighborhood and we do not venture very far from the school.

*Keep in mind that nature walks are only a part of our four's program. The three-year-old program does not leave the school area.

SUMMER CAMPS

Each summer at Creative Kids Preschool we offer fun and exciting weeklong summer camps, during the months of July and August. The children come Monday to Friday for three hours of excitement. These camps are very popular with the children and families and fill up very quickly.

Our program is planned around a relaxed summer fun theme and will emphasize the outdoors. For example: Gardening, outdoor water play, painting, crafts, face painting, creating a piñata, ball skills, parachute fun, kite flying, hot dog/marshmallow roasts, bubble fun, bathing suit water day, blackberry picking, pizza days, nature walks and make believe camping in a real tent. We will also walk down to Unicorn stables and visit the horses, ride the ponies and learn how to care for these amazing animals.

These are always just a **few** of our many ideas. For rainy days we will be inside with arts and crafts, play time, story telling and creative fun.

Summer camps are a great way to introduce the school environment to children just starting preschool in September and a great way for siblings to enjoy Creative Kids together. Also, children just graduating from our four's program look forward to summer camps because saying goodbye after two wonderful years together is always hard.

All information about our summer camps will be outlined in our newsletter each May.

Thank you for taking the time to read our Parent Handbook. We hope we have answered all your questions and what you have read will be beneficial to you and your child's pre-school experience.

Mrs. Sandra Christian
Owner/Director
Creative Kids Learning Centers