

# Errington Cooperative

## Preschool

### Parent Handbook

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# SECTION 1:

## INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME

### The Dream

I dreamed I stood in a studio and watched two sculptors there.  
They clay they used was a young child's mind and they fashioned it with care.  
One was a teacher - the tools she used were books, music and art.  
The other, a parent, worked with a guiding hand and a gently loving heart.  
Day after day, the teacher toiled with touch and was careful, deft and sure.  
While the parent laboured by her side and polished and smoothed it o'er.  
And when at last their work was done, they were proud of what they had wrought.  
For the things they had molded into the child could neither be sold or bought.  
And each agreed they would have failed if each had worked alone,  
For behind the parent stood the school, and behind the teacher, the home.

- Authour Unknown -

## WELCOME

Dear Parent,

On behalf of the Executive Committee of the Errington Preschool, we are very happy and excited to welcome you and your child to our little school. We really believe that you will find this experience of sharing the preschool years with your little one to be full of joy and wonder and look forward to welcoming you into our community. It is our hope to offer you and your family support during these formative years, and to provide a safe and rich atmosphere for your child to grow.

For your information we wish to share with you what constitutes a Parent Participation Preschool. It is a place where a preschool child learns to play and get along with other children of the same age group. It is a place where there is time and space to use equipment not always available at home. Also, it is a place where adults learn to understand children's needs.

The parents' initiative is to organize and finance such a group, and conduct regular business meetings. The supervisor and parents cooperate closely, especially in the classroom, where the parents take turns on the parent/supervisor team.

We wish to stress the importance of our responsibility to the preschool as a group. Each parent is expected to fulfill their obligation as a participating parent, as a member of the cooperative at the monthly meetings, and to assist and cooperate when called upon to perform any small job.

This handbook outlines and explains all aspects and eventualities, and we ask that parents read through it and familiarize themselves with the information.

For your child, a playgroup means a happy experience through play with other children. For you, it means the opportunity to get to know and work with other parents and community members, for the benefit of our children.

Please remember that the more time and effort you put into this experience, the more you will derive from it.

Kind regards,  
The Executive.

## **ERRINGTON PRESCHOOL HISTORY**

We are a little school in Errington, that for over 40 years has been doing some really big work. We are located at 1341 Station Road, on the corner of Grafton Road and Station Road, in Errington, BC.

This preschool is non-profit and it is owned and run by the parents who participate in the program. This means that each family is responsible for the running of the school on some level – updating first aid supplies or doing the treasurer’s duties – each job contributes to the effectiveness of the school. As parents participate in the classroom, supporting the Early Childhood Educator, they have the opportunity to dedicate a morning to play. To witness their child’s growth amongst his/her peers, enjoy playing or reading together, becoming familiar with the children and parents with whom they will journey through the growing years – these are some of the joys of being involved in this co-operative experience.

Co-operative preschools are about building community and Errington’s preschool is a beautiful example of how belonging is developed. We share time, work and celebrations. We have held events for the community, gone camping and on outings, and we learn together. When we leave this special place we are stronger knowing that we belong; that we are contributing to our community. Our children carry this connection into kindergarten and beyond – they are rooted in their memories of their preschool experiences.

Errington Co-operative Preschool provides an opportunity for families to rediscover what being connected feels like. It is an opportunity to share your gifts as an individual and as a parent, and to learn from others. It is a safe space for children to discover their abilities and to explore new friendships.

## **SECTION 2:**

# **PHILOSOPHY**

I tried to teach my child with books;  
He gave me only puzzled looks.

I tried to teach my child with words;  
They passed him by unheard.

In despair I turned aside.  
“How will I teach my child?” I cried.

Into my hand he put the key.  
“Come,” he said, “and play with me.”

-Author Unknown-

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR TEACHER

I love Errington Cooperative Preschool; it is my life's work. Through my experience I see a very positive impact on relationships; the relationships of the children, families, friends and the community. We foster a sense of belonging, harmonious living, creativity and learning.

Errington Cooperative Preschool is a place where a philosophy is presented and honoured each day - "learning through play"- what a wonderful place to start!

- Play aids growth
- Play is a voluntary activity
- Play offers a child freedom of action
- Play provides an imaginary world a child can master
- Play has elements of adventure
- Play provides a base for language development
- Play lay has a unique power for building interpersonal relations
- Play offers the opportunity for mastery of the physical self
- Play furthers interest and concentration
- Play is the way children investigate the material world
- Play is the way of learning adult roles
- Play is always a dynamic way of learning
- Play refines a child's judgement
- Play can be academically structured
- Play is vitalizing
- Play is essential to the survival of humans

We provide a comfortable, creative environment that fosters all areas of development; physical, emotional, social, intellectual, and spiritual.

We provide a preschool that parents can depend on, trust, and feel supported by.

Love, Gillian Crawley E.C.E.

## **WHAT IS A COOPERATIVE PRESCHOOL?**

It is a group owned and operated by the parents of preschool children (aged 3 – 5 years) which offers educational and creative play activities in half day sessions for the children, and a learning experience for the parents

The group is licensed by the Community Care Facilities Licensing Board, and employs a competently trained and licensed Teacher/Supervisor who not only directs the children's progress, but in cooperation with the parent Executive Committee, also helps guide and train the parents to become assistants.

## **WHAT DO THE CHILDREN DO?**

Many preschool centres retain the term "play group". Play is the medium for basic learning in the early years. At Errington Cooperative Preschool your child will be provided with a rich variety of play materials, playmates their own age, and a Supervisor skilled in developing a program of learning based on the children's play interests, and their intellectual, social and emotional needs. They will learn to use their bodies effectively; to cope with their feelings and those of others, to get along with others, to solve problems and to satisfy their curiosity.

Because this is recognized as one of the more critical periods in a child's development, the cooperative concern of the Supervisor and the parents will make it possible to detect early the signs that a child is having difficulty. The Supervisor and parents together will help when a child needs it.

The primary function of a good preschool is to help each child achieve and enjoy the fullest development possible. A successful experience in preschool will serve as the readiness bridge to the primary level of education.

## **HOW DOES THE FAMILY BENEFIT?**

Our cooperative group seeks to provide the preschool children with an educational experience geared towards their needs; and in addition, provides the family with several advantages:

- As a growth experience for both child and parents, sharing in the child's first educational step.
- As a group, provides parents with the opportunity to develop skills and insights needed for guiding children well, and to meet, socialize and work cooperatively with a group of parents from a cross section of the community, sharing with them emotional and practical support
- The relatively lower cost of cooperatively run groups (as compared with private schools) brings them within reach of more families.

## WHAT RESOURCES ARE OFFERED TO MEMBERS?

Systems of resources are used regularly, or are offered to parents and families to help deepen understanding of the children. Learning about the behaviour and growth needs of children at various ages and stages in their development is facilitated through:

- Discussion periods at general meetings
- Educational materials, ie. Parent Library, Parent Education at general meetings, films, tapes/cds etc
- Both parents observing and participating in the classroom
- Parent-Supervisor conferences; both informally or on demand, to discuss progress or difficulties being experienced by your child
- Executive and committee experience within the school
- Yearly parent study group “Children the Challenge” (optional)

## WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF THE PRESCHOOL?

For the parent and the preschool:

To provide an educational experience, to increase parent’s knowledge of their child, and to learn from school experiences, other parents and the supervisor some child guidance techniques

For the children:

### *Socially*

- Helps children learn to live in a democratic culture
- Learn the value of group discussion as a method of solving problems and reaching decisions
- Learn to share
- Become aware of group welfare

### *Emotionally*

- Develop a feeling of belonging
- Develop habits of eating, resting, dressing and toilet hygiene, which represent a sound foundation for further growth
- Experience free dramatic play unhampered by sibling difficulties or the emotionally involved parents. The child’s real experience is deepened and clarified, as it is lived through dramatically over and over again
- Creative expression helps them release some of the pent up intense feelings which may be generated in the course of their everyday lives
- They learn more about control and authority as voiced by someone other than their parents
- Experience satisfactions from a child-centered, child-scaled environment

### *Physically*

- Develop skills in using their bodies effectively
- Learn the nature of the physical objects in their surroundings

### *Intellectually*

- Opportunities are provided for children to use their imagination and express their

- ideas, needs and feelings through use of materials
- Children are encouraged and assisted in trying to solve their own problems and to think independently
  - Children are permitted to experiment with, manipulate and create with materials at their own level and according to their individual pattern

Perhaps the most important job facing us today is giving our children the best possible chance to learn how to grow up into mature, alert, constructive individuals. What we need most urgently at this time is citizens with keen, curious minds who can think imaginatively, who have true regard for the welfare and wishes of others, and who can work with them to the advantage of all.

The basis for these characteristics is laid during the first six years of life, the period in which parents have major responsibility for the development of their children.

Cooperative preschools help parents to fulfill that responsibility more effectively than they could be working alone.

## **HOW DOES THE PRESCHOOL MEET OUR CHILDREN'S NEEDS?**

### What does play mean to a child?

Play, it is said, is a child's work. Through play, many of the necessary skills for later life are developed. From an adult point of view, much of children's play would often appear to be a pointless way of passing away the hours. In a child's eyes it is an absorbing way of learning new skills and techniques, of learning about the complicated world in which they live. Children's greatest need then, is play.

### How does our play material help?

Some basic materials are always available at a preschool. Junk, play house corner, dress up, come first to mind. These form the stimulus for imaginative play – boxes can be anything from a house or bus, to pirate ships or space ships. In the playhouse corner, dishes are washed; animals and baby dolls are fed and put to bed. Bicycles become race cars, ambulances or work trucks. A hat is all that is needed to become a doctor or fireman.

Creative materials such as paint allow the children to acquire the skill to wield a paintbrush with great dexterity, which later forms the skill required for printing and writing. Dough and clay are modeled very satisfactorily. Sand, water and messy play provide an outlet for pent up frustrations, and satisfy the curiosity of "cause and effect".

### Developing physical needs

For this purpose, there are various pieces of equipment, indoor and out. Smaller toys such as balls, hoops, pails and shovels, building blocks and trucks combine to challenge imagination and coordination. Large motor equipment such as climbing frames, tricycles, a trampoline, and the outdoor space require confidence and balance. It also inspires the larger group active games of fantasy and imagination, as well as patience and cooperation.

## Developing imagination and concentration

Sitting quietly listening to stories, manipulating puzzles, building and constructing with blocks and tubes - access to these and other small animals, weights, toy parts and the hands on table of various substances, encourages quiet times of concentration, experimentation and cooperation. It reinforces the introduction to books and contemplative activities as an important aspect of learning.

## Other ways we can help

We can help the three to five year old to learn self-reliance, which is so necessary when they begin school.

- Undo and do up buttons
- Put on and take off coats and hang them up neatly
- To go to the toilet unaided and wash and dry hands afterwards
- To put on and take off shoes/boots

Parents often have no time and sometimes no patience to wait while little fingers fumble with obstinate buttons, and arms go into wrong sleeves. In the classroom, we have the time to wait and not bustle a child, but rather to encourage the special effort of self-sufficiency and praise the successes.

The eating of snacks unaided by parents, but in the company of a large group of other children can be a very big help to a child when school lunches have to be dealt with unaided.

Speech often improves enormously at school. Probably the biggest help here comes from the children's need to make themselves understood by their peers and adults.

## What else have our children learned at preschool?

They have become accustomed to and have enjoyed their break from home environment, and have learned to accept the help and guidance of other adults. They will have discovered, or been shown the need to mix well socially with a large group of children and to cope with the demands that this need creates. They will have formed close friendships with some of their playmates. Lastly, they should be able to make a satisfactory transition from preschool to school or other educational choices and be very ready for the exciting years of learning that stretch ahead.

## **TYPES OF PLAY AND THEIR VALUE**

### Outdoor Play

The children need a lot of fresh air and exercise; it helps develop strong muscles and healthy bodies. When out in the open the children get a sense of freedom and a spontaneous urge to jump and run. It gives them a chance to 'let off steam' in the company of others. They begin to learn to get along with their peers in the liberating atmosphere of the great outdoors.

### Block building

Block building is a bridge between the world of pretend and reality. It provides experience in spatial relationships, opportunities for sharing and develops large and small muscle control.

### Painting

Painting is an opportunity for self-expression and enjoyment. The fun of doing is more important than the end product.

### Playdough and clay

While very enjoyable to play with, these also provide a release for tensions, aggressive feelings, and create expression.

### Water play, sand, rice, etc.

These encourage experimentation in texture and measurement in a fun way.

### Music

Music is a means of self-expression through experimentation with songs, rhythms, instruments and spontaneous dancing.

### Dramatic Play

Dramatic play is used to re-enact experiences and stories. It is often obvious in the housekeeping and dress-up sections

### Language communication

Language communication is developed in all forms of play

### Table toys

Puzzles, beads etc will assist a child to develop hand-eye coordination, sequencing and following instructions

### Cutting, pasting and crafts

This form provides experience in hand and finger manipulation

### Finger painting

Finger painting provides relief of creative energy and tensions, as well as texture enjoyment and pride in achievement.

### Science and Social Studies

This activity helps the children to become more aware of the world and people around them through full use of the five senses.

## **SECTION 3:**

### **ABOUT OUR CHILDREN**

The following pages contain some general information about children, specifically the three, four and five year old child. Perhaps the information will help to give parents some insight into what, why, how and who these small people are; and therefore a small measure of understanding into why our children do, say and act the way they do.

## WHAT WILL WE SEE THEM DO?

### Play

Children's play is their life. Children learn through play. Children communicate through play. Children act and react with the world through play. Play is a child's way of saying "Hello" to the world and to the people and things in the world. Play is a child's way of work. Play is a child's way of life.

It is through play that children say, "This is the way the world operates." Children play with dolls. They learn how it feels to be a mother, for to mother a doll is the first step in mothering a child. They learn how to act and to talk to their future babies. They act out the things they have seen their mothers and other children's mothers doing to them and to other children.

Children play with other children. In the dress-up corner, they act out the way their parents treat them. They learn many ways to get along with other children and other adults. They learn that words work better than hitting or pushing and until they learn that, they will continue to hit and push. They never do learn, if the adults in their world hit and push! They learn that communication and cooperation are better than hitting and pushing.

Children play with other children. On the tricycles they act out the police officer and the fire fighter and a daddy and a mommy going to work or shopping. They learn coordination of the large muscles that are needed to propel a tricycle across a room. They learn acceptable ways of getting a tricycle from someone else. They learn that the world, in the form of supervisors or other children, will not let them push another child off a tricycle.

Children play with other children. In the block corner, they learn how to use the small muscles that help them control the blocks. They learn ways in which children can play with many blocks or with few blocks. They learn the ways in which they can achieve the goals they find desirable.

Children playing by themselves in a corner are still learning. Children who constantly refuse to participate in the singing still learn the songs. It is in a corner alone that ants are discovered, that spider webs are admired, that books are read, that the joy of listening quietly instead of having to rush, rush, is picked up by the inquisitive child.

Children learn the various ways to express their emotions, ways that are acceptable to other people in their world. It is through play that children say "Here are the areas of life that I find troublesome. Here are the things I don't understand, don't like." They learn that they can say "I hate you" and they do not fall apart. They learn that they can express real, deep feelings in words and that they feel better after. They learn that showing hate by words is better than actions. They learn that fear can be understood and controlled better by admitting it than by hiding it.

Children learn the three keys which are critical for cooperation and creative living:

- To live with people without hurting them
- To respect property and the environment so as not to destroy or harm it
- To care for oneself so that positive growth is encouraged

Supervisors learn through watching children play. They learn that children will learn when they are ready to learn. A parent of a child has said, "But I didn't teach him how to read. He learned off the cereal box!" Little can be forced upon a child who is not ready without drastic

consequences in other areas. It would seem that any parent who has waited for nine months to see their child come out into the world would learn that children cannot and will not be forced before they are ready. They have their own time table and the only person who really knows that time table is the child.

Supervisors must constantly watch children. It is only through watching a child that the supervisor can be of assistance in the child's life long struggle and joy, to live from one stage of growth to another. Through constant and cautious watching, adults can gain some hints as to when Susie is ready to ask for the tricycle by herself or when Jamie can pour his own juice.

Children live in and through play; they live in a world where play is their method of living, then it is through play that children must learn and supervisors must teach.

## **HELPING THEM ENTER PRESCHOOL**

### Before preschool starts

- Remember their limited concept of time; avoid too much talk of preschool until nearer the time it will begin
- Do say encouraging things about activities and friends, rather than threats such as “the teacher will settle you down!”
- Very close to preschool starting date, casually mention that it will begin soon. Don't oversell!
- The purpose of information given to the supervisor on the enrolment form and during the parent-supervisor interviews is to aid in a positive preschool experience. Such information is confidential unless otherwise specified.

### As preschool starts

- Children are different; no two may react to preschool alike. Their ease in adjusting to a new situation depends on many things; feeling of self worth, an unworried secure feeling as they leave home each class day, among other things. Children may become angry suddenly ('blow-up'), need more rest, ask to stay home, revert to habits from earlier childhood, or be disturbed in their sleep. These behaviours come to pass.
- Be interested and encouraging about what your child tells you about their experiences. Over enthusiastic praise, over pressing questions about preschool activities and questions with too broad a scope discourage communication. Active listening skills can prove useful for finding out how your child feels about preschool and what they do. Many children say very little about their experiences – it is normal!
- Your child may not bring something home everyday from preschool. Take time to appreciate what they do bring home. About artwork: avoid asking “What is it?” or giving your value judgements. Instead, parents can offer interest and encouragement for their efforts in participating. Ask and listen to children tell how they did the work or feel about it or, in the case of older children, talk about the work (what is represented or seen). Children are not given models for their first experiences in creative work because the child's own free use and exploration of materials and ideas are most valued with a 'learning through play' philosophy. Telling children how they must draw or otherwise create may discourage them from trying because they may not feel they can do it.

- Be sensitive to stereo-typing: boys can enjoy playing with dolls, girls can enjoy playing with cars and trucks, disabled children may be able to do much more for themselves now than was thought when they were young, children from different ethnic backgrounds have valuable experiences to add to the group. From time to time re-assess your attitudes and change, as necessary, speech and behaviour patterns.
- Children can have their own spontaneous reactions that are kind and constitute “good manners”. Recognize it positively.
- Children develop at their own rates of speed. It is recommended not to hurry them, especially beyond what they can comfortably do.
- Nobody, including children, likes to be compared to someone else especially if they are on the negative end of the stick. Distinguish comparing to contrasting, the latter states differences that are both of value.
- Be cautious about pushing reading, arithmetic, and other academic skills on your child too early. Pressure can beget discouragement.
- Give your child opportunities to feel helpful and useful; it so often leads to self respect. Independence contributes greatly to self esteem.
- There is a lot to be learned from letting your child work out their relationships with other children. Interfere with fighting only when it seems like they will not be able to settle the matter, particularly if someone might get hurt.
- A rich background of experiences gives children more material on which to build an understanding of their world. The home and preschool go hand-in-hand in providing this advantage.
- Children may be discouraged from learning to speak properly if constantly corrected. Model correct forms when you speak; a correct form may be used to answer or clarify what a child says and can thus show the right form without a big fuss or negative feeling.
- Children are encouraged to be independent and confident if they have clothes that they can manipulate by themselves at bathroom time. Label clothing and boots plainly so your child can learn to recognize their names and to discourage loss of their clothes.
- It is not uncommon for children to take on new independence and different behaviour at home after they have adjusted and feel secure at preschool.

# WORD PICTURES OF OUR CHILDREN

## Three Year Old

### ***Social-Emotional Development***

- Need security of small group
- Still needs adult as parent substitute
- Often needs comforting/reassurance
- Want to be loved, accepted by significant adults and peers
- Prefer simple dramatic play with “good friend”
- Animal play, housekeeping play, fantasy play common
- Is a “me-to-er”, likes to do what others are doing
- Tend to parallel or associative play
- Has difficulty playing in groups of more than two or three
- Fascinated by cooperative play of “big kids” but has not yet the social skills to take part
- Often blackmails friends – “I won’t be your friend if...”
- Likes to “help” – washing tables, dishes, etc
- Seek and respond to praise/recognition – “Look what I did!”
- Want what they want when they want it
- Only beginning to become aware of social skills
- Hit, kick, grab, bite for what they want
- As difficulty waiting for turn (toys, talking, circle games)
- My cry, have tantrums if things don’t go their way

### ***Mental Development***

- Words understood much higher than actual vocabulary
- Practice words (between three and four, big spurts in language development)
- Like to chat informally with friends, adults
- Learning to count (mixing numbers frequently)
- Often recognize own name, some letters
- Conscious of own age, sex, name
- Sometimes begins sentences with “You know what?” or “Guess what?”
- Likes to talk about self, home, family, pets
- Attention shifts frequently, needs a variety of choices
- Enjoy no-product activities (water play, sand, finger painting, play dough)
- Begin to construct things (gluing, stapling, scotch taping)
- Sometimes names their products
- Likes to read, either alone or in small, intimate groups
- Prefer simple themes, illustrations synchronized with text – nursery rhymes
- Enjoy looking at books (reading the pictures)
- Learns through concrete experiences – finds out with hands, nose, mouth, as well as ears

### ***Motor Development***

- Practice simple skills – climbing, going down slide, hammering
- Are seemingly tireless in repetition of activities that interest them
- Have a compulsion to move and explore
- Need to be mobile, find it difficult to sit still for too long
- Like to dance, hop, jump, move about freely to music
- Begin simple construction with blocks
- Like to transport blocks, etc – dump out

- Can manage some uncomplicated puzzles, construction sets, Lego, etc
- Learning to handle tools – hammers, scissors, shovels
- Like to use, but need some help with some materials (staplers, scissors, etc)
- Need a preponderance of large muscle activities
- Still unsure of balance/equilibrium
- Do not yet realize consequences of actions where others are concerned
- Needs help in routines (transitions, putting things away, etc)

## Four Year Old

### ***Social – Emotional Development***

- Dominates – bossy, boastful
- Hit, grab for what they want
- Loyalties shift frequently
- Cooperative play (with two or three)
- Assertive
- A show-off, cocky, noisy
- Love to tease, outwit
- Terrific humour; nonsense loving, silly
- Alibis frequently
- Covers up unsureness with swagger and bravado
- Explosive, destructive
- Resistant, test limits
- Easily over-stimulated, excitable, goes ‘out of bounds’
- Impatient and intolerant in a large group
- Insist on what they want

### ***Mental Development***

- Full of ideas
- Like a variety of materials
- Accepts change with preparation
- A fabricator – confuses fact and fancy
- Beginning concepts of life and death
- Discover forms while using materials
- Produce recognizable forms – constructive
- Slap-dash experimentation
- Dynamic intellectual drive
- Begin to generalize (often faulty)
- Understand simple reasons for things
- Age – conscious and birthday conscious
- Recognizes today, tomorrow
- Can do two things at once
- Has concept of ‘three’ but names more
- Judges which of two are bigger
- Dramatic in play, uses simple props
- Attention span: 8-12 minutes
- Greets people with “Hey” or “You know what?”
- Calls people names
- Argumentative

- Enjoy silly words, rhymed with meaning
- Use 'bathroom words', swears
- Able to talk to solve conflicts
- Comments, criticizes, compares
- Vocabulary about 1500 words average
- Tells tall tales

### ***Motor Development***

- Beginning sureness and control in finger/hand activities
- A longer, leaner body-build
- Vigorous, dynamic
- Works; builds, drives, pilots
- Accurate, but rash in body movements
- Can jump about own height, land upright
- Acrobatic
- Throws large ball, kicks with some accuracy
- Dresses self
- Can't set limits – active until exhausted

### **Five Year Old**

#### ***Social – Emotional Development***

- Becoming poised, self-confident
- Copies adult behaviour, acts grown up
- Aware of rules, defines them for others
- Plays in groups of two to five children
- Beginning to enjoy group play, circle games
- Generally less combative, more controllable than at four
- Conscious of sex difference of playmates, sex play
- Sensitive to ridicule
- Harbours wounded feelings
- Likes companionship with adults
- Persistent, patterned
- HAS to be right
- Talks about home, possessions; reveals family secrets
- A visiting age – sociable
- Accepts and respects authority, will ask permission
- Growing competitiveness
- May get high, wide, wild
- Silly, giggling
- Enjoys pointless riddles and jokes

#### ***Mental Development***

- Curious about everything
- Seeks information on how and why (post office, grocery worker)
- Ready for short trips into the community
- Knows names and address (often)
- Talks to clear ideas
- Still self-centered thinking
- Beginning of self-criticism

- Likes to display new knowledge and skills
- Uses big words
- Vocabulary about 2000 words average
- Likes to be busy making “something”, industrious
- Often makes a plan before starting a project
- Attention span: 12 – 28 minutes, depending on interest
- Can carry over play interest for more than one day
- Defines familiar objects in terms of their use (broom – sweep)
- Dramatizes house play on realistic level
- Enjoys making up songs/dictating own stories
- Uses complete sentences readily
- Counts ten objects and more
- Assertive in use of language

### ***Motor Development***

- Enjoys activities requiring hand and finger skills
- Draws a recognizable person
- Learning how to tie a bow knot
- Skills and accuracy with simple tools
- Can sit still for brief periods – or longer, depending on interest
- Enjoys jumping, running, stunting
- Adult – like postures in throwing and catching a ball
- Culmination of most basic coordination
- Surging physical drives
- Likes dancing, rhythmic, graceful
- Sometimes rough-houses, fights

**SECTION 4:**  
**PARENT PARTICIPATION**

## **PARENTS ROLE IN THE CLASSROOM**

1. Understand that the supervisor is in charge of the playroom and model her techniques and terminology by being observant in the classroom, in order to facilitate consistency in the classroom
2. Follow supervisor's daily instructions and helpful hints
3. Take the opportunity to observe their child and other children. It is not necessary to be busy all the time. Quiet observation is rewarding and informative
4. Offer their special skills (sewing, cooking, carpentry, etc)
5. Know that just being in the classroom is important to their own child and may at any time be important for some other child
6. Assist during circle time, if needed, join in or accommodate the child who has difficulty joining in
7. Encourage self-confidence; set examples of self-discipline
8. Know why the children may act as they do. Often the supervisor is aware of the reason, so reference to her is recommended when there is doubt as to how to handle a particular situation
9. Demonstrate how to manipulate and work with materials if necessary, but not how to create. Let the child's own ideas and imagination have free range
10. Don't expect too much. Preschool is the stage for both child and parent to learn.
11. Help make preschool a success by remembering that:
  - Gender discrimination is taught, it is not a natural process. If necessary rethink your attitude and change, if appropriate, your speech and behaviour patterns
  - Demonstration is more effective than imposition in encouraging spontaneous consideration of others, which constitutes good manners
  - Let the children express themselves at their level of development, consider their age before judging their actions
  - Everything that is done for the preschool outside class time ultimately benefits all involved, but most of all the children and that is why we are here

## **USEFUL HINTS IN GUIDING OUR CHILDREN**

The most important thing to remember about the guidance of young children is that all the children in your group may be at a different stage of development, even though they are all very close to the same age. Each child will respond to you in a different way.

The supervisor may know each child's problems and achievements. It is important to discuss any difficulties with her; to make her aware of them, but more importantly to obtain her guidance in certain situations, especially if you do not know the child well.

The following hints may be helpful in establishing a good relationship with the children:

- Be positive rather than negative with requests. Encouragement to do something acceptable works better than orders to stop unacceptable actions.
- Speak quietly and use simple terms. A stimulating tone of voice to excite a child into compliance undermines the child's ability to accept occurrences at their face value.
- Allow a child to learn by experimenting. Help only when necessary to avoid failure and discouragement

- Praise the type of behaviour you wish continued. Praise a child's desirable behaviour emphasizes it and the undesirable will gradually drop out of sight.
- Be consistent with rules and attitudes towards behaviour, make only justifiable requests.
- Avoid conflict and forcing an issue as much as possible. A little ingenuity often makes a situation go smoothly. The child needs to establish a pattern of happy performance instead of one of negative refusal.
- Give a child a choice of two courses of action when feasible. Asking a child to choose between two acceptable outcomes often brings more successful results than a command with no leeway. It gives a child a personal interest in the situation and develops independence and initiative.
- Step into a social conflict situation only when necessary to prevent injury or to suggest a socially approved solution to a difficulty. Children need to learn self-reliance as well as cooperation. If left to themselves, they will often end conflicts and solve difficulties in satisfactory ways of their own. This is a valuable lesson learned, which may be undermined when an adult interferes too hastily.
- Allow a child plenty of time to perform a change in activity. Small children become confused and overwhelmed when hurried. Forcing a child to perform too quickly or to turn abruptly from one activity to another causes conflict.
- Encourage the children. Ridicule of the child or comparison with another is damaging to one's self image and does not set the scene for positive compliance. No competition will allow each child its own pace for learning.
- Try to understand the child's difficulties even when exasperated
- Try to give the children the respect and consideration you would accord a friend. If you must break into a child's concentration when they are absorbed, do so gently and with understanding
- Help the children feel like responsible members of the group by letting them help you with jobs
- Use a definite but impersonal approach. Rules should be stated without blame on the child's behaviour – 'Paint stays at the easel. Bikes are not to be crashed.' A non-negotiable course of action should be stated with no choice when none is necessary. 'It is time to go to the bathroom. Time for juice.' A question may bring a negative response at a time when none is acceptable.
- Self-direction and self-control are learned through guidance, not imposition. A threat as a means of discipline does not allow a child to learn the consequences of socially desirable and undesirable behaviour. Provide legitimate ways to express feelings, or perform tasks in their own style. Yours is not always the only or best way!
- Have a limit to permissiveness; limits are necessary for a child to feel secure. To deny a child something and then give in if a scene is made robs the child of the security needed to learn self-control
- Try to converse with the children, instead of at them
- Try to ensure that promises made are conceivable and are fulfilled
- Encourage the children to think of their own safety, for example by asking "Do you know how to hold tight?", rather than making the children afraid to use their bodies by saying "Be careful" all of the time.

While it seems impossible to remember all that is being asked of us, it is possible to remember that every parent in the preschool is in for the learning experience as much as the children are. While it is hard to give every ounce of your attention to your work of supervision in the classroom, it can be easier for you to let the children teach you how to be involved with them. Let them remind you how it is to play and experiment until eventually, you look forward to school as much as the children do.

**SECTION 5:**  
**PROGRAM INFORMATION AND**  
**PROCEDURES**

## PROGRAM INFORMATION

### Attendance

3/4 year old class:	Monday and Wednesday	9:00 am – 11:15 am
4/5 year old class:	Tuesday and Thursday	9:00 am – 11:15 am

It is easier on the children if they are dropped off and picked up promptly. This also allows the duty parents time to clean up and leave within a reasonable amount of time. The school observes all public school holidays **including** Teacher Professional Days.

If the supervisor becomes ill and can not attend preschool every effort will be made to find a replacement.

## IN THE CLASSROOM

### Children's Schedule

8:55 – 9:00	Arrival
9:00 – 10:00	Art and Free Play
10:00 – 10:10	Clean up
10:10 – 10:30	Circle
10:30 – 10:40	Bathroom
10:40 – 11:15	Snack, then Outside

This schedule is extremely flexible! It may at any point in time be on track or thrown off by projects and occurrences within the classroom. It is certainly allowable to remind the supervisor of the time, as she may be so involved with the children that she is unaware of the time. This does not happen often and is not a major disaster. On days that field trips occur, the schedule is kept as closely as possible, according to where the class may be.

### Parent's Routine

Here are a few guidelines that may help the parents on duty to remember certain things that make the day easier and more enjoyable. There are also some parts of the routine that must occur for safety, standards, and health reasons.

1. The duty parents arrive 15 minutes before the class is scheduled to begin. This allows time to get organized and to aid the supervisor with any craft supplies.
2. Prior to clean up time, parents clean away supplies and wipe table in preparation for snack. At clean up time parents help the children stay on task
3. While the children are taking part in circle time parents are asked to join in. The supervisor may indicate to a parent helper any child who may need help in joining in circle time.
4. While the supervisor escorts the children to the bathroom, an adult must help to ensure that the children come safely to the snack table and get seated
5. The duty parents organize the snack for distribution, and if their child is willing to help they will serve the snack to their peers

6. Remind the children to clean up their snack remains before heading out for outside play
7. When the weather permits, the children will spend the remaining class time outside in the playground. The supervisor and parents help the children organize their shoes and jackets, if necessary; one parent should help with the outdoor supervision. The second parent may choose to stay inside to complete clean up and organize the children's art projects for their parents to take home.

It is up to the parents on duty to share the work between themselves, to decide who would like to perform what duties, to alternate duties within one class or another, or between both classes that week. Once all the duties have been performed there may be preferences taking into account, as long as all duties are shared and performed on a per class basis in order to ensure the continued safety and cleanliness of the classroom. The daily checklist of duties is posted on the bulletin board beside the sink.

## **BUILDING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT**

1. Have a good set of simple safety rules for children to follow
2. Provide adequate supervision
3. Learn to anticipate danger by being conscience of situations that lead to trouble
4. Allow time between activities
5. In planning a safe environment, relate safety measures to the developmental needs of the children
6. There are many areas to consider for indoor safety; furniture arrangement, equipment, toys, good lighting, adequate heat and ventilation. Perhaps you can think of more
7. Outside or large play equipment must be sturdy, stable and thought should be given to placement. Check for protruding parts and bolts or sharp edges.
8. Yard should be free from foreign objects
9. The gate should be locked, to ensure preschoolers remain in the yard.

These are just some of the rules and guidelines followed at the preschool to ensure safety.

## **RULES FOR SAFETY WITH CHILDREN**

If parents and the supervisor are aware of precautions, the program will be safer and more consistent. Please tell the children what to do, instead of what not to do. This gives them the information they need to change behaviour.

1. No hitting or rough housing. Encourage verbal messages and acceptable play
2. No climbing on shelves. Ask for help
3. Walk carefully, then sit with tools
4. Look at the fish or any other class pet and feed them only with an adult. Hands and foreign objects do not belong in the tank/cage.
5. Small objects for playing with should not be put in the mouth.
6. No throwing or destructive behaviour with toys.
7. Indoor toys stay indoors. Small toys can be hazardous in a large motor area, like the bike track
8. Walk in a safe manner on the deck stairs

9. Play is confined to areas where children can be seen.
10. Play on large outdoor equipment in a safe manner. No high jumping or bouncing.
11. Use of stereo to play music should be supervised
12. Encourage safe driving on the tricycles/plasma cars; helmets must be worn, drive in the same direction. Persistent crashing should be stopped. Tell the child to park and take a break, give the child the choice of not to ride or to ride safely.
13. Parents must always shut the outside gate behind them. Do not allow your children to leave first, go together. Teach them to walk cautiously to and in the parking lot.
14. If parents cannot or will not be attending class field trips with their child, parents must pre-arrange to have one responsible adult supervising the child for the entire trip.

The supervisor will inform parents of how many attending adults there should be at any given time, depending on the length and location of the field trip. Please be aware of those parents in your class with adequate liability insurance on their vehicles, should transportation be required. Any arrangements for car or booster seats and the ability to properly install these seats in the transporting car should be confirmed with the supervising adult before leaving. The field trip coordinator for your class should have a confirmed list of those parents and vehicles with adequate insurance, which are willing to drive for their class.

Due to ever-changing amounts and types of equipment in the preschool each year, some rules of safety and discipline may no longer apply, or may not be present in this handbook if equipment is purchased after the printing of this book (August 1993. Updated 2008. Updated 2013. Updated 2015. Updated 2018). Concerns of this nature should be brought to the supervisor and the executive's attention for discussion. Likewise, the state of repair or need for repair of any piece of equipment, big or small, indoor or outdoor, needs to be brought to the attention of the Vice President, a member of the maintenance committee or the supervisor. Any specific problems regarding the discipline of any child in your class should be discussed immediately with the supervisor if you have any doubts as to how to handle a situation. The supervisor should be informed of any disciplines used with a child during class time.

## **CLOTHING**

Ensure that your child has proper shoes to wear within the classroom, especially outdoors on the bike track, if they have to change out of boots. This is to prevent slipping and unnecessary accidents, protect feet and to keep the children ready at all times to leave the school in any weather in case of emergency. Holey shoes (crocs), rubber boots and flip flops are not suitable footwear outdoors.

It is wise to always provide suitable outdoor clothes. Outdoor play is encouraged at the end of each class in all but extreme weather conditions. Please be sure to label your child's clothing with their name, the children are notorious for not knowing what belongs to them, and everyone owns the same black rain pants..

It is also encouraged that clothing be easy for the child to manage on their own when using the bathroom so the child is not required to have to ask for help.

## **SNACKS**

One duty parent will provide a nutritious snack for the class and the other will provide an unsweetened drink (fruit juice, milk, water). The parent who schedules the duty days will indicate what to bring on your duty day. Please be sure to check the allergy sheet posted on the fridge for your class to avoid bringing any offending food or drink. Please avoid “treat” foods such as candy, marshmallows, sugar coated cereals, potato chips etc. These may not be acceptable snacks for some parents and may also undermine the schools ability to help teach children health and nutrition.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

A first aid kit is always available within the classroom. Please familiarize yourself with its position (shelf near the front door). The kit must be taken on all field trips, along with the emergency medical information card box. No medication other than what is available in the first aid kit may be administered. Personal prescriptions are an exception.

In the event of a serious injury, medical emergency or illness, the supervisor obtains professional help and notifies the child’s parents/guardians immediately. If parents cannot be reached, contact is then made with the person whose name appears as the alternate on the enrolment forms. It is important for you to keep your phone number and the numbers of the alternate contacts up to date.

If your child has allergies, please notify the supervisor on your enrolment form and ensure that your child is placed on the allergy list for your class.

Please see that your child’s immunizations are up-to-date. If you have chosen not to immunize, please write a liability statement on the immunization part of your enrolment form. If you child comes into contact with, or contracts a communicable disease, inform the supervisor immediately so that she can inform the other class parents, so that they can watch for symptoms in their children.

The TB test is not compulsory at the time of this revision (April 2018), but may become so at any point in time. Please be aware that you may be required to test for TB, if you are continuing to participate in the class should the law require it.

## COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PROCEDURE

In the case that your child has caught, or there is a suspicion that your child has caught, an communicable disease or infestation please keep your child at home and tell the supervisor immediately.

It is the responsibility of the supervisor (not the parent) to notify both the Vancouver Island Health Authority and the families of the preschool when she has knowledge that a reportable communicable disease is present

Communication of any potential exposure risks will be shared with the family in several different ways depending on the illness in question and the exposure risk. Under most circumstances the information that a family in the community has been officially diagnosed will be posted on the outside bulletin board. If the exposure risk is deemed exceptionally high the supervisor will ask a member of the executive to call every family at risk, and/or post the appropriate information to an online community forum if one exists. Health information of a student is confidential and will not be disclosed, only the potential risks and what symptoms parents should look for.

Routine practices to reduce the spread of communicable diseases are in place in the preschool. These include teaching the children to cough into their inner arm, no sharing of any personal items (including towels), teaching children to wipe their own noses, hand washing, preparing food safely etc. It is the supervisor's responsibility to educate herself on the symptoms for common communicable diseases, and any reported disease, and then to monitor the children where exposure was possible or suspected.

If your child is suspected of being contagious of a communicable disease, you will be called and required to come and pick up your child. A suspected contagious child will be monitored to ensure he does not pose a risk to other children, and if there is a threat of serious exposure he will be kept separate from the other children, under the direct care of either the supervisor or the supervisor's assistant until a parent or guardian can come and get him.

## **FIRE PROCEDURE**

Our premises have been checked by the Fire Department. Be sure that you can open all EXIT doors and familiarize yourself with the placement and use of the fire extinguishers. The supervisor will have periodic fire drills to acquaint the children with the sound of the smoke alarm and the procedures to follow.

Children: Immediately follow the adult with them to the nearest exit. Grab a hold of the safety rope.

Parent Assistant:

1. Stand at nearest safe exit and call the children to you.
2. Form a line, count children, open door and walk to grassy area on the other side of parking lot.
3. Count the children again. STAY CALM.

Supervisor:

1. Take file box and attendance sheet from counter by the phone
2. Check the building (bathrooms, play areas, kitchen, stage and entrance)
3. Close doors and go to grassy area
4. Take attendance by name
5. Delegate someone to go and call the Fire Department (dial 911)

## **EARTHQUAKE PROCEDURE**

The space has been checked by a structural engineer for appropriate readiness in the event of an earthquake. There will be one earthquake drill to acquaint the children with proper procedure.

### **IN CASE OF EARTHQUAKE**

Children: Once instructed by supervisor, immediately follow the adult with them to the nearest exit. Grab a hold of the safety rope.

Assistant:

1. Stand at safe exit and call the children to you.
2. Form a line, count children, open door and walk to grassy area on the other side of the parking lot
3. Count the children again. STAY CALM.

Supervisor:

1. Take file box and attendance sheet from counter by the phone, and emergency backpack from closet
2. Check the building (bathrooms, play areas, kitchen, stage and entrance)
3. Close doors and go to grassy area
4. Take attendance by name

If there is an earthquake during regular school hours, children will be instructed to get under the tables. Once the shaking has stopped, the supervisor will instruct parents and children to leave the school and meet in the field on the other side of the parking lot. There is a backpack in the classroom with emergency supplies, as well as a stocked and updated earthquake kit in the shed that contains food items, water, and coats. During orientation parents will be made familiar with this procedure and location of supplies.

## **WILD ANIMAL PROCEDURE**

As the school backs onto a wooded area, there is always the possibility that a wild animal could enter the playground area or more likely be spotted just outside the grounds.

If you are aware that a bear or cougar has been spotted near the school grounds recently, be sure to inform the supervisor.

### **IN CASE OF WILD ANIMAL SIGHTING**

- Children: Go to the nearest adult, and follow that adult back inside the school.
- Assistant:
1. Ensure that the animal has a clear escape route, don't corner it and always keep it in sight.
  2. Call the children to you and keep them together as a group as you return to the school. Always watch the animal
  3. Count the children. STAY CALM.
- Supervisor:
1. Quickly assess the situation and try to determine which type of an encounter this might be – sighting, surprise or close encounter
  2. make sure the animal has a clear escape route — don't corner a it
  3. always watch the animal and slowly back away until it is out of sight. If it is a close encounter - yell, wave your arms, throw objects, aggressive.
  4. get inside, or leave the area if you are on a nature walk in the woods
  5. Take attendance by name
  6. Call the BC Conservation Office at 1-877-952-7277 to report the sighting, and if necessary, call parents to let them know to be attentive at pick up.

## **MISSING CHILD PROCEDURE**

The school yard is fully fenced, and the gate should be locked before the children are allowed into the yard for large motor play or outdoor play to ensure a child doesn't unintentionally wander off-site.

### **IN CASE OF A WANDERING CHILD**

- Children Follow the normal schedule of the day, at the direction of the supervisor
- Assistants
1. Follow the supervisors lead
  - 2.Count the children to ensure no other children are missing.
- Supervisor
1. Carry out a thorough search of the building and outside area.
  2. Take attendance
  3. Check doors and gates for a breach in security which would have

enabled a child to wander off the premises

4. Interview other adult to establish when and where child was last seen

5. If the child can not be found the parent will be informed and the incident reported to the police.

## **BIRTHDAYS**

The celebration of birthdays is at the parent's discretion and in consultation with the supervisor. A child's birthday may be acknowledged by having the parent provide a cupcake for each child. If the birthday does not fall on the school day, then you may wish to choose the closest school day.

## **FAMILY MEMBERS**

Since it is not always possible for all adult family members to participate in the regular preschool program, they are instead encouraged to visit the school at any opportunity; to offer any special skills or hobbies to the classroom and the administration of the school. They are welcome to attend the monthly general meetings, and to participate in parent duty days as an extra when possible, or as a duty parent provided the proper orientation and paperwork has been received.

## **BULLETIN BOARDS**

There are two bulletin boards:

1. For general business of the school located inside
2. For current information located outside the front door

Please try and read the bulletin boards on a regular basis, for it is the best form of inner-school communication.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Parents driving for the school excursions must have cars in good repair, and be in possession of a valid, up-to-date BC Driver's License and insurance sticker. Sufficient insurance coverage is mandatory and must be a minimum of \$1 000 000.00 Third Party Liability for transporting children under these circumstances.

Parents taking medication or experiencing any problems, which may interfere with their ability and concentration, **do not drive** for reasons of liability.

Parents are notified of all excursions and have the final word on who they will allow their children to be transported by.

Children must be secured by an approved child safety restraint, properly installed and preferably with all children in the rear seat.

# **SECTION 6: POLICIES AND BYLAWS**

## **INSURANCE INFORMATION**

Each family pays a premium (per child) of \$65.00/year to the Vancouver Island Cooperative Preschool Association (VICPA), this is paid for by your registration fee to the preschool.

First, this premium gives the association, supervisors, and parents on duty \$5,000,000.00 coverage for bodily injury, property damage where the above named persons may be found legally liable, while conducting the operations of the cooperative preschool. The Tenant's Fire Insurance has a limit of \$345,000.00. There is also a Miscellaneous Equipment Floater of \$480,000.00 which covers the equipment of the preschool for loss or damage caused by such occurrences as fire, theft, malicious damage, disaster etc. We have a \$1000.00 deductible.

Second, there is a Third Party Legal Liability. Vehicles owned and operated by the individual should be carrying the minimum of \$2,000,000.00 Third Party Liability (November 1999) or the Association could be held responsible.

Under the Child Care Regulations, travel to and from school is not included in any Association policy.

The membership premium adequately covers the Association Insurance, Association Membership fees and the costs of the disbursements of these fees.

Members are not covered outside of regular class hours, except for general meetings and full school functions with the supervisor in attendance. Insurance does not cover athletic activities outside of the school grounds.

## **THE SUPERVISOR**

Supervisors employed by the cooperative preschools are registered with, and meet the educational requirements established by the provincial Child Care Facilities Licensing Board. Their training in Early Childhood Education has been achieved through 2 years of study at a university or college.

The supervisor undertakes several areas of responsibility with the children and their families in a cooperative preschool. While the general management of the preschool is the responsibility of the membership, the educational program is the supervisor's area of responsibility, and this involves not only the direction of the children's program, but also, the training of the parents to enable them to assist her in the classroom.

## **RELEASE OF CHILDREN POLICY**

Children will only be released to those parents and persons who have been outlined in writing in the enrolment form kept on file at the preschool.

If a parent appears incapable of providing safe care, then the supervisor would ask the parent to

provide an alternate person to pick up the child. If parent insists on taking the child, then the supervisor would contact the proper authorities. If the pick-up person appears incapable, then the parent would be notified to provide an appropriate alternate pick-up.

If the parent or pick-up person were substantially late then the supervisor would try to contact the parent or the emergency pick-ups. If none of these persons are available then the supervisor will contact the proper authorities.

Parents of a child must have reasonable access to their child while in the facility. Legal agreements should be on file if a parent has limited or no access.

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY**

If schools in District 69 are closed due to hazardous road conditions or weather, Errington Co-operative Preschool will be closed. If School District 69 buses are not running (roads deemed unsafe) then the Errington Cooperative Preschool will be closed. If there is a power outage then the Errington Cooperative Preschool will be closed. If the supervisor deems the weather/roads unsafe (snow, high winds, etc) preschool programming will be cancelled with the consultation of one executive member. Every attempt will be made to notify parents/caregivers by telephone before 8:30 am on the morning of closure.

Announcements regarding school closures/bus cancellations for School District 69 are made between 6:30 am – 8:30 am on the following local stations:

The Beach – 88.5 FM  
The Wolf – 106.9 FM

And at the School District 69 website at: <http://www.sd69.bc.ca/Pages/default.aspx>

## **POWER OUTAGE POLICY**

If there is a power outage at the beginning of the school day, the Errington Cooperative Preschool will be closed for the session. If the outage is noted before drop off every effort will be made to phone the families before they arrive at the school. If this is not possible, the supervisor will remain until 9:15 to inform arriving families that the power is out and the school is closed. Beyond 9:15 the supervisor will leave a note on the door letting families know of the outage. If the outage occurs during the session it is up to the discretion of the ECE if the session will continue. If the session is to be cancelled, families will be called and asked to pick up their child.

During a power outage it is important to note that the building is on a well, and the pump ceases to work during a power outage meaning that the toilets will stop working.

# **SECTION 7: ENROLMENT AND ADMINISTRATION**

## FEES

Currently fees are \$130.00 per month per child, and are payable with **ten post-dated cheques** (dated September 1<sup>st</sup> through to and including June 1<sup>st</sup>). An annual **non-refundable registration fee of \$65.00** is required at the time of registration. This fee covers insurance coverage through the Vancouver Island Cooperative Preschool Association as well as other various administrative fees associated with the preschool. Cheques are to be made payable to “Errington Preschool Parents Society or EPPS” and are submitted to the Enrolment Officer at the time of registration. It is the parent’s obligation to make sure that your cheques are given to the Enrolment Officer at the beginning of the preschool year. **If a payment is missed and not paid within 45 days, the participating family will be asked to leave the preschool.**

Eligible families may also receive a subsidy through-The Ministry of Children and Family. This subsidy may vary due to income. The parent is responsible for paying the parent portion. Approach the Treasurer for more information about subsidy opportunities.

There are also limited spaces for children of working parents. These spaces are for children whose parents are unable to help in the classroom. The fees will be \$120.00 per month and should be paid as listed above. Attendance at monthly meetings, helping with fundraisers and signing up for a preschool job is mandatory for all parents. The working parent is excused from doing duty days in the preschool classroom.

## REFUND POLICY

Preschool payment is made through post dated cheques on the first of every month, unless otherwise arranged between the Treasurer and the Member. If for any reason the preschool needed to close during the middle of a month there would be no refund for the month in progress. However if closure continued into the next month the Member’s cheques for that month would not be cashed.

## WITHDRAWAL NOTICE

One month’s notice or monthly fee in lieu of notice is required before withdrawing a child. **Notice must be given in writing to the Secretary** and brought to the attention of the Enrolment Officer. If withdrawal is after May 1<sup>st</sup>, the June fees will be forfeited.

## ELIGIBILITY

To enter the 4/5 year old group, a child should reach the age of 4 or 5 by December 31<sup>st</sup> of the school year in question. To enter the 3-year old group a child should be 3 years old by December 31<sup>st</sup> of the school year in question.

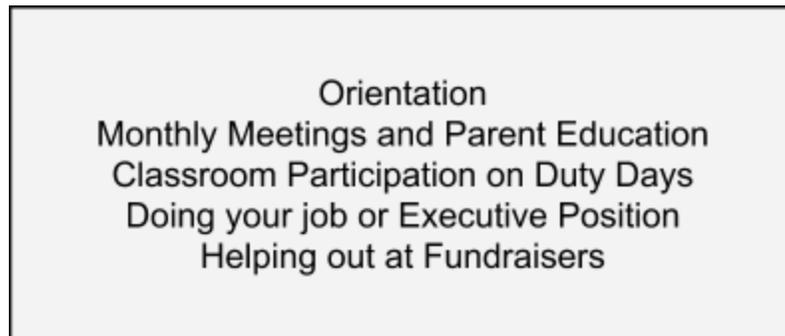
Inclusion of all children is encouraged in our school. Children with special needs should be brought to the attention of the Enrolment Officer at time of registration, and then the supervisor along with the family can create a plan to best suit their needs.

## ENROLMENT

To enrol your child in the preschool and before you are eligible to participate in the classroom a registration package needs to be filled out, signed and submitted to the Enrolment Officer.

**Please ensure that the enrolment package is completed before the first Wednesday in September (or sooner).**

Also remember that co-op preschool only runs smoothly when parents do their part in these areas, **these are mandatory elements of our co-op:**



Your enrolment package should contain all of the following forms and request:

- **Emergency permission card-** this goes to the Supervisor for storage in the classroom in a portable container
- **Childcare registration form**
- **VICPA Agreement**
- **Special interest field-trip sheet-** can be given to the enrolment person to check that they are complete, and then they belong in the classroom in the binder for the appropriate class.
- **Criminal record check and Vulnerable Sector Letter-** please hand deliver this form to the RCMP station on Pym and bring your ID and the letter. You'll be required to pick it up once it has been completed and return it to the preschool.
- **Subsidy information if applicable-** must be signed by the Supervisor and submitted by July 1st. For information on eligibility and how to apply please visit the BC Childcare subsidy Website at [http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/subsidy\\_promo.htm](http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/subsidy_promo.htm)
- **A registration cheque for \$65** (this check is non-refundable and will be deposited immediately) and a signed letter stating you understand our refund policy, and **post dated checks for September to June** of the current year for the monthly fee of \$130. Please ensure checks after January have the correct year.

- **Two current photos of your child**
- **Two character references**
- **A record of work history**
- **Your immunization schedule** or a liability statement stating that you choose not to immunize

## **ORIENTATION**

The Community Care Facilities Licensing Department (which licenses all preschools in BC) requires that each parent assistant complete 10 hours of mandatory orientation before working in the classroom. The goals of orientation are to observe the following:

- Growth and development of young children
- Suitable program activities of young children
- Acceptable procedures in guidance of behaviour in our preschool
- Relationships between supervisor, executive, membership and committees
- Relationships between the above and the benefits to the children of our school

All persons to be involved in duty days with any class in the preschool must receive adequate orientation before their first duty day. The program to fulfill the 10 hours of orientation may differ from year to year, but may include the following:

- Attendance at the May AGM and the June General Meeting prior to enrolment including any corresponding Parent Education.
- Observation of a full session of preschool
- Tour of the preschool and facilities with description of its procedures and routines
- Orientation evening with the supervisor and other classroom parents in September
- September General Meeting
- First Class attended – staggered entry
- First Duty Day

The Enrolment Officer along with the Supervisor will inform you of any hours still needed to complete mandatory hours and can accommodate those unable to follow the regular orientation schedule due to late enrolment.

## **PARENT DUTY DAYS**

Two assistants must be present and actively taking part each preschool day (approx one week out of every six for each parent). Duty parents must arrive 15 minutes before school begins to help set up, and must remain to help clean up afterward.

Parents can not leave their children at the school until both duty parents have arrived. Duty parents may not leave the school until all children have been picked up.

Parents on duty may not bring other children, except for infants who are not yet mobile unless approved in advance by the supervisor. Maternity leave from duty days is three months, if

chosen.

Working parents must arrange for their own substitute and ensure that the alternate assistant receives the 10 hours of orientation and attends General Meetings. However, exceptions are made for those parents who hold the “working parent” position. They are not required to participate in the classroom, but are still required to attend the monthly General Meetings, Fundraisers and do a job within the preschool. There are only 2 working parent positions in each class.

If you have more than one child enrolled, you will be expected to perform class duties for each child.

If you are unable to attend on a scheduled duty day due to emergency or illness, you will be expected to make arrangements for your own replacement. There may be an emergency parent for your class or someone who may be willing to trade, but substitutes must have received orientation.

## **PARENT PARTICIPATION**

Parents must be prepared to serve on the Executive or contribute to the operation of the school by performing a specific job. Also, parents will be asked from time to time to volunteer their help to the supervisor, executive or to the organization and operation of full school social and fundraising functions.

## **GENERAL MEETINGS**

One or both parents are **required to attend monthly parent meetings** held at the Bradley Centre 975 Shearme Road, Coombs (on the corner of Shearme Rd and the Alberni Highway. As well, all others involved in the school as parent substitutes for working parents should be in attendance. The meetings are held on the first Wednesday of every month. The Executive meet from 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm, the General Meeting is from 7:00pm – 9:00 pm and the parent education portion of the meeting is between 8:00 – 9:00 pm. It is appreciated if everyone could take a turn hosting the meeting (setting up chairs, making coffee/tea, bringing a snack, clean-up).

The reasons for these meetings are:

- To discuss, conduct and present the ongoing business of the preschool
- To hear the reports of all committees, members and executive required to do so according to the agenda
- To remain in touch with the concerns, happenings and curriculum of our school
- To hear the concerns and share experiences of the other parent members of the cooperative
- To provide a minimum of 1 hour per month of ongoing Parent Education, which is required by the Community Care Licensing Department of all cooperative child care facilities

Attendance will be taken at the meetings, as they are essential to conform to Provincial

Regulations. If a meeting can not be attended for a valid reason, a member of the executive must be notified before the meeting. If two consecutive meetings are missed without a valid reason, you may be asked to withdraw from the preschool.

Members involved in committees may be required to attend additional meetings to perform the function of their committees. Member of the Executive are also asked to attend Executive Meetings once a month (usually the first Wednesday of the month from 6:00 – 7:00pm). The Executive also have 3 additional meetings per year. Days and times for Executive and Committee Meetings are at the discretion of the members and their personal schedules. Please be advised that the General Meetings are often packed with business to accomplish. Your input is much needed and welcome when discussing issues at these meetings. Any general information and questions can be put to the appropriate member of the executive for answering, thereafter added to the agenda of the meeting if it involves the entire membership. Executive phone numbers are provided for this purpose.

Also keep in mind that with the amount of business to accomplish at these meetings, they are not short. Your cooperation is appreciated in full evening attendance, as all input in school business and in our Parent Education is valuable.

**SECTION 8:**  
**JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

# JOB DESCRIPTIONS

## Executive Committee

### ***President***

- Chief administrator of the preschool
- Chief liaison with the supervisor/ECE
- Resource person for committees
- Evaluates the group
- Link with VICPA
- Chairperson at meetings
- Acts as a sounding board for all members, including supervisor and executive, regarding concerns, class issues and conflicts
- Ensures all the business of the preschool is done, and is in alignment with current requirements (society act, non-profit requirements etc)
- Updates the lease with the landlord every year
- Assists treasurer to update the employment contracts every year

### ***Vice-President***

- Assists the president
- Assumes the president's duties should the president be absent
- Resource person for committees
- Encourages and enforces meeting attendance
- Initiates job sign-up and ensures performances of jobs
- Keeps adequate records of pertinent information and inventory, forwarding a copy of the equipment inventory to insurance agency, for insurance purposes.
- Oversees yard maintenance
- Regularly asks membership for concerns and opinions and lends anonymity to their presentation to the membership or executive
- Ensures that the quality care and health care standards are upheld in the classroom
- Oversees yearly evaluations from members
- Sets up and supervises the cleaning of the classroom on a regular basis, a minimum of 3 times a year (November, March and June), possibly more if it has been a bad flu and cold season.

### ***Treasurer***

- Deals with monies relating to preschool
- Disburses funds and keeps books
- Presents a financial report at each General Meeting
- Registers supervisor and support worker with Canada Pension Plan
- Liase with Payroll Assistant to ensure payroll, T4 slips and GST forms are filled out accordingly.
- Provides a complete list of members and insurance payment to insurance agent of school's choosing
- Presents a projected budget for the following school year for approval by the membership in the spring with at least one other Executive member (Secretary, President, Vice)
- Negotiates ECE contract
- Responsible for submitting all relevant documents for unaudited Notice to Reader and charity taxes
- Responsible for checking mailbox for correspondance

### ***Secretary***

- Takes minutes of meetings and posts on bulletin board, preps agenda if necessary
- Is familiar with constitution and can refer to it during meetings if necessary
- Handles incoming and outgoing correspondence
- Maintains the files, including insuring that minute binder and gmail minute folder is updated monthly. Minutes should be stored for 10 years, after which they can be discarded.
- Organizes General Meeting hosts
- Takes attendance at General Meetings

### ***Enrolment/Orientation***

- Handles publicity for the school
- Updates enrolment forms and distributes to new members
- Ensures that all prospective new members understand what cooperative schools involve before they register
- Works with families to ensure registration packages are complete
- Ensures that all prospective new members understand what cooperative schools involve before they register
- Corresponds with new members to extend invitations to any dates, functions or meetings, in which they are welcome to attend
- Distributes Parent Handbook and maintains the updating of the information in the handbook.
- Works with ECE to:
  - Arrange observation and orientation tours
  - Set-up orientation program for new parents
  - Accommodate late-comers throughout the year to ensure adequate orientation is received
  - Ensure that all participating members receive adequate orientation, records and reports to VICPA

### ***Fundraising Chair***

- Chairs fundraising committee to raise funds
- Organizes fundraising events
- Liaison between fundraising committee and the executive members

### ***Newsletter***

- Obtains minutes from meetings within the school to compile into a newsletter to be distributed to the membership
- May pass on interesting facts, community information, pertinent articles from outside sources
- Collects from membership any information they have, and may want printed
- Allows the supervisor to review the newsletter before it is printed/mailed to members

### ***Gaming/Grants***

- Applies for gaming licenses, certification of affiliation and grants
- Liaison with Alberni Valley Gaming Association

## Committees

### ***Fundraising Committee***

- Organize fundraising events
- Handles publicity for events
- Books entertainment for events
- Notifies general members of upcoming events

### ***Bottle Drive Co-ordinator***

- Books 3 - 4 dates throughout the school year for a bottle drive, co-ordinating with the Fundraising Chair
- Posts sign-up sheet prior to the drive, and communicates with members to ensure that all shifts are filled. Each drive requires at least 2 shifts of 6 bottle sorters and 2 drivers - see Fundraising Chair for details
- Attends bottle drive for the entire event, organizing volunteers and ensuring that everyone is aware of their job

## General Membership Job List

### ***Calendar (one per class)***

- Prepares the monthly duty parent schedule for the class
- Posts the calendar schedule on the bulletin board
- Ensures each parent in the class receives a schedule (typically via their mailbox in the classroom)
- Photocopying of the calendar is paid for by the preschool

### ***Field Trip/Bookings Coordinator***

- Plans monthly field trips with the help of the ECE
- Passes on dates and times of trips at the General Meeting and in newsletter and calendar
- Manages the booking of the hall and the key for Executive and General Meetings throughout the year
- Sends thank-you cards after field trips

### ***Purchaser***

- Purchases supplies as needed, according to the list on the small whiteboard located next to the main bulletin board in the preschool
- provides a list of any non-consumable items to the Vice-President for the inventory

### ***Library/Scholastics***

- organizes and cares for the children's library and parent library
- sets up a system for keeping track of borrowed books
- purchases new books with the consent of the ECE
- ensures that the books set out in the children's library correspond with the school curriculum
- makes sure the books are in good repair
- gives the Vice-President a list of new books for the inventory
- distributes and collects scholastic order forms and cheques
- makes monthly calls to place the scholastic order

### ***Laundry/Cleaning (one per class)***

- cleans the dirty laundry in the classroom on a weekly basis – there are several laundry bags under the sink, and the bag-in-use is hung on the door handle of the cupboard next to the sink
- washes costumes, hats, play blankets, stuffies, smocks as needed
- assists the Vice President with the coordination of classroom cleaning days as needed

### ***First Aid and Earthquake***

- Ensures the school equipment is in state of good repair and does monthly safety check
- Organizes the checking and filling of the earthquake kit
- Provides current earthquake kit and safety information for the October newsletter
- Ensures that the quality of the supplies is up to date, as they do expire
- Ensures that there is a preschool and adult size pocket mask in the kit, as well as a supply of gloves in the kit and on the shelf

### ***Camera and Album/Slide Show (one per class)***

- Documents by photograph the happenings in the classroom and during fieldtrips and special events
- Compiles an album or slideshow of the events of the year to be displayed at the June General meeting and can be made available for purchase by co-op families if possible
- Coordinates classroom photos in April/May for members to purchase

### ***General Maintenance***

- Regularly check yard and preschool for broken toys/items, and organize getting them fixed
- Assist the ECE and Assistant with raking the yard at the end of the day
- maintain the vacuum cleaner and other similar supplies
- ensure that the fence parameter is free of brush, clean, and in good repair
- organize the removal of dead trees/branches, working with the ECER
- ensures the sheds are organized and clean
- Checks the yard for vandalism and garbage
- Uses the licensing checklist posted on the bulletin board in the classroom for referral

### ***Event Maintenance***

- responsible for the set up and take down of equipment for preschool events, including fundraising events.
- involve the setup and takedown of our event tent, and any tables and chairs as required for the event (ie: Halloween Party, Fundraising Community Events, Camping weekend)

### ***Parent Education***

- Supports the ECE in organizing education topics, group discussions, speakers, providing written information etc.
- Works with the Supervisor and parents in planning programs
- Sends thank-you notes/ gifts to speakers
- Posts information on bulletin board regarding community-wide events that are relevant to preschoolers at the discretion of the ECE and Executive.

### ***Treasurer Assistant***

- Assists and supports the treasurer as needed, which may involve making deposits at the bank, dropping off cheques, communicating with the membership about fees and

other treasury items. Picking up mail from the mailbox.

Jobs may be deleted from or added to this list in any given year depending upon circumstance and necessity. Some jobs and positions may require a portfolio to be passed along from the previous holder of your position. Some committee jobs will be documented in the school files to better explain their duties.

Please contact the Vice President if your job or function is not immediately clear to you.

All members are entitled to class lists containing the names and phone numbers (and possibly emails) of the membership for contact purposes. All members are entitled to a list of executive members and a list of members and the jobs they are responsible for. There is a large poster on the wall with this information on the way up the stairs to the main hall.

Each member must perform one or two duties with executive positions counting as two jobs.

**Any group is only as good as the people willing to contribute to it. Many hands make light work!**