



Lessard Community Playschool

Where learning begins....



PARENT HANDBOOK 2023 - 2024

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We acknowledge that we are on Treaty 6 territory, a traditional meeting grounds, gathering place, and travelling route to the Cree, Saulteaux, Blackfoot, Métis, Dene and Nakota Sioux. We acknowledge all the many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit whose footsteps have marked these lands for centuries.

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Welcome to Lessard Community Playschool!

A WORD FROM OUR TEACHER

Welcome to Lessard Community Playschool! I am thrilled to be your child's playschool teacher. My name is Jennifer Foo (Miss Jen). As a mom of two fabulous children, I have experienced the best that playschool has to offer. I am committed to providing an excellent playschool experience for your child. One that will foster a love of learning in each student and will become a basis for the many years of school ahead!

OUR PHILOSOPHY

At Lessard Playschool, we offer a community learn through play program for 3 & 4-year-olds. Our program offers a safe and welcoming classroom environment where each student is supported to develop mentally, emotionally, and physically while building confidence in oneself. Our program offers students the predictability of a schedule, promoting security and confidence so that they may feel empowered to explore and learn. Staff enrich the learning opportunities by offering uninterrupted free play time and creating invitations to play that are based on common interests of our students. A variety of activities are offered so that all children are engaged in activities of interest to them. Social-emotional learning is monitored, modeled, and discussed so that our students can develop important skills that encourage connection with peers and staff. Routines such as circle time, craft/art time, snack time and star student aid in the students feeling secure as well as help develop common skills that will benefit them as they move on to kindergarten.

Lessard Community Playschool is a program offered by the Lessard Community League, which is incorporated under Alberta's Societies Act. We are a non-profit, parent co-operative whereby all excess funds are put back into the playschool. As this is a cooperative, please remember involvement is needed from all parents/guardians to make each and every year a success.

We are a parent co-op, however we do not require parent roster days where you must volunteer in the classroom. Instead, we have a lead and assistant teacher in each classroom. Parents are welcome to be involved in their children's learning experience at playschool, through your committee position (details to follow) and occasional volunteer opportunities. Should you wish to contribute in other ways, please speak to the teacher.

Lessard is a licensed playschool subject to education, health, fire and safety regulations and inspections. We have a Parent Advisory Committee who volunteers their time to work with the staff and ensures the involvement of all parents.

PLAYSCHOOL PROGRAMS

Our programs are for registered participants. Therefore, casual or drop-in participants cannot be accommodated. Class start date will be September 5, 2023 and the last day of classes will be June 14, 2024.

Children must be FULLY TOILET TRAINED before they can start the program (See Bathroom Policy).

*3 & 4-year-old Playschool Program: Tuesday & Thursday 9:00 am – 11:15 am

*There are a limited number of spots for 2 year olds turning 3 by December 31st

4-year-old Preschool Program: Monday, Wednesday & Friday 9:00 am – 11:30 am

We follow the Edmonton Public School calendar and are closed for all public holidays, Teachers Convention, Spring Break, Christmas Break and PD (Professional Development) Days. You can view the school calendar on their website at <https://www.epsb.ca/calendars/>

Please note: Christmas Vacation is December 16, 2023 – January 7, 2024 inclusive. School commences January 8, 2024.

DAILY CLASSROOM ROUTINE

1. Children Arrive and complete arrival routine (Name Tags, Shoes, Attendance)
2. Circle Time (Story, Star student, introduction of craft, etc.)
3. Craft Time
4. Free Play
5. Snack
6. Circle/Movement (Story, Games, Songs, Movement)

All children should arrive by 9 am and be picked up promptly at dismissal time (11:15 T/Th, 11:30 M/W/F). Parents are responsible for their children until class begins. Students will be greeted at external door and checked in by our volunteer parent before being escorted downstairs to the classroom. If someone other than a parent/guardian is picking up your child, please make sure their name is listed in the registration form under the authorized section, and please inform the teacher by email.

The main doors to the playschool will be locked from the outside at approximately 9:15 am. This is for your child's safety. There is a doorbell above the boot rack that you may use if necessary.

Our Teaching Team consists of one Lead Teacher and Assistant Teacher for each class. In the unlikely event that a substitute is not available, an adult with a vested interest (parent, grandparent, nanny) who is willing and able to fill in will be contacted.

BATHROOM POLICY

Children **must** be FULLY TOILET TRAINED and able to manage themselves **independently** in the bathroom. Children cannot attend playschool in training pants (e.g. pull ups etc.)

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

The beginning of the year will be a staggered entry. Half of the students will attend each day, providing a quieter introduction to the classroom. Families will be notified of which day during the first week they are expected to attend. On their staggered entry day, a parent is encouraged to stay with the student for the first portion of the morning, although is not required to do so. During that time, we will familiarize students with the location of their shoe bin, coat hook, and classroom areas. We will participate in a short circle time, followed by a craft. Once the student is ready for playtime, we will ask parents to leave and return at dismissal time. We ask that siblings not stay on staggered entry day.

WHAT DOES MY CHILD NEED EVERYDAY?

Please ensure your child has the following items on the first day of school and each day thereafter:

- ✓ 1 pair of indoor running shoes (Velcro, non-marking soles) which will remain at school.
- ✓ 1 backpack (large enough to hold snack bag, and crafts sent home)
- ✓ 1 complete change of clothes in large Ziploc (shirt, pants, under garment & socks)
- ✓ 1 small snack bag to hold their snack.
- ✓ 1-2 small healthy snack(s): Please ensure all snacks are PEANUT AND TREE NUT FREE
- ✓ 1 water bottle

All items are to be taken home daily, with the exception of indoor shoes.
PLEASE LABEL ALL ITEMS CLEARLY WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME.

CLOTHING

Your child should be dressed in suitable play clothes for every class. During centre time, your child will paint, use glue, play in the water table and sand; therefore, please dress accordingly. Children will be provided the opportunity to play outdoors (weather permitting) so please provide rain boots, winter boots, snow pants, mittens, toques, and sunscreen as per the season. **PLEASE LABEL ALL ITEMS CLEARLY WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME.**

SNACKS

We ask that all children bring a small snack bag and label any containers, water bottles etc. Remember this is a snack not a meal. Snack time is approximately 15 minutes long. Teachers eat snack with students and model table behaviours. Lessard Playschool is a **peanut and tree nut free zone due to allergies.** Foods that pose a choking hazard must be cut lengthwise (grapes, cherry tomatoes).

Please do not send glass containers. Accidental drops result in glass shards on the floor that are difficult to clean up and may result in a student being injured during play!

Healthy Snack Ideas Popular with the Children (1-2 Items):

*Cheese Strings
Babybel Cheese
Yogurt Tubes
Applesauce
Fruit Cups
Fruit cut up*

*Carrot/celery sticks
Sausage Slices
Turkey Pepperoni Sticks
Granola Bar
Bear Paws*

*Goldfish Crackers
Crackers
Pretzels
Mini Muffins
Rice Krispie Squares
Rice Pudding*

CLASS PARTIES

Class parties are planned for Halloween and Christmas and are family events. Involving playschool families creates a sense of community and allows your little one to demonstrate some of the types of activities and crafts they encounter at school. Our students may also celebrate with a Spring Tea, and a Year-end celebration. Dates will be communicated in advance, using a classroom newsletter.

PARENTS RESPONSIBILITIES

To ensure the Playschool maintains a quality program at a reasonable cost, the parent(s) of each child in the program have the following responsibilities:

1. Full Payment of Monthly Fees.
2. Maintain a current community league membership.
3. Ensure your child arrives on time and is prepared.
4. Ensure your child is picked up on time.
5. Check email and child's backpack for communication daily.
6. If your child is being dropped off or picked up by someone other than yourself, they must be listed on the "Authorized Individuals" and may be required to show proof of ID.
7. Option to attend Playschool Parent Advisory Committee Meetings.
8. Responsible for a Parent Advisory Committee OR Playschool Committee position unless you have chosen to OPT out.
9. Participate in Fundraising unless you have chosen to OPT out.
10. Parents need to ensure their contact information is always current and up-to-date and inform staff of any changes. We use a variety of communication methods to get information to you in a timely manner.
11. Ensure you communicate any concerns with the Teacher(s).

COLD WEATHER POLICY

Please ensure your child is appropriately dressed for the weather. Fall and Spring days are unpredictable, and often we will head out to the park and find that the wind is cooler than expected, or it begins to rain on us! We will not go outside in weather colder than -15°C. Winter play outside is scheduled in advance and communicated to families so that the students are prepared with snow pants and outdoor winter wear.

We will follow the regular school systems lead should a snow day be called, and classes cancelled. Please check communication methods regularly for updates.

BIRTHDAYS

We would like to honor each child's birthday by giving a special crown, singing "Happy Birthday" and allowing the birthday child to choose a "prize" from the treasure chest. If you are opposed to this, please let the Teacher know as soon as possible. Summer birthdays are celebrated in June. Some families ask whether they may bring a treat for their child to share with classmates; any treat must be in original packaging and will be sent home with students, allowing parents to decide if they may partake.

PARENTS IN THE CLASSROOM

Although we do not require parent roster volunteer days, we know that some parents are interested and excited to volunteer occasionally in the classroom. We are happy to welcome parents into our classroom. Please speak to the teacher in advance to arrange a day or time that you wish to volunteer.

There may be times when an email is sent out to request parent volunteers when a busy day is anticipated at school, or in the event of staff absence.

BEHAVIOUR POLICY

In the case of inappropriate behaviours such as hurting others, being destructive, failing to follow directions, an effort will be made to verbalize and model positive behaviour for the student. This helps to create a positive environment where students feel safe and cared for.

Should the behaviour continue, the teachers may use any of the following behaviour management strategies as the situation warrants:

1. Redirection to another activity or toy. Students are encouraged to use their words politely and cooperate with their peers.
2. Take a breath. The child is calmly encouraged to take a break. The child will be encouraged to join the rest of the group and try again when they are ready to demonstrate acceptable behaviour.
3. Talk it out. Teacher will discuss the situation and action with the student, and work on possible solutions together.
4. If a child's behaviour is continuously or repeatedly disruptive, the parents will be asked to work with the teacher and Lessard Coordinator to achieve an appropriate solution. Aggressive, physically abusive, or verbally abusive behaviour will NOT be tolerated.

Parents may be called to pick up their child if the behaviour is putting themselves or others at risk. If a child's behaviour is a continuous or recurring problem, or if a child is not developmentally ready thereby causing disruptions to class, the child will be withdrawn from the Playschool program.

CHILD ILLNESS

Please text (780-686-4201) or email (lessardplayschool@gmail.com) **before** 9 am if your child is unable to attend that day or will be away. We appreciate the notice, so we are not delaying circle time as we wait for your child.

In the case of a child who exhibits symptoms of illness at school, the parent will be contacted and must arrange to pick up the child immediately.

Students are not permitted to attend school if they have any of the following symptoms; runny nose, sore throat, cough, chills, nasal congestion, pink eye, vomiting, fever, diarrhea, a new or unexplained rash, general feeling of being unwell, any other symptom that staff deem a potential health risk to other students and/or staff.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICINE

Under **NO** circumstances will the staff give out any medication (unless it is an Emergency Medications such as an epi-pen or asthma inhaler, *see below) to a child while the child is at Playschool. It is the parents' responsibility to administer prescription and non-prescription medication. We recommend that any child who has asthma or severe allergies receive their medication PRIOR to coming to class.

EMERGENCY medications can be administered ONLY if the following documentation is provided:

- a. Written consent from the parent.
- b. Medication is in its original labelled container.
- c. It is administered according to the labelled directions.
- d. If any medication is administered the following procedure will be followed:
 - Document the type of medication, time it was given, amount that was given, and the name of the person who administered the medication.
 - The teacher will contact the parents or emergency contact to advise that the medication was administered.
 - The teacher will advise the Lessard Community Program Coordinator. They will then determine what further steps are required.
- e. If medication is left on the playschool premises, it must be stored in a container that is not accessible to children. The container shall remain locked unless the medication is needed in emergency situations.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips may be planned throughout the year. Any off-site activities are planned well in advance and parents will be notified through the newsletter. Each parent will need to sign a field trip permission form for their child to participate which will include details of the field trip as well as an opportunity to volunteer. Siblings and unregistered children are not permitted during in-class field trips and off-site class field trips. You will be responsible to drop off and pick up your child from the field trip location.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

There is a possibility of unexpected closures beyond our control in the case of extreme weather, staff illnesses and no substitute available, building issues etc. You will be electronically notified.

Emergency procedures (map and steps to take) are outlined and posted in the classroom for your information. We have one emergency "practice" fire drill every month throughout the year per program.

Children will be relocated next door to:
Centennial Elementary School
17420 - 57 Avenue Edmonton, AB
Phone: 780-481-5590

FUNDRAISING

School fees do not cover the program needs in full. The remaining funds needed are raised through fundraisers run during the school year. Playschool fundraising initiatives will be discussed and decided on by the parent committee. A postdated bond cheque of \$275 will be submitted by each family. Near the end of the year, the amount of funds raised by each family will be calculated and the cheque you provided at the beginning of the year will be adjusted or returned if you met your \$275 obligation. You have the option to opt out of fundraising at the beginning of the year. If you prefer this option, you can indicate this in the registration package and your cheque will be cashed on October 1st.

Some past fundraisers included sales of raffle tickets, chocolate almonds, gingerbread houses, 50/50 tickets sales, bottle drives, etc.

We do not require families work Bingo shifts. Casino shifts are optional. We are always open to innovative fundraising ideas. Please communicate them to the Parent Committee.

PLAYSCHOOL PARENT ADVISORY/COMMITTEES

Lessard Community Playschool does not require roster days. As a parent co-operative playschool, we **DO** require families to contribute by taking on a position from the Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) OR Playschool Committee list. Should the positions not be filled, we will assign parents to a position. Non-participation on either the Parent Advisory Committee OR Playschool Committee will result in the \$200 Parent Committee cheque to be cashed. By sharing the responsibility of running our school we ensure that our playschool year is a successful one. Additional parent jobs may be added as needed.

Parent Advisory Committee Positions	Playschool Parent Committee jobs
<p data-bbox="261 1255 630 1514">Chair Vice Chair Secretary Celebration Coordinator Fundraising Administrator Fundraising Coordinator Social media/Marketing</p> <p data-bbox="159 1549 732 1617">*these jobs are required to attend a PAC meeting approximately 5 times/year</p>	<p data-bbox="899 1255 1403 1472">Craft Preparation Morning/Afternoon Check-in Parent Laundry Aide Celebration Team Fundraising Team Bottle Drive Team</p>

Parents are able to select their top 3 choices from the jobs above, and every effort will be made to place you in one of your top selections. Job descriptions are located in the next few pages. Selections will be made at the end of summer, before our school year begins.

PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Playschool Chair	<p>Playschool Chair:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversees the proceedings of the committee. • Schedule and sets meetings. • Prepares and distributes agenda prior to the meeting and chairs playschool meetings.
Vice-chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports Playschool Chair's role. • Supports Fundraising team. • Chairs playschool meetings if Chair unavailable. • Attends Playschool Meetings.
Secretary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completes and distributes minutes of meetings no later than one week after meeting. • Updates and maintains files of playschool documents to be forwarded to playschool regularly and upon end of term. • Attends Playschool Meetings.
Celebration Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepares, purchases, and helps plan celebrations for Halloween, Christmas, may include Spring Tea and Year End Party in coordination with the teacher and/or assistants. • Work with Celebration Parents to execute a successful celebration. • Attends Playschool Meetings.
Fundraising Administrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comfortable with spreadsheets and provides a master list to teacher of fundraising profits broken down by individual family participation. • Attends Playschool Meetings (approx. every 2 months), and updates Team. • Notify parents of outstanding fundraising commitment twice in the year by individual letters (first notice midway Dec/Jan and second notice end of April).
Fundraising Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meets initially with teacher and team at the start of year to discuss goals and fundraisers for the year. • Communicates with Fundraising Team. • Available to count money after every fundraiser. • Takes the lead onset up and organization of chosen fundraisers.
Social Media/Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively maintains playschool Facebook Page and promotes playschool. • Setup and help maintain any other social media platforms such as Twitter, Instagram etc.

PLAYSCHOOL COMMITTEES

<p>Craft Preparation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preps crafts provided by teaching staff in a timely fashion.
<p>Morning Check-in Parent (Rotation, approx. 1 week/month)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greet students and families at door. • Enquire that student is well. • Helps students sanitize hands. • Supervise students as they remove outdoor shoes and proceed downstairs to classroom. • Scheduled shifts run 8:50 am – 9:10 am on a weekly rotation. • Contact list will be provided with schedule; should you be unable to attend, please find coverage for your shift.
<p>Laundry Aide</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collects and washes any soiled laundry and returns in a timely fashion. • Typically, a small load weekly or on a rotation (varies depending on activities and requirements).
<p>Fundraising Team <i>Fall (Oct-Dec)</i> <i>Winter (Jan-Mar)</i> <i>Spring (Apr-May)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meets initially with Fundraising Administrator, teacher, and team at the start of year to discuss goals and fundraisers. • Sets up and distributes the fundraiser among classes. • Collects funds with Fundraising Administrator. • Reconciles fundraiser and completes appropriate paperwork to forward to Fundraising Administrator.
<p>Celebration Parents</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist Celebration Coordinator with celebration. • Prepare activity stations, set up hall day before party, clean up after second party. • Halloween, Christmas, may include Spring Tea (April) and Year End Party, in coordination with the teacher and/or assistants.
<p>Bottle Drive Team</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bottle drives occur 5 times/year on a weekend day for approximately 2 hours each time. • Help families dropping off bottles, load into truck and count number of bags dropped off. • Provide totals to teacher after bottle drive is done.

FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL CHILD CARE AGREEMENT

The agreement between Alberta and the Canadian Government promotes affordability in child care, including playschools. The agreement provides operating grants to our playschool, reducing the amount each family pays. (****subject to change***).

For example: **3 & 4 year-old class** annual fee \$1480 - \$790*
= parent portion of fees \$690 (or \$69/month)

4-year-old class annual fee \$1900 - \$800*
= parent portion of fees \$1100 (or \$110/month)

In addition, families with a household income below \$180,000 can apply for subsidy. If approved, they may qualify for a further reduction of playschool fees.

****subject to change***. The current agreement indicates payments of an affordability grant of \$75/month per registered child and annual program fee increases. This grant is subject to change should the government agreement be modified in any way.

COMMUNITY LEAGUE MEMBERSHIPS

Lessard Community Playschool operates under the umbrella of the Lessard Community League. To have your child enrolled with our program, you must have either a Lessard Community League membership or a valid membership with another community league in Edmonton. Proof is required at time of registration, or one can be purchased at that time. Price is \$35 for the family rate.

RETURNED CHEQUES

In the event of cheques returned due to non-sufficient funds (NSF), you will be required to resubmit the monthly fee and a \$25 service charge.

SUBSIDY

The Alberta Government offers a child subsidy for children who attend a licensed Preschool program. Families who have an annual income of less than \$180,000 per year may qualify for subsidy funding. To see if you qualify, or for more information, please visit their website <https://applychildcaresubsidy.alberta.ca/> or call **1-877-644-9992**

REFUNDS AND WITHDRAWALS

One FULL month's written notice is required for any participant wishing to withdraw from the program. *For example, if you are withdrawing in April then we must receive written notice before March 1st.* There will be no refunds for partial months. You are required to send in writing your withdrawal request and reason; otherwise, your monthly payments will be cashed as scheduled. Fees are not refunded for absences due to illness, holidays, nor for the month of June.

FEES SUMMARY

At time of **REGISTRATION**, we need the following:

1. Completed Registration Form. Please Email the completed form to lessardplayschool@gmail.com
2. Wait for confirmation that your child has been accepted into the program.
3. Once accepted, send \$100 non-refundable registration fee sent by EFT.

**All EFT payments to coordinator@lessardcommunity.ca
Cheques made payable to Lessard Community League.**

Methods of **PAYMENT** accepted for school fees:

- a. Automatic Withdrawal for monthly payments (*Sept 1 – Jun 1*).
Complete PAD form and include void cheque.
PAD Agreement will be emailed in August and must be remitted by August 20th to confirm enrollment.
- b. EFT or cheque for **annual fee** amount dated September 1, 2023
3 & 4-year-old program \$690 **OR** **4-year-old program \$1100**
(\$1480 - \$790 government
childcare agreement funds)* *(\$1900 - \$800* government
childcare agreement funds)*
***subject to change**

To be **COLLECTED** in September 2023:

1. Community League Membership from Edmonton Community League (2023-24). Must provide proof of active membership card. Can be purchased online for \$35 at www.lessardcommunity.ca/memberships . Please note that community memberships expire at the end of August and ensure you are purchasing after September 1st.
2. \$75 Toy cleaning fee. There are no cleaning bees; instead, we have a paid cleaner who cleans and disinfects toys on a regular basis.
3. \$275 fundraising deposit cheque post-dated May 1, 2024. This cheque will be returned to you if participation/commitment is fulfilled. If you choose to opt-out of fundraising, please date your cheque for October 1, 2023, at which time will be cashed.
4. \$200 parent committee participation deposit cheque post-dated May 1, 2024. This cheque will be returned to you if participation/commitment is fulfilled. If you choose to opt-out of the parent committee, please date your cheque for October 1, 2023, at which time will be cashed.

**All EFT payments to coordinator@lessardcommunity.ca
All cheques made payable to Lessard Community League.**