

Parent Handbook 2021-2022



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Hello and Welcome!

The Spruce View Playschool Program was established around 2008 by a non-profit organization, the Spruce View Rural Child Care Society. The playschool program operates in a classroom located in the elementary wing of the Spruce View School.

SVRCCS Philosophy:

Provide a safe, accessible, and supportive environment in which children are inspired to be playful, explore, learn, and grow.

SVRCCS Vision:

Continue to develop and provide an integrated and positive child care experience for families and children in the surrounding areas.

SVRCCS Code of Conduct:

Communication and behaviour between parents, teacher and board members needs to be kind and courteous. It is the expectation that all parties will address any concerns in a positive and supportive manner, avoiding public actions or criticism detrimental to the playschool program.

SVRCCS Statement of Inclusion:

It is our belief that learning and education can not discriminate. Every child from every background has a right to express their individuality and it is our goal to encourage and celebrate this to elevate the learning experience.

The Spruce View Rural Child Care Society is a board of elected parent volunteers consisting of a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, directors, and auditors.

Board members are elected at the Annual General Meeting held in early September.

If you are interested in becoming a board member please email spruceviewruralchildcaresociety@hotmail.com

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Dear Parents,

We are so excited to have you and your child be apart of the Spruce View Playschool!

Our goal within the program is to nurture and explore 5 different dispositions of learning:

“We are playful, seeking, participating, persisting, and caring.”

-Makovichuk, L., Hewes, J., Lirette, P., & Thomas, N. (2014). Flight: Alberta's early learning and care framework. Retrieved from flightframework.ca.

Enclosed within this handbook is a copy of Policies and Procedures for the playschool program.

Please take the time to read through the information provided as it contains useful information that will help to answer questions you may have.

It is also beneficial to reread through this information throughout the school year as the information will become more clear and applicable.

We are wishing you and your child a fun and rewarding year with the Spruce View Playschool.

Sincerely,
Spruce View Playschool Board of Directors

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Policies and Procedures

Eligibility: Upon registration, children must be 3-5 years of age and potty trained.

Playschool year: Early September until end of May. Registrations are accepted anytime throughout the year. The playschool program follows the Chinook's Edge School Division Calendar.

Playschool days: Monday and Wednesdays, 1 Friday/month- dates based off of Chinook's Edge School Division Calendar.

Class times: Class begins at 10:00 a.m. and ends at 1:45 p.m.

Fees: 1 day per week.....\$50/month/child (Sept-May)
2 days per week.....\$85/month/child (Sept-May)

Payment: Post dated cheques are to be handed in to Playschool Board of Directors (President or Treasurer) on the first day of class. If there are any changes in payment or amount of days child is attending, please inform President or Treasurer as soon as possible.

Cheques are made out to Spruce View Rural Child Care Society (SVRCCS) dated for the 1st of each month (September-May).

- There is a \$25 charge for any cheques returned due to insufficient funds.
- If payment for program falls behind by 1 month, parents will be contacted by the Treasurer. If payments are delinquent by 6 weeks, the child will be removed from the program. For the child to be reinstated, all missed payments must be paid in full.

******Pandemic Policy*** If the playschool is closed due to a COVID-19 outbreak or due to any circumstances beyond our control, fees for the time playschool is closed (whether it be permanent or temporary) will NOT be reimbursed.***

Absences: If child must be absent for a month or longer (due to illness or any other major reason approved by the board), payment will not be required for that month provided that a Doctor note be submitted or the parent notifies the board of directors why the child will be absent. Notifications must be provided before the child is absent, not after the fact.

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Reimbursement: If you decide to stop sending your child, you must notify the Board of Directors (President or Treasurer) on the day that you stop bringing your child. Days missed before notice is given will not be reimbursed.

Toys: Children will not bring toys to the school unless it is their day for show and tell, in which case parents will be notified by the teacher.

Sign in/out: Please sign your child in at drop-off and sign them out upon pick-up. The sign in/out sheet is located in the classroom on top of shoe cubbies. Please do not sign your child out until you are taking them out of the school.

Weather: If busses are not running or the Spruce View School is closed due to inclement weather, the playschool will be closed as well. The teacher will notify parents if playschool is closed through text message and a post on the playschool Facebook page (Spruce View Playschool Parent Group).

Off-site Activities: Parents will be notified of off-site activities (eg. field trips) and supervision arrangements for the activity through monthly meetings, monthly teacher newsletters, and Facebook page. Parents must fill out a permission slip with all the necessary information and provide their signature indicating they understand the parameters of the off site activity and their child has permission to attend. The teacher is required to take the portable records of each child, which includes all parent and emergency contact information, to the off-site activity in the case of an emergency situation or evacuation.

Transportation: It is the parent's responsibility to provide transportation to and from playschool as well as for off-site activities.

Parent Helper Days:

- Our program depends on parents to help in the classroom on a rotational basis. It is very exciting for your child to know that their Mom, Dad, or relative will be helping out in the classroom and it is a great opportunity for you to see how your child is doing in the classroom. As a helper, we ask that you assist in the classroom with various children's activities and clean up duties.
- As a Parent Helper for the day, you are considered Primary Staff. As such, it is required for you to be familiar with playschool program policies and procedures listed in this handbook and the Code of Ethics that is attached to this handbook.
- The amount of Parent Helper days each parent is expected to partake in is determined by the class size each year. Once determined, the teacher

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will assign parents their Parent Helper days on a rotational basis. A Parent Helper Calendar will be sent through email to parents and posted to Spruce View Parent Group Facebook page before the first day of class.

- Licensing standards stipulates that we maintain a ratio of 1 adult to every 7 children.
- Typical playschool class sizes need a Parent Helper to operate. If there is no Parent Helper then class would have to be cancelled. No reimbursement will be given for a missed class due to this reason. Parent Helpers can be anyone over the age of 18 (grandparent, aunt, uncle, etc.). If there are classes with no Parent Helper, the teacher will sign parents up. If you are unable to be there yourself, it is your responsibility to find another adult family member or another Parent Helper to take your place.
- Licensing standards stipulate that siblings may NOT accompany any Parent Helper.
- All Parent Helpers are required to have a current (within 6 months) criminal record check and vulnerable sector check. This is a free service from the RCMP that ensures children are being provided with a safe environment at all times.

**Please take the Primary Staff letter attached to this handbook to your local RCMP detachment (call beforehand to double check that it is the correct detachment based on your address) along with 2 pieces of ID. The checks take approximately 5-10 business days to process and they need to be provided to the teacher on or before your Parent Helper days.

Volunteer bond: The Spruce View Playschool is a parent run program. As such, volunteering your time to the program ensures that the program runs successfully throughout the year. Each family is expected to assist the playschool through various volunteer and fundraising activities. Each family enrolling a student or students into the program will provide a "Volunteer Bond" that will be held by the playschool board.

- The bond will be in the form of a cheque post-dated for May 31, 2022 in the amount of \$200. It will be returned to parents at the end of May if their required volunteer time has been met.

Fundraising: The Spruce View Playschool depends on fundraising events to help cover the costs of the program. Fundraising events may change from year to year. The date and type of fundraising event is decided through the consensus of parents and board members. Example Fundraisers: Flower sales, bottle drives, gift card sales

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Information and Communication:

- Information is passed on through parent meetings, emails, telephone calls, text messages and newsletters. The playschool Facebook page is an excellent means for parents to receive and pass on any necessary school information. Simply request to join **Spruce View Playschool Parent Group** and the administrator(s) will approve your request.
- All concerns with the playschool program need to be addressed with the teacher first. If after a discussion with the teacher takes place and the parent does not feel that the concern was addressed to their satisfaction, the parent will be required to bring their complaint in writing to the Playschool Board of Directors. The board will then discuss the situation and meet with the parent to provide a response.

Supervision and Safety:

- Orientation is provided to staff when hired to show them around the playschool room and outdoor playground (on site).
- Staff are expected to follow a schedule that allow for movement from A to B as one unit. This includes going to the washroom, Library day, Gym time, and going outside. When leaving the classroom, the teacher organizes the children into a line. The teacher is at the front to lead the line to wherever they are going and Parent Helper or Education Assistant is at the back. As children move from A to B, the primary staff ensures that the children stay together and are accounted for.
- Health and fire inspections are scheduled at the beginning of the school year before class begins to ensure that there are no fire hazards or health violations within the classroom.
- The Spruce View School janitors clean and disinfect the playschool room as often as the rest of the school classrooms and notifies the program about any issues that are observed as well.
- It is the responsibility of the teacher, any staff members, and Parent Helper (primary staff) to always visually observe and monitor the children's play and behaviours indoors as well as outdoors. Using verbal communication, primary staff will indicate with each other as needed regarding changes in role of supervision.
- The playschool program promotes child safety through practices such as head counts throughout class time, staying together as a group as much as possible, detailed orientation for new and existing staff members, taking attendance, and consistent use of sign in/out sheets. The program also facilitates supervision through safety practices such as fire drills and walking in an orderly fashion to and from library and outdoor play space.

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Child Guidance: The children will be involved and encouraged to help develop proper class etiquette and classroom rules during the first days of school through age appropriate discussions and directions from the teacher. Classroom rules and expectations will be discussed as needed with the children throughout the year.

Child guidance within the program will be consistent with the actions of a kind, judicious, and firm parent and be reasonable of the circumstances. Rough or corporal chastising, verbal abuse, physical punishment, verbal or physical degradation and emotional deprivation is not accepted and will not be tolerated within the program.

Staff is encouraged to guide children to appropriate behaviours as situations dictate throughout class time. Some behaviours that are not tolerated include but are not limited to:

- Swearing, spitting, kicking, hitting, wrestling
- Any sort of physical violence
- Screaming or shouting
- Bullying of children or staff members
- Teasing to the extent of hurting another's feelings
- Threats to any child or adult involved within the program

1,2,3 Method

1. Explanation: The teacher explains that it is not ok to behave in this manner. The teacher will explain to the child that they need to change his/her behaviour. The child will be allowed to participate in class depending on the severity of their actions. If the action was not severe, the child would get a warning.
2. Warning: The child will be told they have 2 choices. Example: Choice #1, to gain self control and stay and participate with the class and apologies if necessary. Choice #2, to place him/her in a timeout spot. This allows the child to choose the consequence of their behaviour.
3. Time out spot: If the child continues to display unacceptable behaviour then he/she will be placed in a timeout spot. If the child hurts another child or adult causing bodily harm, the teacher will explain to child why that is unacceptable and be placed in an immediate time out. Any behaviour resulting in a time out will be documented and the parents notified.
 - The time out spot is a prearranged area, like a chair placed within the classroom so the child is always under supervision. No lectures will be given but an explanation will always be given to

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the child as to why their behaviour warranted a time out. Time out length will not exceed 1 minute for every year of age of the child (3 minutes for 3 year old, 4 minutes for 4 year old).

Suspension and Dismissal: Should any unacceptable behavior (hitting, biting, kicking, etc) persist, as many of the following steps as possible will be taken:

1. The child will be sent to time out.
2. The parents will be notified, and a written notice will be placed in the child's file.
3. A member(s) of the Spruce View Playschool Board will visit the classroom to observe the child's behavior.
4. A meeting will be arranged with the child's parents, teachers, and Board Members to consider corrective actions. The Licensing Officer will also be notified.
5. The child will be suspended from the playschool for an appropriate period.
6. Should all efforts fail, the child will be dismissed from the playschool with proper written notification.

Supplies and Dress:

- Please clearly label all of your child's belongings. You can find a Supply List on page 13 of this handbook.
- Dress your child in weather appropriate clothing. Any child arriving at school improperly dressed may be sent home at staff's discretion.
- Please provide winter gear during winter months as the children will be going outside on weather permitting days.
- All children are required to bring their own healthy snack from home. Please refer to Canada Food Guide for nutritious snack ideas.
- Water bottles are to be brought daily and preferred over juice or juice boxes.
- Spruce View School and playschool are a **NUT FREE** facility.

Medical:

- Parents must ensure they have completed the medical section of their child's registration form, including all known allergies and medical conditions.
- If your child requires lifesaving medication (eg. insulin, Epi pens):
 1. Please fill out Medication Administration Form attached to this handbook. This form gives the teacher your consent for administration of lifesaving medication.

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2. Meet with teacher before class begins to go over all appropriate steps when administering this medication and to review the Medication Administration and Storage Procedure (attached to this handbook) in place within the classroom
- We strongly discourage bringing non-lifesaving medication (eg. Tylenol, Benadryl) to the classroom, but if your child is in need of it please follow steps listed above.
 - If your child is ill or unable to go outside, they must not attend class. Exceptions may be made for children with chronic conditions (eg. asthma).
 - If your child will not be attending playschool for a day, please inform the teacher or post to the Facebook page.

Accident or Illness:

- If an accident or illness occurs, parents will be called and notified as soon as possible. If parents cannot be reached, the emergency contact will be called and notified. It is the responsibility of the teacher to provide appropriate medical attention.
- If a major medical emergency, an ambulance will be called. The teacher administers appropriate medical attention until the ambulance arrives. The parents will be notified as soon as possible. If parents cannot be reached, the emergency contact will be called and notified.

Potential Health Risks:

Any child in attendance at playschool will be removed if they exhibit the following:

- vomiting
- fever
- diarrhea
- new or unexplained cough or rash
- they require greater care and attention than can be provided without compromising the care of the other children
- having or displaying any other illness or symptom that may indicate the child poses a health risk to persons on the program premise.

Parents will be called to pick up their child if they appear to have the above listed symptoms or concerns. The child will be kept in an empty classroom away from other children and under the supervision of the Parent Helper until their parent arrives to take them home. The child must not return to class unless they are symptom free for 24 hours or a Doctor's note is provided.

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Fire/Emergency Evacuation:

- Fire drills are held in October, December, February, and April. The teacher leads fire drills in a calm and quick manner.
- During fire drills and in the event of a fire/emergency evacuation, the teacher lines up children at the nearest exit. The Parent Helper and other staff in classroom will do a head count, check play area, washrooms and meet up with teacher and children at the end of the line. The teacher leads everyone outside to a designated area and does a head count.

Incident Reporting: In the event of illness, accidents, medical emergencies, medication administration, fire evacuations, emergency evacuation or time outs, the teacher fills out and signs an incident report and provides all information regarding the incident to parents. All incident reports are disclosed to the playschool program Licensing Officer and copies are kept in a locked filing cabinet within the classroom.

Holiday Closures: All holiday closures for the playschool will follow Chinook's Edge School Division calendar. This calendar can be found on the Chinook's Edge website: www.cesd73.ca

Kindergarten Readiness: The playschool program focuses on preparing children for the next steps in their education journey, Kindergarten. The teacher assesses children in September, January, and May. There is no prerequisite for children to enroll in Kindergarten other than their age. With that being said, the teacher uses a Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (attached at back of handbook) as a tool only and is a way to monitor and report progress to parents. These assessments do not determine if your child can register for Kindergarten. That is completely the parent's decision going forward.

Surveys: The playschool program is funded by Family and Community Support Services (FCSS). Families registered in the playschool program are asked to fill out surveys in September, January, and May. These surveys are a way to gather information for FCSS to determine the success of the program and continue to receive funding for our program. Your involvement in filling out these surveys is greatly appreciated.

The Playschool Board of Directors also sends out a Program Satisfaction Survey to be done by parents anonymously at the end of the year. This survey is to gather the necessary information to better improve the Spruce View Playschool for future years.

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How Do I Say Good-Bye?

Separation anxiety is a normal part of development in children and occurs at different ages, can come and go, and may happen when you drop off and pick up your child. Here are some suggestions to make the transition as easy as possible for all concerned.

- Take time to prepare at home and not be rushed to get out the door – if you are frazzled your child might feel anxiety too.
- Use travel time to get into “playschool mode,” talk about activities and guess what centers might be open.
- Spend a few minutes together when you arrive, help you child settle in and get started on an activity, then leave.
- Acknowledge your child’s feelings and tell your child you will be back after a certain activity.
- Use “love you” but not “miss you” since your child may then feel guilty if he/she had fun and didn’t miss you.
- Use quick good-byes with a special parting phrase like “see you later alligator” or talk about what you will do together after playschool.
- If you “sneak” out it may make your child more guarded and insecure next time you try to leave.
- Take a special object i.e. a picture of yourself, a kiss of lipstick on your child’s hand or a special ‘treasure’.
- Ask the caregiver for help to write you a letter from your child or draw a picture.
- Try to not be too upset if your child cries when you are leaving. The crying is usually for your benefit and will generally stop once you are out of sight. It is a new experience for your child and naturally slightly worrisome. Give him/her a few days to adjust.
- Pick your child up on time. Your child has to build up trust to be secure enough to handle the time away from you, assured that you will return as promised.
- Always take time to talk to your child about his/her day and to observe his/her reactions to going to playschool. Distinguish between a natural reluctance to be parted from you, (consider it a compliment) and a real anxiety about the place. If he/she truly is unhappy there, consider a

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move. It helps to talk with the students regularly to role model and assure the child you are confident in their security.

- If none of these work, ask yourself if your child is truly ready for playschool.

Supply List

Please ensure these items are brought on the first day of class.

- Extra clothes- Please pack an extra set of clothes in case of accidents or spills in a Zip loc bag labelled with your child's name. These clothes will be kept in a cubby within the classroom.
- Paint shirt- Please pack a paint shirt labelled with your child's name to protect your child's clothing during arts and crafts. Paint shirts are kept within the classroom.
- Post dated cheques
- Volunteer bond
- More items may be added to this list and will be communicated to parents before first day of class via Spruce View Playschool Parent Group Facebook page.

Please ensure your child has these items each day.

- Backpack- It is best to bring a backpack that is large enough to fit a lunch kit, library book, and other items.
- Indoor shoes- Shoes must be worn indoors at all times. They can be left at school in the classroom. Please label your child's shoes.
- Lunch kit- Please provide healthy, **NUT FREE** lunch and snacks for your child. For healthy ideas, please refer to the Canada Food Guide.
**The playschool schedule has a 10 minute snack time in the morning and a longer lunch time at noon.
- Water bottle- Please pack a full water bottle for your child.

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Attachments:

- Registration Form
- Medication Administration Form
- Medication Administration and Storage Procedure
- Photo and Name Release Form
- Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Tool
- Code of Ethics
- Primary Staff letter- attach to Criminal Record Check applications.