



*Educating for Life*

## PARENT HANDBOOK

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### MISSION STATEMENT:

As a community of Christians, we desire to educate for life. Our mission is to teach children to know God, His word and His world, challenging children to excel, yet with humility serve God and humanity.

## **WELCOME TO KING'S CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL!**

Thank you for your interest in King's Christian Preschool. King's Christian Preschool is an extension of King's Christian School which is governed by Shuswap Christian Education Society.

We hope this handbook provides you with the information necessary to help you to feel comfortable in the program. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this handbook, please feel free to discuss it with Susan Kamstra.

### **STAFF**

#### Preschool Director:

Susan Kamstra, Early Childhood Educator

#### Preschool Teacher:

Tamara Sawatzky-Martens, Early Childhood Educator

#### Preschool Assistant:

Lisa Volkmann, Early Childhood Educator Assistant

### **SCHOOL HOURS AND FEES**

Preschool classes begin one week after King's Christian School begins in September and finishes mid-June. Please note there are no preschool classes on statutory holidays, King's Christian School Pro-D days, two weeks during Christmas break, and Spring Break. The fees are set for the year based on operating costs and are averaged over ten months, resulting in equal monthly payments.

Contact us for current preschool tuition.

\*Four-year-old class (child must be four by December 31 of the year they attend)

- Tuesday and Thursday 8:30 – 11:30 am

Four-year-old class (child must be four by December 31 of the year they attend)

- Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 8:30 – 11:30 am

\*At the discretion of administration, an exception may be made for three-year-olds who are planning on attending KCS Kindergarten.

## **PAYMENT & WITHDRAWAL**

There is a \$100 non-refundable registration fee due at time of enrolment. In September, we require September and June fees, payments can also be set up through automated debit, or a credit card payment.

## **REPAYMENT AGREEMENT**

Tuition that has been paid through pre-authorized debit, which has already been received is non-refundable.

If the school is closed due to an unexpected circumstance, the pre-authorized payments will be discontinued until the program resumes as usual. If you have fully paid for the year or half year, you will be refunded the month(s) tuition following the unexpected closure.

### **Affordable Child Care Benefit**

Affordable Child Care Benefit (ACCB) is available for qualifying families.

The application for ACCB is now all done online ([link 1](#)).

Included on the site is a link to [estimate your funding](#), as well as how to [apply for funding](#).

You will first need to register for both a basic BCeID and a “My Family Service” account ([link 2](#)), then you can apply for ACCB.

1. <https://www.myfamilyservices.gov.bc.ca>
2. <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/caring-for-young-children/child-care-funding/child-care-benefit>

## **EARLY WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PROGRAM**

**Voluntary Withdrawal:** Voluntary withdrawal: One month written notice is required. We will remove the automated debit of the unused portion of fees, or return payments made by credit card if the above notice has been given.

**Involuntary Withdrawal:** Unfortunately, challenging situations sometimes arise, and solutions can be difficult. Consequently, after attempts to resolve any issues, King's Christian preschool may regretfully ask a child to leave the program. If King's initiates this process, the remainder of the fees will be reimbursed to the family for the remaining months of the school year.

## INCLUSION

Jesus loves the little children. All the children of the world. At King's Christian preschool we value all children and will do our best to support the social, emotional, and behavioural needs of individuals as well as the class as a whole. Kindness and respect towards all children and families will be promoted and expected from the school community. Discrimination will not be tolerated.

## BEST FIT POLICY

Each preschool child will be placed on a three-month probation to assess the preschool's ability to meet the child's needs. Determinations resulting from this probation are solely at the discretion of King's Christian Preschool.

## PHILOSOPHY

As Early Childhood Educators, we commit to providing a stimulating, challenging, healthy environment for all children. In a safe, loving, and supportive atmosphere a child will feel secure and happy.

As a Christian centre, we will be bringing God into everyday classroom lessons through many topics/subjects of learning as well as in the ordinary moments of the children's day. We consider it a **privilege** to be able to begin fastening these Christian attributes in children at an early age.

Each child is a unique individual, and we value his/her opinions, thoughts, and ideas and encourage freedom of expression. We feel that by providing opportunities and offering choices, children will make their own decisions and solve problems to successfully meet their own needs.

In a preschool setting our primary focus is education, with care following close behind. Our role is to prepare them for entering the school system. We want to make school exciting and fun for them, a place where they feel safe and look forward to coming. We see the most successful classroom setting as one that is primarily teacher directed. The children respond well to a structured program where the rules and limits are clearly marked out for them. Once the children know your expectations, they rise to meet them.

During the preschool years most learning stems from play; therefore, we make learning fun through games, arts and crafts, free-play, story, and circle time. During free-play the children are given opportunity to choose which centre/activity in which they would like to participate; with art, math, and science activities being strongly encouraged. During circle time, and with simple worksheets and games, it is exciting for us to begin to introduce topics such as weather, calendar, the alphabet, math, rhyming, and phonics.

We view working with the students' families of equal importance to working with the children themselves. We work as a team with parents. Because preschool is the setting where parents begin the process of letting go of being the sole influencer of their child, it is our job to make this transition as easy, smooth, and as stress free as possible for the child as well as the parent.

It is our professional responsibility to adhere to the code of ethics set forth by Early Childhood Educators of British Columbia and to maintain open communication with colleagues and other professionals related to the field of Early Childhood Education.

## OTHER EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONALS

On occasion, we have various professionals such as Speech and Language Therapists and Occupational Therapists visit the Preschool. We will notify you if they have any concerns about the development of your child. If you have any concerns, please let us know so that we can make a referral as soon as possible. Wait lists can be very lengthy and an early start often improves the effectiveness of therapies.

## PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM

This centre offers children a wide variety of play experiences set in an atmosphere of trust and acceptance. The activities are planned with care, considering the needs of the class and of each individual child. We provide an environment in which each child can learn at his/her own developmental level.

The classroom routine schedule is posted for each class. Our time together is divided between group times and individual free times when the children are free to choose from the various activities throughout the room. Play centres include housekeeping, puzzles and games, cars and building area, and library. In addition to this, we provide sensory activities, art projects, painting, math, science experiments, circle time, story, etc. We will try to go outside at the end of each class, weather permitting. We go outside at the beginning of class during the winter months. If we do not go to the outdoor playground, we will go to our indoor play area to ensure that large muscle activities are included in the day.

Childcare Licensing Regulations require that King's Christian Preschool maintains an active play policy. Active play is physical activity which includes moderate to vigorous bursts of high energy, raises children's heart rate and may make them 'huff and puff' such as running or jumping.

Active play helps to promote healthy growth and development and supports body control and movement. Active play can help build strong bones and muscles, improve balance, coordination and assists with the development of gross motor and fine motor skills. Active play also helps to promote children's confidence, improves concentration and thinking and learning skills, and provides opportunities to develop social skills and make friends.

King's Christian Preschool will ensure the minimum outdoor active play of 30 minutes (per 2-3-hour class) is met (indoor active play will be substituted when weather is poor or outdoor physical space is limited). This active play time will be comprised of un-facilitated (free) play and facilitated (directed by adult) games and activities.

King's Christian Preschool Director and Staff are aware of, and will incorporate, fundamental movement skills (gross motor skills using different body parts) and injury prevention into all active play activities. Children will have opportunities to practice fundamental movement skills as part of their indoor and outdoor daily routines.

King's Christian Preschool does not include screen time (TV, computer, electronic games, iPads, iPods) in the daily classroom routine. On occasion, students will be permitted to use an electronic device for periods of time under 10 minutes or watch a video that is 30 minutes in length or less.

All screen time must be approved by the Preschool Director and is supervised by Preschool Staff. Games, videos or apps that are used or shown are chosen by the Preschool Director and are used as learning tools for the students.

## FIELD TRIPS

You will have prior notification of all driving field trips as permission slips must be filled out. Parents are required to drive their own children to and from the trip and are responsible for their child at all times. If you are unable to attend, you may make alternate arrangements for your child by either asking a relative or another preschool parent to participate.

## CLOTHING

- **Please dress your child in appropriate and comfortable play clothes. It is important that your child feels free to engage in messy activities without the worry of his/her clothing.** Painting smocks are available; however, we do not make children wear them. Sleeves with a cuff are great for pulling up!
- Please ensure your child wear a jacket to school each day that can be hung on their hook in the entry
- Please bring clean, rubber soled indoor shoes that can be left in your child's bin. Consider croc-type shoes or slippers with rubber soles as they are comfortable, they have rubber grips on the bottom and no laces.
- Dirty outside shoes can be placed under their coat hook, not in their bin.
- Mark all personal belongings with your child's name.
- Send spare clothing only if your child has frequent accidents, otherwise we have spare clothes for the occasional accident. Please wash and return these to preschool.

**Toys, blankets, and stuffed animals should remain at home.** Exceptions will be made at the beginning of the year for children who may be experiencing separation anxiety. Please let the Supervisors know if your child requires these items to help him/her feel secure.

## ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Children must be accompanied into the preschool and signed in each day. They must also be accompanied out of the Preschool and signed out at the end of the day. There will be a sign in/out binder outside the classroom door. If someone other than the parent/guardian is going to regularly pick up your child, they must be listed on the registration form as an alternate pick-up person and photo I.D. may be required to ensure the child's safety and well-being. In shared parenting or custody situation, a copy of the guardianship or other court orders are required upon enrolment.

The Supervisors are busy setting up in the classroom and will open the door within 5 minutes prior to class starting. Please wait patiently in either the Parent Room or the Hallway area until the doors to the classroom are open. We appreciate you picking up your child punctually at the end of class or a phone call/app message if you are going to be late. We look forward to seeing your child each day and would appreciate notification if he/she will not be attending. Please call or message via the app as soon as you know that your child will be absent. If you know ahead of time that your child will be away, please inform the Supervisor and write "not attending" beside your child's name in the daily sign in book for the applicable day.

- If anyone other than the usual pick-up person will be picking up, please write his or her name in the sign in book.
- If you are sending someone who is not listed on the registration form as someone you have authorized to pick up your child, then you must inform the Supervisors by telling them and write their name in the sign in book.
- Please phone the Preschool phone number (250)463-5200 and inform the Supervisors if you have an emergency and are sending someone different at the last minute to pick up your child.
- If we have decided to go to the outdoor playground at the end of the day, a note will be left on the sign in/out table indicating this.
- Please check your child's labelled bin each day for any artwork or newsletters.

## FAILURE TO PICK UP A CHILD

- Staff will attempt to reach the parent/guardian after reasonable time has passed.
- Staff will call the authorized pick-up person(s) listed on registration form.
- If no contact has been made with the parent/guardian or any authorized person within a reasonable amount of time, we are obligated to contact the Ministry of Children and Families. Please note that the Ministry decides whether to take a child into custody.
- Staff will inform the parent of their child's location by leaving a message on parent's answering machine and by posting a note on the front door of the Preschool.
- Please notify us of any change of address or phone for yourself or your contacts.

## **SNACKS**

Good nutrition is strongly emphasized. After all, healthy eating starts young!

Please send a healthy snack containing 2 food groups for your child to eat.

- Please send snacks in your child's snack container provided in September. Place your child's snack in the fridge located in the Parent Lounge.
- We will inform you if any children have food allergies that may limit what is brought into the classroom.
- The children drink water at snack, so please leave the juices at home.
- Children are not permitted to chew gum or have lozenges at school as they are a choking hazard.

## **BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS**

We love to celebrate Birthdays! You may bring treats such as Timbits, Rice Krispy squares, cookies, fruit, etc. We will inform you ahead of time if there are any food allergies limiting what can be brought into the classroom.

## **PARENT HELPERS**

There are times and days throughout the year that we will need parent helpers. This may be to help with a craft or special activity or even just to help supervise and play. If this is something you are willing and able to do, please let us know at the beginning of the year.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

Throughout the year the staff will be evaluating your child's progress in various areas of development. Feel free to discuss your child's development with us. It is of utmost importance that communication be kept open. Your home environment (separation, divorce, live-in, birth, and death) influences your child's behaviour, if we are kept informed, we will be better able to partner with you in helping your child adjust.

We are always available to discuss any matters concerning your child, simply make a request and we will set aside some time. It is easier to talk without your child or others hearing, so please feel free to call us on the preschool phone (250)463-5200. All information is kept confidential and will only be shared with the staff directly working with your child.

## **COMPLAINTS**

- If you have any concerns or differences of opinion, please discuss them directly with a the preschool director.
- If you cannot reach a resolution with the director, speak with the King's Christian School Principal.
- If you are still unsatisfied, you may write a letter to the Shuswap Christian Education Society Board stating the issue and the avenues you have taken to pursue a resolution.

## GUIDING & DISCIPLINING

Children are unique individuals, and their behaviour reflects their level of development, which is influenced by their experience in their family and in their culture.

At preschool the staff use the following techniques to promote a positive learning environment.

Techniques to foster appropriate behaviour:

- Establish clear, consistent, simple limits in a friendly supportive way
- Offer straightforward explanations for limits
- State in a positive manner, rather than negative (children, like adults, respond much more positively to telling them what they can do, rather than what they cannot do)
- Focus on the behaviour, rather than the child
- Make statements of expectations, rather than pose questions
- Allow time for child to respond to expectations
- Reinforce appropriate behaviour with words and gestures
- Ignore minor incidents
- Encourage children to verbalize their feelings and ask the teachers for assistance in problem solving when having difficulty

Techniques used in the event of inappropriate behaviour

- Gain the child's attention in a respectful way
- Use proximity, eye contact and touch
- Acknowledge child's feelings and remind child of the rules
- Model problem-solving skills
- Offer appropriate choices
- Utilize natural and logical consequences i.e.: child takes off mittens refusing to put on again = hands get cold or child spills = child helps clean up
- Re-direct activity, distract or divert when appropriate
- Limit the use of equipment
- In rare situations if a child loses all control and the ability to reason, he/she may become so upset as to scream or thrash. The staff will hold the child with just enough strength to protect the child or other children and only until the child's self-control is regained
- As outlined in the CCF Act, punishment such as hitting, pinching, spanking, or belittling are illegal and prohibited in Preschool

OUR GOAL is to have a secure, happy, safe environment for children.

## HEALTH POLICY

- The children and staff will wash hands with soap after going to the washroom and prior to eating.
- Parents must notify the centre if their child has been exposed to or contracted any contagious illness or infestation, i.e.: chicken pox, strep throat, scarlet fever, pink eye, or lice. If it is the weekend, call so we can decide if other parents need to be notified.
- Parents will be phoned to pick up their child if he/she becomes ill, unless it is so serious that the physician needs to be alerted first. If required, an ambulance may be called at the parents' expense.
- Everyone appreciates you keeping a sick or potentially sick child at home. Please be considerate of other children as germs spread quickly with little ones.
- If a child has a temperature, or flu-like symptoms, they must remain at home.
- If a child is too ill to participate in all aspects of the school's program, they should remain at home.

Parents are advised to keep their children at home or seek alternate care arrangements for the following conditions:

- Pain – any complaints of unexplained or undiagnosed pain
- Common cold symptoms: coughing, runny nose, sore throat, fever, etc.
- Difficulty breathing, wheezing or persistent cough
- Fever (100 F/38.3 C or more) accompanied by general symptoms such as listlessness may be an early sign of illness requiring a physician's attention
- Sore throat or trouble swallowing
- Infected skin or eyes or an undiagnosed rash
- Headache and stiff neck
- Nausea and vomiting may be early signs of illness requiring a physician's attention
- Severe itching of body and scalp
- Known or suspected communicable disease
- Unexplained diarrhea or loose stool combined with nausea, vomiting or abdominal cramps. These symptoms may indicate a bacterial or viral (gastrointestinal) infection which is very easily passed from one child to another. The child should be kept home until all symptoms have stopped.
- If in doubt, please keep your child at home.

## **ADMINISTERING MEDICATIONS**

Prescription Medication: The staff will only administer medication provided in the original container and that has been prescribed by a physician. The parent must fill out a form with instructions (the care plan) for dosage and times.

Non-Prescription Medication: Medication shall be administered only when accompanied by written instructions from the physician stated in the care plan. The parent must fill out a form with instructions for dosage and times. All medication must be kept locked and accessible only by preschool staff.

- Please inform the staff if you have administered any medication to your child prior to school so we can watch your child more closely
- Medicine must always be locked up, do not leave in backpacks or bins

## **IMPAIRMENT POLICY**

- It is the staff's responsibility, to the extent that it is possible, not to release a child to an authorized person who is unable to adequately care for a child due to, but not limited to, the influence of alcohol, drugs, marijuana, medications, medical condition, or rage.
- If the staff believes that a child will be at risk, the staff will offer to call a relative or friend to pick up the person or child or offer to call a cab.
- If the person is driving a vehicle, the staff will explain that driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol is against the law and that the Supervisor is obligated to ensure the safety and well-being of the child.
- If the presumably impaired person chooses to drive the car with or without the child, the Supervisor will immediately notify the police and provide a description of the vehicle and geographic vicinity.
- If the staff believes that the child needs protection, they will call the Ministry of Children and Families.

## CHILD ABUSE POLICY

- All childcare employees are required by law to report child abuse and neglect to the local child protection office of the Ministry of Children and Families as well as to the Medical Health Officer.
- Any person who has reason to believe that a child has been or is likely to be abused or neglected has a legal duty to report to the Ministry. This includes service providers, family members, and general public. If unsure as to whether there are reasonable grounds for action, be sure to consult with the Child Protections Office of the Ministry.
- If you suspect the child is in immediate danger, call the police first.

## FIRE AND EVACUATION PLAN

Please familiarize yourself with the fire escape plan that is posted at the doorways. Fire drills will be done monthly. In the case of an evacuation due to a fire, our meeting place will be the parking lot area west of the preschool, closest to the fence. We will remain there until we are informed it is safe to return to the preschool.

In the event of a flood, the children will be safely escorted to the top floor of the church building in which the preschool is housed until we are informed it is safe to return to the preschool.

In the event of any other disaster for which we would need to evacuate the building, the preschool children will be safely escorted to King's Christian School playground area. If evacuation from this area is also necessary, a King's Christian school bus will be notified and will pick up the children and transport them to the Salmon Arm Recreation Centre (2250 – 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE) or other evacuation centre as designated by local authorities.

The preschool staff will have the Preschool cell phone with them during any times of evacuation. They will also bring the Emergency Record cards for both the staff and the preschool children who are present at the time of evacuation. An emergency bag equipped with a blanket, water, and snacks will also accompany them out of the building.