



Parent Handbook

2025/2026

Table of Contents

Welcome

Program Approach & Structure

Hours & Holidays

Special Events & Fieldtrips

Parental Involvement

Parent-of-the-Day

Room Parent

Fundraising

Preschool Protocols

Arrival & Pick-Up

Parking & Bikes

Clothing & Personal Belongings

Snack Time

Birthdays & Special Occasions

Communication

Expectations for Classroom Behavior

Health Standards

Emergency Procedures

Enrolling in Preschool

Eligibility

Class Placements

Payment of Fees

Notice of Withdrawal & Refunds

The Preschool Staff

The Preschool Board

Welcome!

Welcome to Canmore Preschool, your child's introduction to formal education. This booklet will give you an overview of our program and explain our guidelines to ensure that you and your child have a rewarding preschool experience. Please read this handbook carefully, save it for future reference, and feel free to contact Preschool board members or staff if you have questions at any time.

Canmore Preschool encourages three- to five-year-olds to learn cognitive skills, creativity, physical coordination, confidence, and social skills through play. We do not expect our students to arrive knowing the ins and outs of how to behave at school. We expect them to learn by experience and experimentation.

On the other hand, we do expect parents to abide by the operating procedures in this handbook and in supplemental notes and newsletters produced from time to time.

The Canmore Preschool Society is a private, non-profit, parent-directed organization. The board and the committee members volunteer their time to ensure the Preschool runs smoothly and successfully.

As we strive to keep our program affordable, we depend on you! Parents are required to volunteer in the classroom on a regular basis, and we welcome extra help, suggestions, constructive criticism, and financial, moral, and volunteer support.

Thank you for allowing us to join with you in caring for and nurturing your developing child. We look forward to a fun, rewarding year!

Why Preschool?

Studies have shown that preschool has long-term positive effects on people's lives. Future education, relationships, careers, happiness... however you measure success, preschool provides a step up. Sound ambitious? It's true (read about the Perry Study at <http://www.highscope.org/>).

FUN

And yet, our classes often look like playtime! The same studies have shown that the most effective approach to early education is a mix of teacher-directed activities and child-directed exploration. Children learn through play.

SOCIALIZATION

As children learn to share and progress from parallel play to cooperative play, they develop their first friendships with peers. Along the way we demonstrate and encourage children to show respect and empathy – for themselves, their peers, their teachers – for everyone!

COGNITIVE AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

With daily opportunities for social play, arts and crafts, stories, songs, physical activity either in the gym or outside, and games that teach colors, shapes, letters, numbers, counting, and patterning, we provide all the materials your child needs to thrive, develop new skills, and move up to kindergarten with confidence.

COMMUNITY

As a non-profit, parent-run, licensed program, founded in 1972, Canmore Preschool has deep roots in our community. We enjoy having parents in the classroom, and welcome many community visitors each year – firefighters, librarians, Alberta Parks educators, RCMP... We want our classes to reflect the diversity and strength of our community!

Program Approach & Structure

Learning Centres

Our classrooms are arranged with thematic areas, or “learning centres.” Examples include: house centre (play kitchen, doctor’s office, baby dolls, costume cupboard), story centre, building centre (blocks, legos, trains, trucks), puzzle & game centre, water centre, sand centre, etc. At certain times in class, children are allowed to freely choose any centre in which to play and explore.

Circle Time

During circle time each day we read stories, sing songs, learn finger plays, and introduce new concepts, such as colors, numbers, letters & sounds, name & shape recognition, the calendar and our monthly themes. The children are encouraged to participate in discussions and to play games with the group. For PreK classes, “Handwriting without Tears” and Empathy Baby programming are introduced as the year progresses.

Arts & Crafts

Each day the children have an opportunity to do projects, which may involve gluing, painting, scissors, clay, plaster, and other mediums that encourage creativity and the development of fine motor skills.

Daily Physical Activity

In the fall and spring we go outside as much as possible. When the weather keeps us in and on days when we have scheduled music or movement classes, we share the use of the mini-gym where students have plenty of space to develop their strength and coordination.

Monthly Classroom Themes

Themes are followed throughout the year. During the fall months, the children learn about autumn, harvest, getting ready for winter, outer

space, and make bread and applesauce. January, February and March cover nursery rhymes, dinosaurs, under the ocean and caring. With the arrival of spring, the children learn about the changes they see in nature, baby animals, bugs and the beginning of growth.

Class Size

At this time both of our 3yo Preschool classes as well as our Pre-Kindergarten classes are a maximum of 12 students.

Hours and Holidays

The 2025/2026 Preschool program begins September 2nd and continues until June 12th. The hours of operation are as follows:

Three-Year-Old Programs

- Tuesday/Thursday mornings 9:00AM-11:30AM
- Tues/Wed/Thur afternoons 12:15PM-2:45PM

Pre-Kindergarten Programs

- Monday/Wed/Friday mornings 8:30AM-12:00PM
- Monday-Thursday afternoons 12:30PM-3:30PM

Office Hours

Monday-Thursday 8:30-3:30PM

The Canmore Preschool observes statutory holidays and other holidays decided by the Preschool Board. The Preschool follows the schedule of the Canadian Rockies Regional School Division No. 12, except for Professional Development Days. The Preschool is closed for Family Day Break in February.

Special Events & Fieldtrips

Special events, field trips and theme days are regularly scheduled. These may include:

- Colour Days
- Library Days
- Pajama Day
- Teddy Bear Picnic
- Beach Day
- Music programs
- Cross-country Ski Days
- Mothers' Day Celebration
- Visits to community places of interest
- Classroom visits from community members
- New Baby Visits - Empathy Program

Three year old's do not go on field trips until January, at which time they go to the Canmore Public Library once a month. From past experience, they need the first part of the year to feel more comfortable in the classroom.

It is MANDATORY that all children wear a helmet cross-country skiing. Helmets are available for use through the Preschool. The monthly Preschool newsletter will contain detailed information regarding all field trips.

NOTE: *Some special events require a parent to attend with their child and some special events require the children to be picked up or dropped off at a location other than the Canmore Preschool.* If you are not able to drive your child to or from some special events, please contact the Preschool for assistance in finding transportation for your child.

Parents sign a general parent consent and waiver on the Preschool registration form. The parent consent and waiver states:

“I hereby grant permission for the child named above;

a) to participate in all of the activities organized by the Canmore Preschool Society and

b) to use all the play equipment owned or used by the Canmore Preschool Society and

c) to leave the school premises under the supervision of a staff member of the Canmore Preschool Society for walks in the neighborhood and

d) to participate in activities involving bus transportation under the supervision of a staff member of the Canmore Preschool Society.”

and “I AGREE NOT TO HOLD THE CANMORE PRESCHOOL SOCIETY, THE BOARD MEMBERS, THEIR OFFICERS, EMPLOYEES OR AGENTS RESPONSIBLE FOR ACCIDENTS.

When a child participates in an activity organized for preschool aged children, there is always a risk of personal injury or death, and property damage or loss. I acknowledge that the organizers will not be able to fully supervise, care for, or control the participants involved in Preschool activities. If anything happens to my child or my child's property in Preschool activities, I agree not to hold those supervising the activity, the Canmore Preschool Society, the Board Members, and their Officers, Employees or Agents responsible unless they have been grossly negligent.

Parental Involvement

Fundraising

The Canmore Preschool Society organizes a number of fundraising activities each year. The funds raised help pay for programming, which in turn keeps program fees down. Parents are required to volunteer for fundraising activities and special events outside of the classroom. A separate post-dated cheque or pre-authorized debit agreement is required with fee payment as security towards your 5-hour volunteer commitment. Fundraising events include:

- Casino (every 3 years; February 4-5th 2025)
- Canmore Christmas Artisans' Market
- Raffle
- Save-on-Foods Grocery Cards
- Spring sale of local products (Flatbread, sausage, etc.)

Preschool Protocols

Arrival and Pick-Up

- Please accompany your child to the door; the Teacher will greet you and let your child enter the building; either a Classroom Assistant or our Office Admin, Sarah will be there to help get your child changed into indoor shoes.
- Please be on time to pick your child up from Preschool when the class is over. Your child will not be released to an unauthorized person without written or verbal permission from the parent.
- **If you are going to be unavoidably late (after scheduled pickup or drop-off time), please call the office. A late fee of \$1 per minute will be applied to all late pickups past closing time. This fee will be applied to your next invoice. Please be respectful of our staff and your children by being on time for pickup and drop-off.**
- We share the front yard with the daycare. If a group is using the playground or front circle, of course you're welcome to pass through, but the Daycare workers would ask you not to linger to play if your child is not officially in their care.

Bikes

Any bikes parked out front are personal property of other children, so please do not play with them. The Daycare children may be watching through the windows and become upset when their bike is being used without permission. Preschool and Daycare children enjoy riding bikes around in the front circle when the weather allows, so please leave any adult bikes in the bike/stroller shelter outside the main gates to allow room for play.

Clothing and Personal Belongings

- Dress your child in play clothing (not good clothing) as they will be painting and gluing.
- Footwear must be worn in the classroom at all times due to fire regulations.
- Label your child's belongings (shoes, backpack, lunch bag, cup, winter clothing) for easy identification.
- Dress your child appropriately for outdoor days and field trips.

Snack Time

Each child should bring a nutritious snack in a small container with the child's name clearly marked on the outside. Fruit, vegetables, cheese slices, or crackers are convenient and mess-free. Along with the snack, each child should bring a water bottle (with their name).

- Due to serious allergies, peanuts, peanut butter, nuts, nut butter or snacks containing any nut products are **not** allowed at Preschool.
- Due to provincial regulations, the following foods are not allowed: grapes (unless cut lengthwise), hot dogs (unless sliced lengthwise), hard candies, seeds, nuts, gumdrops, jelly beans, pitted fruit, caramels, popcorn, toffee, chewing gum or snacks with toothpicks.

Birthdays and Special Occasions

Birthdays and Special Occasions will be celebrated at the Preschool. With birthday crowns and special activities. On other special days (Valentine Day, Halloween etc.), **if you want to send a treat for your classmates, we ask that it not be food.** Treats could be stickers, pencils, etc. Balloons are not permitted by licensing at Preschool.

Communication

The newsletter and calendar provide information about the activities planned for the coming month. It is emailed to all families each month.

Classroom Behavior

A primary goal of Canmore Preschool is to teach children to socialize in a positive manner. Self-control in expressing their emotions is not always a smooth road, but fair and appropriate discipline will help children to this end. Limits will be stated kindly, but firmly, and consequences for misbehavior will be clearly-communicated, logical, and realistic. Children will be kept in the mainstream group activities where possible, and any inappropriate behavior will be redirected into more positive alternatives to the situation. Our experienced staff manages this throughout class each day.

Occasionally, when needed, children who are out of control will be removed from the situation, group, or classroom and one-on-one attention will be provided until the child has regained control. The child will then be invited to rejoin the group.

If, in the opinion of the teacher, a child's behavior persistently disrupts the normal operation of the class, the teacher will contact the parents and suggest that an outside professional assess the child regarding their suitability to continue in the program. Some professionals that can help include Family Resource Network, your pediatrician, your optometrist, or speech & occupational therapists at Bow Valley Community Care.

If a family requests special accommodation for their child, our teachers and parent board will decide if the requested

accommodation is reasonably balanced with the needs of the class as a whole. If at any time Canmore Preschool's staff or parent board feels the accommodation requested creates undue hardship for the rest of the class, we reserve the right to ask a family to leave the program unless they can access extended one-on-one support.

Canmore Preschool's program fees and structure are based on each class having one qualified, experienced teacher supported by parent volunteers/Teacher Assistant. If a child's behaviour persistently requires disproportionate one-on-one attention from the teacher, our program cannot support that indefinitely without negatively impacting the rest of the class. It is not a reasonable accommodation for the teacher to focus primarily on one child in a group of many children. It is also not a reasonable accommodation to ask the preschool to increase our staffing and fees, making our program unaffordable for other families.

There are 3 types of aides that may provide extended one-on-one support in the classroom:

- **CDF** - Canmore Preschool welcomes Child Development Facilitators and therapist. Children undergo developmental screenings to qualify for support.
- **Private Aide** - A family may hire their own aide (with a Vulnerable Sector Background Check) to accompany their child, as long as the aide is willing to support the classroom teacher's direction.
- **Parent or Family Member** - A parent may accompany their child to class as an aide, but they may not bring siblings, and should expect to play an active part in the classroom.

A child will require an aide to attend if any of the following is true:

- **The child persistently requires one-on-one attention** in order to not disrupt class, as described above.
- **The child's actions pose a danger** to himself/herself, other children, or adults.
- **The child is not toilet trained**, i.e. the child has 2 toileting accidents within 2 weeks. We are not licensed for diapering.

Health Standards

The following are guidelines to help parents and teachers decide when a child is too ill to attend Preschool. For the safety of the other children, your child should not attend Preschool if he or she has any of the following symptoms:

- Diarrhea - Two loose bowel movements within four hours.
- Vomiting - One or more episodes within the last twelve hours.
- Cold - In combination with one of the above or fever or lethargy.
- Fever - A temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or 38 degrees Celsius or higher.
- Rashes - Any questionable rashes.
- Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye) - Child should remain at home until they have been on medication for twenty-four hours.
- Ear Infection, Sore Throat, Cough - If these are being treated by a doctor with antibiotics, it is recommended that the child remain at home for at least twenty-four hours.
- Please also check the latest Covid-19 Restrictions here:
<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/topics/Page16998.aspx>

If the child develops any of the above symptoms while at Preschool, you or your contact person will be notified to take the child home. In case of a communicable disease (measles, mumps, rubella, etc.) or parasitic infestation, those children infested may not attend Preschool until clearance from the Doctor or Health Unit is obtained. A child must be on antibiotics for at least 24 hours and feeling well before returning to Preschool. The teacher must be notified if your child is on any kind of medication. Teachers cannot administer medication except an EpiPen. Parents must sign a release form and supply all information pertaining to their child's condition. Children who have not been immunized will be accepted at Preschool.

Emergency Procedures

Emergency Medical Care Procedures

The teacher will take whatever steps may be necessary to obtain emergency medical care if warranted. The steps include but are not limited to the following:

- Attempt to contact a parent or guardian;
- Attempt to contact a child's physician;
- Attempt to contact parent through their emergency contact person;
- If the parent or child's physician cannot be contacted, any of the following actions may be taken:
 - call another physician,
 - call an ambulance*,
 - have the child taken to the hospital.

ANY AMBULANCE EXPENSES INCURRED WILL BE BORNE BY THE CHILD'S FAMILY

Please note that the Preschool uses universal precautions regarding the handling of bloody or body fluid spills which consists of wearing gloves, removal of visible blood or fluid with a chemical germicide or 1:10 bleach, and disposal of gloves and wiping material in double bags.

Emergency Evacuation Procedures

At the warning signal:

- The teacher is to accompany children through the nearest exit,
- The parent helper checks washrooms, hallways, kitchen, office, playroom corners, storage room and closes doors behind them,
- Teacher takes attendance,
- Everyone will proceed to emergency shelter at Lawrence Grassi School, next to the Preschool.
- Teacher will phone fire department, gas company, and children's parents.

Medication Policy

The Preschool staff does not administer any medication to any child in the Preschool except if the child requires Epipen use as a life saving treatment. If your child requires an Epipen, parents will be required to sign a waiver. The Epipen must have clear instructions and be visible in the classroom at all times that the child is present.

Enrolling in Preschool

Eligibility

Pre-Kindergarten Program

Children must be born before December 31, 2021, and toilet-trained, to enter the PreK program.

3-Year-Old Program

Children must be born before December 31, 2022, and toilet-trained, to enter the three-year-old program.

Enrollment for the 2025/ 2026 school year is possible until end of January, 2026, provided space is available. Fees will be pro-rated for children who start after the first day of class due to late registration when there is space in the program. Places will not be held without payment when there are other children on the waitlist.

Class Placements

Class lists are drawn up each spring from families that attend AGM & Registration Night.

Priority placement is given to special needs children, children of board members, returning students, and siblings who request the same class providing their registration is received at AGM.

Teacher preferences are neither asked for on the registration form nor guaranteed for anyone other than board members. You may express your preference to us, and we will fulfill it if possible, but we will make the best decisions we can for the class as a whole. The Preschool reserves the right to balance classes.

Registrations received after Registration Night are accepted on a rolling basis, and placed or waitlisted as space allows.

Students may transfer between classes if space allows.

Payment of Fees

September preschool fees must be paid by August 1st, 2025. For payments from October through June we recommend paying in monthly installments by pre-authorized debit from your bank account. This is effectively the same as paying by cheque, except you only need to give us one void cheque instead of 10 post-dated cheques. Any pre-authorized debit agreement can be cancelled with 30-days' written notice – the same as our withdrawal policy.

If necessary, we can also accept cheque, cash, or credit card. For credit cards only, there is a 3.5% processing fee charged by the card processor.

Receipts are not issued automatically but are available upon request.

During the year, families who fall 10 days in arrears in fee payments may have their child removed from the program. The Preschool reserves the right to charge a \$20 fee for all NSF cheques, and it will be deemed as a payment in arrears. Following 2 NSF cheques, parents will be on a cash only basis, all fees to be paid by the first of each month.

Notice of Withdrawal and Refunds

The \$50 registration fee is non-refundable. 30 days' written notice to info@canmorepreschool.com is required to withdraw from class, or one month's fee in lieu of notice.

The Preschool Staff

The Preschool Staff consists of

- two teachers (Ms. Claire & Ms. Debbie),
- two part-time Teacher Assistants (Ms. Pamela & Ms. Ursula) and
- one administrative assistant (Ms. Sally).

The Preschool does not have a Director or Principle as it is truly parent-directed. The volunteer board supervises all staff.

All staff have their Child Care First Aid and CPR certification.

The Preschool Board

The Preschool Board is responsible for the administration of the Canmore Preschool. The Board consists entirely of parent volunteers. The Board meets monthly and is elected at the Annual General Meeting held each year in Spring. All Preschool parents are welcome to attend board meetings.

Chairperson leads all Board meetings. Supervises all operations and speaks on behalf of the board.

Vice-Chairperson organizes the Casino fundraiser, updates the website, and assumes the duties of the Chairperson in her or his absence.

Secretary records, distributes, and maintains copies of the minutes of all board meetings.

Treasurer maintains the financial records of the Preschool. The treasurer also prepares the budget, issues cheques, and supervises all bookkeeping matters.

Volunteer Coordinator keeps track of families volunteer hours and oversees the room parents, who keep track of parent-of-the-day.

Fundraising Coordinator oversees all fundraising events including Scholastic book orders, Canmore Christmas Artisan's Market, and the Rocky Mountain Raffle.

Events/Social Media Coordinator works with the teachers to plan and organize field trips, guest speakers and other special events.

Raffle Coordinator organizes annual Raffle with assistance of the Fundraising Coordinator



606A- 7th Avenue
Canmore, Alberta
T1W 2H5

Tel (403) 678-2538

Fax (403) 678-4361

info@canmorepreschool.com

www.canmorepreschool.com