

2026-2027

Parent Handbook



Version: January 2026

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

We aim to strike a happy balance between child- and teacher-directed activities each day to provide both structured and free learning opportunities. Children this age are busy learning through every game they play, and they tend to be kinesthetic learners who want and need to be active. Here are some of the key elements that keep our program varied and stimulating:

Learning Centres

Our classrooms are arranged with toys and crafts in different theme areas, or “learning centers.” Most days begin with self-directed play, so students can choose an area to explore. Some examples include the costume cupboard, the cars and trucks corner, the painting easel, the building blocks, the sand table, the dollhouse, the reading rug, and craft tables where the teachers set up a different project each day. Our teachers allow for plenty of playtime; they circulate among and interact with the children, guiding them and asking questions to help stimulate their imaginations.

Circle Time

Circle Time provides a more structured period in the day. The children learn to follow directions, to take turns, and to communicate with others. They also learn about the days of the week and begin, through songs, games, and stories, to learn pre-literacy skills and early math skills such as patterning.

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.

Outdoor Play

We have access to a fenced play-yards that we share with the Canmore Daycare. They allow us ample opportunity to play active games such as “What time is it Mr. Wolf?” and “Red Rover.” We also venture out into our neighborhood on walks and scavenger hunts.

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. No matter the weather, our students are physically active every day. We

use hoops, balls, parachutes, bean bags, and lots of music and games for organized physical play.

Additionally, the PreK program attends an outstanding monthly physical education program called Body Moves with Ms. Cathy Robinson, a local physical education instructor.

Community Involvement

We encourage community visitors to our classrooms, such as wildlife conservation officers, nurses, RCMP, dental hygienists, the Biosphere Institute, dog-sled teams, firefighters, grandparents, etc.

Empathy Program

Canmore Preschool actively teaches empathy. Each year we seek out a few families with a newborn baby who are willing to visit our classrooms once a month. This allows our students to watch their newborn friend grow over the course of the year. Students will measure their friend and notice as the baby learns to smile, move, and vocalize.

We also incorporate literacy circles to better understand our feelings and the feelings of others.

Handwriting Without Tears

Our teachers have attended workshops on Handwriting Without Tears and are incorporating these techniques in the classroom. In our 4-year-old Pre-K classes, there are daily literacy activities and a letter-of-the-week as our students learn to write the alphabet and their own names.

Music Classes

We are lucky to have additional musical and theatrical enrichment for both the 3- and 4-year-old classes. A local music teacher will come to preschool each month to sing songs, play instruments, and dance with each of our classes.

Field Trips

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

- Visits to the Canmore Library with a ride on a school bus
- Cross-country Ski lessons at the Nordic Centre
- Visit to the Canmore Farmer's Market
- Attending the Festival of Trees at the Malcolm Hotel

- Pajama Days
- Teddy Bear Picnic
- Beach Day
- Mothers' Day Celebration
- Classroom visits from community members, such as the fire department, Wildsmart, RCMP, dental hygienist and Alberta Parks.

For the 2026/2027 school year we are hoping to include skating lessons and a Forest Play field trip or a visit to the Outdoor Learning Centre.

Parents sign a general parent consent and waiver on the Preschool registration form for participation in all preschool organized activities.

Occasionally, parents are asked to pick up students from locations other than the preschool (i.e. the library) at the end of classes. If this is a concern for your family, please contact the preschool to make alternate arrangements.

The monthly Preschool newsletter and calendar will contain detailed information regarding all special events and field trips.

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.

Program Structure

Class Size

At this time both of our 3yo Preschool classes as well as our PreK classes are a maximum of 14 students.

Hours and Holidays

The 2026/2027 Preschool program begins September 8th, 2026 and continues until June 18th, 2027. The hours of operation are as follows (*in principle; subjective to change either before the start of or during the school year*):

Three-Year-Old Programs

- Tuesday/Thursday mornings 9:00AM-11:30AM
- Tues/Wed/Thur afternoons 12:45PM-3:15PM

Pre-Kindergarten Programs

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

The Canmore Preschool observes statutory holidays and other holidays decided by the Preschool Board.

The Preschool follows the [learning calendar](#) of the Canadian Rockies Regional School Division No. 12 (with the except of Professional Development Days).

During the 2026/2027 school year the Preschool is closed for:

- Christmas Break (2 weeks; Monday December 21, 2026 – Friday January 1, 2027)
- Family Day Break (1 week; Monday February 15, 2027 – Friday February 19, 2027)
- Spring Break (2 weeks; Monday April 5, 2027 – Friday April 16, 2027).

Eligibility

Pre-Kindergarten Program

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

Three Year-Old Program

Children must be born before December 31, 2023, and toilet- trained, to enter the three-year-old program.

Enrollment for the 2026/ 2027 school year is possible until end of January, 2027 (provided space is available).

Places will not be held without payment when there are other children on the waitlist.

Office Hours

Office hours generally correspond with preschool operational hours. However, on occasion our administrator will have to leave the office to run errands.

If you'd like to speak to our administrator directly, please reach out to them via email or give them a call at 403-678-2538 to make an appointment.

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. Parent involvement is of great importance to the preschool, the children and the community.

Fundraising events may include:

- Casino (every 3 years; next one will be Summer 2028)
- Canmore Christmas Artisans' Market (November 2026)
- Save-on-Foods Grocery Cards (monthly contribution)
- Rocky Mountain Spring Auction (March 2027)
- Cookie Dough sale (Fall 2026)
- Rocky Mountain Flatbread Pizza night (January 2027)
- A Bottle Drive
- Etc.

Save-on-Foods Grocery Card Fundraiser:

- Families may choose to buy a \$200 Save-on-Foods grocery card each month - you pay \$200 and receive a \$200 grocery card, and in return Save-on-Foods gives the Preschool \$20
- OR Families may choose not to purchase a grocery card and contribute the same \$20 directly each month.

A Pre Authorized Debit Agreement will be set up for the monthly contribution to the Save-

on-Foods Fundraiser program (either for \$200/month or \$20/month as outlined above) at the start of the school year.

Class Placements

Class lists are drawn up each spring from families that registered. Board members are guaranteed their class placement.

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 class placements are made, are accepted on a rolling basis, and placed or waitlisted as space allows.

Students may transfer between classes if space allows.

Fees for the 2026/2027 school year

A one-time non-refundable Registration Fee of \$50 is applied with each registration.

Pre-Kindergarten (Birthdays in 2022)

Mornings (3-days) 8:30-12:00, Mon/Wed/Fri

- **\$150.97/month** (\$250.97 less \$100 Affordability Grant)

Mornings (4-days) 8:30-12:00, Mon-Thur

- **\$217.87/month** (\$317.87 less \$100 Affordability Grant)

Afternoons (4-days) 12:30-3:30, Mon-Thur

- **\$187.87/month** (\$287.87 less \$100 Affordability Grant)

3-Year-Old Preschool (Birthdays in 2023)

Mornings 9:00-11:30, Tues/Thur

- **\$90.38/month** (\$190.38 less \$100 Affordability Grant)

Afternoon 12:45-3:15, Tues/Wed/Thur

- **\$135.38/month** (\$235.38 less \$100 Affordability Grant)

Prices listed above include a \$100 reduction from the 2026/2027 Affordability Grant Agreement effective April 1, 2025. The monthly parent-paid portion of the preschool fees is printed in purple.

Payment of Fees

Our payment method is:

- credit card for the Registration Fee and September Program Fees (through the Active Network registration platform)

- automatic monthly pre-authorized debit from your bank account for Oct-June Program Fees, which we will help you set up after classes begin in September.

If this causes any issues or if you have any questions, please contact the office via e-mail at info@canmorepreschool.com

By exceptional circumstances 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 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.

Volunteer Guarantee

Each family commits to provide *a minimum of 5 hours* of volunteer work per child during the year. We require a guarantee for \$200.00 as security towards your commitment to volunteer these hours. If, by June 18, 2027, you have not completed your volunteer hours, you will be responsible for payment of said \$200.00. We will notify you prior to this date if your payment is required. This guarantee will be a clause in your pre-authorized debit agreement at the start of the school year.

Ways you can complete your volunteer hours:

Join the board! Help clean toys. Volunteer at the Canmore Christmas Artisans Market on the 3rd weekend in November. Throughout the school year we send out links to a comprehensive online sign up that offers a wide range of jobs!

Notice of Withdrawal

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.

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 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. Additionally, make sure to close the gate properly behind you.

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 glue-ing.
- 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). Please refrain from sending glass containers as they can cause

serious safety concerns when they break. Stainless steel containers are a good alternative to plastic.

- 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 Behaviour

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 collaboratively come with a plan about how to best move forward. Resources can be provided as needed.

If a family requests special accommodation for their child, our Board of Directors with input from the teachers 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 or until they can access extended one-on-one support/aide.

A child will require an aide in order 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.

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 infected 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. 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 expense incurred for emergency medical treatment, including ambulance cost, 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 teacher or educational assistant 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 do not administer any medication to any child in the Preschool, except if the child requires a medication as a life saving treatment, such as an epipen or inhaler. If your child requires an Epipen, parents will be required to sign a waiver. The Epipen must have clear instructions, which must always be visible in the classroom that the child attends.

The Preschool Staff

The Preschool Staff consists of:

- Full-time teachers, Ms. Claire & Ms. Debbie
- Part-time teacher and educational assistant Ms. Ursula
- Educational Assistant Ms. Pam, and
- Administrative assistant Ms. Tatjana

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 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.

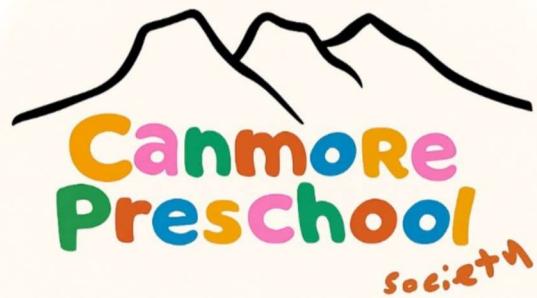
Treasurer maintains the financial records of the Preschool. The treasurer also prepares the budget and supervises all bookkeeping matters.

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 Canmore Christmas Artisan's Market and the Rocky Mountain Raffle.

Events 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



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