

Woodvale Playschool

Where learning is fun for 3, 4 5 & 6 year olds!

Parents' Guide 2008 - 2009



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Please read this entire manual prior to September

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Welcome to Woodvale Playschool!

At Woodvale Playschool, play is recognized and valued as an essential part of a child's developing years. Our teachers therefore plan an exciting and stimulating **"Play-Based Learning"** program as unique as each enrolled child. Our goal is to offer your child and family a wonderful Early Childhood experience in a fun and nurturing environment.

"Play-based" is an approach where children develop through interactions between his/her environment and the people in it. It is open ended programming which is child directed and teacher lead. This allows every child to develop to their full potential by exploration, risk taking and experimenting.

Our classes are staffed with two qualified Early Childhood Educators for each group of sixteen children.

Roberta Kaasa is a true Edmontonian.... born and raised. She has raised 2 children, a son who is married and has since made her a "nana" and a niece who has set off to explore the world. She lives with her beloved jack russell terrier, Sherman, who is essentially her third child. Roberta believes in giving back to the community and volunteers both locally and globally. Roberta has her Early Childhood Diploma and has been teaching preschool for over 20 years, as a volunteer in different organizations and within the preschool classroom. She is passionate about teaching and loves to explore the world of a child and to help them see who they are and what they can accomplish.

Kathy Reimchen is also from Edmonton. Her interest in music led her to obtain two A.R.C.T. diplomas in piano teaching and piano performance. After raising two daughters, Kathy decided it was the opportune time to pursue some post-secondary education. She completed the Early Childhood Development Diploma at Grant MacEwan College in 2007. This was a truly life-changing experience, opening her eyes to the capabilities and potential of young children, especially in a group setting. The attributes of young children - their curiosity, creativity and honesty - are just some of the reasons she enjoys working with them so much. Her dream for many years has been to teach a music and movement program to young children and this dream is finding its place at Woodvale Playschool.

Woodvale Playschool is a fully licensed Parent Co-operative Playschool. It is run by its members, the parents, who are involved in all aspects of the school's operation. Your involvement can be anything from a position on our board, assisting with art prep, supervising on a field trip and more.

Our school is an active participant in the community and works in association with the Woodvale Community League. We require parents to obtain a community league membership in their community for the upcoming school year. Information for your Community League can be found at www.efcl.org. To fulfill commitments to Woodvale Community League, each enrolment is required to work one Bingo event. A date will be assigned to your family at the beginning of the school year.

Please remember WOODVALE PLAYSCHOOL IS A NUT FREE SCHOOL. This means no nuts or nut products are to be brought to our school. This is for the safety of children with allergies.

We hope you enjoy your year at Woodvale Playschool!!!
Woodvale Playschool Executive

OUR PHILOSOPHY

At Woodvale Playschool we believe your child and his/her family is unique and that they are entitled to a warm, nurturing and safe early childhood experience that meets their needs and growth. All areas of your child's development, emotional, social, physical and intellectual, are key components within our program.

Your child will be introduced to a "Play-Based" Learning Environment. He/she will be encouraged to learn through play and the experiences in the classroom. Your child will learn self-expression through the choices made available to them. Independence will be fostered through being encouraged to try his/her own ideas. Confidence will be gained from achieving what he/she has set out to do. Knowledge will be acquired from investigating things and ideas both at school and at home. Communication skills will expand through interaction and expression between peers and adults. As well, social confidence will develop from learning to play with others. Through new found knowledge and skills, your child will develop maturity to prepare them for the years ahead.

The program will offer your child the freedom to choose from a variety of experiences through play. Realizing that each child is an individual with varying degrees of development, the teachers utilize your child's spontaneous activities to further their learning in many ways. The program will offer structured and unstructured activities developmentally appropriate for the age group setting.

The teachers will use their skills, experience, knowledge, imagination and creativity to provide a stimulating, warm, nurturing, safe, and spontaneous environment. When a child feels loved and accepted as a worthwhile individual, he/she will have the confidence to take risks, learn and grow.

PROGRAMS

3 YEAR AM

Tues, Thurs mornings
9:00 am – 11:00 am
\$75.00 per month

This class is designed to help your child adjust to their first experience away from home in a safe and caring environment. The focus is on socialization and emotional development, including: encouraging independence, taking turns and sharing. Children will also develop fine and gross motor skills and experience art activities. Each class will have a portion of time allotted to physical movement activities and/or games within our open space downstairs. Children will be introduced to Kodaly based music programming weekly.

PRE K AM

Mon, Wed, Fri mornings
9:00 – 11:00 am
\$110.00 per month

PRE K PM

Mon, Wed, Fri afternoons
12:45 – 3:00 pm
\$125.00 per month

The Pre-K program is for children who are going to be entering kindergarten the following year. This class allows your child to further develop socially and emotionally in a smaller class setting to ensure their success in kindergarten. Children work on developing independence, friendship, self help skills, conflict resolution skills, sharing and listening to others. This class involves a hands-on learning environment; interacting with peers, teachers, community and parents. The focus is project based and geared towards school readiness through the Animated Literacy and Handwriting Without Tears programs. Classes also include journal writing, math, science, cooking, movement and an introduction to Kodaly based music programming weekly.

FINE ARTS PM

Tues, Thurs afternoons
12:45 – 3:00 pm
\$100.00 per month

Our four, five and six year old Fine Arts program is a specialized enrichment program to introduce children to the exciting world of Music, Drama, Movement, Art and more. Your child will experience a Kodaly based music program using the voice as the principle instrument. The teachers will invite the children's response to music through movement, props and the visual arts. Children will experience many art mediums with open-ended activities that will encourage discovery, exploration, experimentation, creativity and originality.

Classes run from September to June.

ELIGIBILITY/FEES/WITHDRAWALS

ELIGIBILITY

A child entering the 3 year old program must be 3 years of age on or before the first day she/he starts the program.

Four year old students must be 4 years of age on or before December 31st of the current school year.

All participants must be toilet trained and self-sufficient in the bathroom. **NO PULL UPS.**

No child may begin classes until his/her guardian has completed and submitted a registration package, monthly dues, bingo deposit, cleaning fee, registration fee and have a current Community League Membership in their community.

Pre-registration is given to returning students currently registered, siblings and Woodvale Community League members with a current membership.

General registration is taken in spring of the current school year and all remaining spaces are available to the general public.

The Registrar is responsible for keeping a **waiting list** once the registration list for the year is full. As spaces become available, they will be filled on a first-come first-served basis.

The preschool staff has the right to ask any participant to change classes or withdraw should the individual not be suited for the class they are in. Should this occur, a teacher would speak to you and try to find an alternative arrangement. Should one not be found, your outstanding posted cheques would be returned to you.

FEES

All families must pay a \$45.00 non-refundable registration fee at time of registration. A mandatory Playschool Orientation Meeting is held in late August to complete all registration information and children's profiles. At least one member of each family must attend this meeting to get familiarized with our school program and to submit a) Bingo cheque \$200.00 b) cleaning fee \$30.00 c) September & June fees dated for September 1st and 8 post dated cheques for your monthly dues dated the first of each month, October through May.

All fees are set according to the amount needed to cover the operating expenses.

Method of payments: Monthly fees are handled by way of post-dated cheques or cash. Fees for September and June are dated September 1st and all other months' fees are post-dated the first day of the month. When paying cash you must pay the entire year in full at the August Orientation. More information about specific fee arrangements is included in your package.

Returned Cheque (NSF) FEE: If your cheque is returned by your bank for any reason, a **\$20.00** NSF penalty will be charged. If not paid, this represents immediate grounds for exclusion of your child from

the Playschool. If a second cheque is returned by your bank for any reason, you will be required to pay the remainder of the year's fees on a monthly basis (including any fees owing) by cash or certified cheque no later than the first of the month. Failure to provide the fees as described also represents grounds for immediate exclusion.

Bingo: As our school is a non-profit program that runs off the revenues we receive from enrolment and fundraising, **every family in our program must work one bingo event** per child during the school year. Bingos are major fundraising activities and an obligatory contribution to the Woodvale Community League which provides significant financial support to the Playschool.

If you are unable to take part for any personal reasons or beliefs, but would like to be part of the school, you must pay a \$200.00 fee to the school that is non-refundable.

At our Orientation you must provide a \$200.00 Bingo deposit cheque that will be dated for the Bingo shift you are assigned at the Orientation meeting. If you are unable to attend your assigned Bingo date, then the cheque will be deposited the next day. If you complete your shift you will receive your cheque back as soon as possible.

Should you be unable to attend your assigned Bingo shift, you must find someone over the age of 18 years old to replace you or your family will forfeit their \$200 Bingo cheque. When considering a replacement person for your family, keep in mind that they must be a good representative of our school and be willing to work the full shift.

If you would like the opportunity to earn some extra money, the BINGO Association provides parents with a list of people who are able to work a Bingo for a fee (\$50.00 for the 5pm-10 pm Bingo, \$75.00 for the 5pm-midnight Bingo. If you would like to be on the Bingo worker list, please ask the Bingo co-coordinator for more info.

If you withdraw after November 1st and have not worked your required bingo, we will keep your following month's fees and return your bingo cheque.

Cleaning fee: Woodvale Playschool has contracted out the cleaning of the Playschool. To help cover the costs associated with cleaning the Playschool, a fee of \$30.00 per registered child is charged. A cheque for \$30.00 must be provided at the August orientation meeting.

WITHDRAWALS & REFUNDS

If, for some reason, you choose to withdraw from the Playschool, you must provide written notice to the Registrar on the first day of the month, one full month in advance to ensure a refund of your June fees. Your remaining post-dated cheques will be returned.

The exception would be any withdrawal made after April 1st. As of this date you will automatically forfeit your June fees. Your remaining post-dated cheques will be returned.

If you withdraw after November 1st and have not worked your required bingo, we will keep your following month's fees and return your Bingo cheque.

No refunds are given on the \$45.00 registration fee and \$30.00 cleaning fee.

GENERAL INFORMATION

If you have any questions or concerns about Woodvale Playschool Policies and General Information, please bring them up with the President, as the guidelines are determined by the Playschool Executive Board and not the teachers.

Please do not arrive earlier than five minutes before class, because the outer door will be locked to allow for class set up and to prepare for the day.

Your child is to be picked up immediately after class. If a parent/caregiver is consistently late with insufficient reason, you will be given a verbal warning. Failure to comply will prompt a written warning. Failure to respond to the written warning will prompt the immediate withdrawal of your child from the Playschool with *NO REFUND*.

Do not under any circumstances leave your child at the Playschool unattended prior to or following class.

OPEN-DOOR POLICY

If you would like to sit in on a class, the teachers have an open-door policy. Advance notice is not necessary, but appreciated. There will also be opportunities for you to attend celebrations and events at the Playschool. Info about these events will be in your monthly newsletters.

COMMUNICATION AND CONCERNS

Each class will have a Class Representative. Your Class Rep is your liaison with the Executive and the teaching staff. Any problems or questions of a general administrative nature should be directed to this person who in turn will make sure the Executive is made aware of it. His/Her name and phone number is on the class list, which will be provided to you. Please note that issues relating to teacher performance, school policy and procedure should be directed to the President. Questions or concerns relating to program content should be directed to the teaching staff.

NEWSLETTERS

The Playschool publishes a monthly newsletter with information about classroom activities, upcoming events and important dates to remember (such as school closure days). This will be sent home monthly in your child's backpack. Please watch for it to keep up to date with the activities in your child's class. Also, a copy of the Millwoods Newsletter, containing important community league information, may also be picked up at the Playschool.

PARKING

When dropping off or picking up your child, please use the playground side of the school parking lot. The other side is Greenview paid staff parking. Double parking or parking in the middle of the parking lot is *NOT PERMITTED*, even if just for a few minutes. If there are no spaces available in the lot, we ask that you exit the parking lot and park elsewhere. The church on the corner allows parents to use its parking spaces for pickup and drop off during the week. Always remember to be courteous of the school staff and keep in mind the safety of your children and the children attending Greenview Elementary.

CARPOOLS/CAREGIVERS

If you have arranged a carpool with another family or have a caregiver other than yourself picking up your child, you must inform the teachers prior to the class. The staff at the Playschool are not allowed to release any child to anyone other than the parent/primary guardian, even if your child can identify them.

CLOTHING

“REMEMBER TO LABEL EVERYTHING”

Each child is to have:

1. A pair of runners (NO SLIPPERS), which are to be left at the school for the year. This is required for safety purposes. Please ensure their name and class are clearly marked on the runners.
2. An extra set of clothes in the case of an accident – one pair of socks, one shirt, one pair of pants, and underwear. Please label all items and put them in a Ziploc bag with your child’s name printed clearly on it. Should this extra set of clothing be used during class it is your responsibility to launder it and return with your child to the next day they are in session.
3. A LARGE knapsack or bag with his/her name clearly marked on it. The knapsack is to be brought to school daily so they can bring home all their treasures and classroom communication.

Children must be dressed everyday for the weather, especially in the winter! In order to participate in outdoor activities all children must be prepared to go out; if one child is not properly dressed for the weather the entire class is unable to go outdoors. Adequate attire is also needed in the case of a fire drill or emergency.

In sunny fall and summer, please include a hat and apply sunscreen on your child prior to coming to school. Licensing regulations do not permit teachers to apply communal sunscreen to children.

Please ensure all boots, coats, jackets, etc. are labelled with your child’s name.

ABSENCE

Should your child be absent from class please notify the teachers that they will not be attending. You may leave a message on the Playschool answering machine that day (780-462-4736).

WEATHER POLICY/SCHOOL CLOSURE

If the public school (Greenview School) is open, then the Playschool is open. In the event the Playschool is closed, every effort will be made to notify you.

As families and staff are coming to our school from many areas of the community, we would like to take into consideration the safety of everyone in extreme weather conditions. We do have the right to close the school with short notice or none. This may be an inconvenience, but necessary.

If the outside temperature with the wind-chill is below -30 or we experience extreme road conditions, the school may be closed. The final decision as to whether the school is closed is made by the President. Every effort will be made to contact parents/caregivers prior to the closure.

ILLNESS/ MEDICAL INFORMATION

The teacher has the right to request that parents temporarily remove their child from class if the teacher feels the child is a health concern to the other children (e.g. contagious disease). The teacher's decision is final and will be supported by the Executive Board.

A child should not attend school if they have experienced a fever, diarrhea, dark green discharge from the nose in the past 24 hours or seem generally unwell. If your child contracts a communicable disease (i.e. measles, mumps, strep-throat, chicken pox etc.) please inform the teachers. Please think of the staff, children and families in our program when evaluating if your child is healthy enough to attend class. Bringing a sick child to the program could affect many others.

The teachers cannot administer medications.

Medical information: The Playschool must be informed of any medical (i.e. allergies) or emotional problems your child may have. Any issues must be clearly stated on your registration form and may be discussed with the teaching staff in private. Be specific when listing allergies.

SNACKS

PLEASE NO NUTS

Snack time is a short break in the day to fuel up the body. It is not a substitute time for breakfast or lunch. Only 10 minutes is allotted for snack time so keep it simple. As a parent or caregiver you must provide a snack daily for your child. Please ensure that it is nutritious and the containers and lids are labelled and easy for your child to open. Make sure fruits and vegetables are cut and peeled. Water will be provided by the Playschool if requested.

Suggested

Fresh fruit
Vegetables
Wholesome cookies or squares
Wholesome loaves or breads
Yogurt
Sunrype Raisins (others may contain traces of nuts)
Pudding
Nutrigrain bars
No Name cheese/cracker snacks (Superstore)
Kraft cheese/cracker snacks
Bear Paws
Fruit to Go
Yogurt
Ritz Bits Sandwiches with cheese (not peanut butter) (check label)
Rice Krispies Squares
Dried fruit snacks
Dole fruit cups
No Name fruit cups (Superstore)

Not Permitted

Candy
Chips
Gum
Nuts or nut products

SPECIAL SNACKS/ SPECIAL CELEBRATIONS

The Health Department has strongly recommended that all group snack items be store bought (unopened) or made/assembled at the Playschool with unopened ingredients.

Please note that we are a “nut –free” school, and it would be appreciated if you could please check the labels of your child’s snacks to ensure there are no “traces of nuts.”

EMERGENCY AND RELOCATION PLAN

FIRES AND EMERGENCIES

1. The responsibility of those on duty at the Playschool during an emergency are:
 - a. Check to ensure the route out of the building is free of obstacles.
 - b. Open the door with one teacher taking position in front of the children and one behind the children.
 - c. Escort the children to the tether pole located between Greenview School and Woodvale Playschool on the tarmac.
 - d. The teachers will double check to ensure that no one is in the Playschool. They will have the class register (which contains emergency phone numbers), activate the alarm system, leave the lights on, and join the children outside.
2. Under no circumstances will they stop to put on coats, boots, hats, or anything else, no matter what. This is one reason we insist that the children and visiting parents wear shoes at all times in the classroom.
3. When the children are all out safely and are at least 50 feet clear of the front door of the building, a head count will be taken. The children will be taken to the Greenview School Gymnasium and remain with the teacher. If Greenview School is also in danger, the Gymnasium at John Paul I is to be used.
4. A teacher will phone the fire department or Emergency Services, if possible, to direct or report any missing children.
5. Do not re-enter the Playschool unless permission is given by Emergency Service.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

Children are not to bring any toys or items from home unless requested by the teachers.

Children are not to bring chewing gum or candy to class.

Children are not to bring any snack containing nuts.

IT IS A PARENTS RESPONSIBILITY TO INFORM THE SCHOOL OF ANY CHANGES TO YOUR CHILD'S PERSONAL CARE OR INFORMATION PROFILE.

Birthdays – There is one celebration half way through the year in which each child's birthday will be recognized at an UNBIRTHDAY PARTY. Although we acknowledge the excitement of a birthday we request that parents refrain from bringing cake, refreshments or party favours to school on your child's birthday.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Our school is run by the parent board and parent participants. There are many ways of taking part in the school.

BOARD POSITIONS

Many positions need to be filled at our Orientation meeting before the school can operate. Consider taking on a position to be involved in your child's school and help us run a successful program this year. If you are interested in any of these positions, please call our President before the Orientation meeting for more information. Thank you in advance!!

We are currently looking for:

Board Positions

CLASS REPRESENTATIVES (one per class)

FUNDRAISING COORDINATOR

BINGO COORDINATOR

SUPPLY PERSON

EQUIPMENT REPAIR PERSON

ART PREP (one per class)

Please see Appendix A for Board Job Descriptions

SUBSTITUTES

If you are interested and able, the Playschool maintains an "emergency helper parent" list in the event that one of the teachers is ill. We are unable to operate classes with only one adult. If you are likely to be available to assist, please sign up on registration night or with the teachers.

MEETINGS

The Playschool Board Meetings, which are held usually once per month (2nd Thursday @ 7:30), are open to all parents in the Playschool. The time and date of these meetings are posted in advance at the Playschool and in your newsletter. If you wish to discuss a particular item, you must notify the President a minimum of one week in advance so that it can be included on the Agenda.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

Woodvale Playschool follows the Edmonton Public School calendar to assist as many parents as possible, who have children in both Playschool and regular school, in their child care arrangements. As Greenview Elementary is our “safety,” we observe the same holidays, PD days and other closures as dictated by Greenview (www.greenview.epsb.ca). Should Greenview be closed for any reason (PD day, snow or weather closure, etc.) Woodvale Playschool will be closed that day.

Labour Day	Monday, September 1 st
Staggered Entry Days (1/2 classes)	September 8 th – 11 th
Full Classes Begin	Monday, September 15 th
Thanksgiving	Monday, October 13 th
October Planning Day	TBA
Remembrance Day	Tuesday, November 11 th
November Planning Day	TBA
Christmas Recess	December 22 nd – January 2 nd (inclusive)
January Planning Day	TBA
Family Day	Monday, February 16 th
Teachers Convention	March 1 st & 2 nd
Spring Break	March 30 th – April 3 rd (inclusive)
April Planning Day	TBA
Good Friday	April 10 th
Easter Monday	April 13 th
Victoria Day	May 18 th
May Planning Day	TBA
Last Day of School	June 19 th

*Please be aware that there are three professional development days and one day in lieu (of report card writing) during the school year for Greenview. Watch your newsletter for dates.

**In months where there are no PD days, the teachers will take one day of preparation time to plan the curriculum, activities, and learning focus for all four classes. There will be no classes on these dates, and they will be noted in your monthly newsletter.