

Laugh, Learn, Play!



PARENT HANDBOOK

Digital version available at
www.funwithfrenchpreschool.ca

Welcome to Fun with French Preschool

This parent handbook will provide you with valuable information about the preschool and its policies. Please keep it for future reference. You will also find a copy on the preschool website.

We are a parent-run, non-profit preschool. Our executive board is elected annually and consists of **volunteer parents of children currently enrolled**.

Our teachers look forward to being your child's first introduction to education. Applying the early childhood education philosophies of learn through play and student-led learning ensures that students are encouraged to explore their interests and creativity while learning about the world around them.

We rent our classroom space from École Parc Elementaire (EPE). They are kind enough to include us in their school, let us use the playground and gymnasium. As such, our preschool follows many of EPE policies and the Elk Island Public School (EIPS) division calendar in regards to school holidays, vacations, and professional development days. We ask that our families respect the school and its property, as we are guests.

Registration

- Children must be turning the accepted age for the program on or before December 31st of the school year to be eligible to register.
- Children must be completely potty trained (NO Pull-Ups) prior to starting school.
- If your child turns 3 years old part way through the year, you will be required to pay the months leading up to his/her birthday to secure your placement.
- Currently enrolled families will be given the option to pre-register.
- All registration is on a first come, first served basis. There is a \$50 non-refundable application fee.
- Attendance to the Spring General Meeting is **mandatory** to confirm registration. May tuition fees are to be paid at the Spring General Meeting. These fees secure your spot for next year and are **non-refundable**.
- All registrations will be processed via the website and completed at the Fall General Meeting.
- Attendance to the Fall General Meeting is **mandatory** to confirm registration. Fees for the entire year will be collected at the Fall General Meeting and essential paperwork will be signed and remitted.
- Your child(ren) will not be able to begin attending preschool until all post-dated cheques are received by the registrar.
- Non-attendance at the General Meetings will result in forfeiting your child's spot in the program. The Board on a case-by-case basis will review non-attendance due to special circumstances.

Fee Breakdown and Fines

- Registration is based on a full year – September to May.
- Fees are based on a yearly total, which is then divided into nine payments.
- The current monthly fee is \$125 for 2 classes/week.
- No refunds will be given for absenteeism, field trips, school holidays and closures, breaks or sickness.
- The **membership fee of \$125**, paid at the Spring general meeting, will cover the May fees.
- Make all cheques payable to F.F.P.S and include your child's full name on the memo line.
- Bring all postdated cheques to the Fall General Meeting.

Fee Payment Breakdown:

Option 1 - One-time payment

\$1000 - covers fees for September to April

Option 2 - Quaterly payments

\$375 cheque dated Sept 1st, 2017 - covers fees for Sept to Nov

\$375 cheque dated Nov 30th, 2017 - covers fees for Dec to Feb

\$250 cheque dated Feb 28th, 2018 - covers fees for Mar to April

Option 3 - Monthly payments

\$125 cheque dated Sept 1st, 2017 - covers fees for Sept

\$125 cheque dated Sept 30th, 2017 - covers fees for Oct

\$125 cheque dated Oct 31st, 2017 - covers fees for Nov

\$125 cheque dated Nov 30th, 2017 - covers fees for Dec

\$125 cheque dated Dec 31st, 2017 - covers fees for Jan

\$125 cheque dated Jan 31st, 2018 - covers fees for Feb

\$125 cheque dated Feb 28th, 2018 - covers fees for Mar

\$125 cheque dated Mar 31st, 2018 - covers fees for April

NSF Cheque Policy:

A \$40 administration/handling fee will be levied on all NSF cheques. A new payment, and the missed fee must be received by the Treasurer by the end of that month for your child to retain their placement. If more than 2 NSF cheques are received all remaining fees must be paid in cash, certified cheque, or money order before the first of each month for your child to be able to continue attending.

Withdrawl Policy:

One month's written notice is required to withdraw from the preschool. This notice will take effect on the first day of the following month – there will be no refunds for partial months. For example, if you wish to withdraw your child effective March 1st, we would need to receive your notice no later than February 1st. If you give notice part way into February, your March fees will be forfeited.

Fundraising

As we are a non-profit organization, we rely, in part, on fundraising to operate the program. All families are required to fundraise. All funds raised through fundraising go directly into the classroom each year to pay the teaching assistant (*no parent rostering*), provide new equipment, supplies, and extra activities.

A **\$100 fundraising cheque** will be required at the Fall AGM. At that time the Board will inform you of the various fundraising options and the participation structure for the year.

If you coordinate fundraising or have participated in a successful fundraiser before that you'd like us to consider please contact us.

Volunteering

Volunteering in the classroom is welcomed and appreciated, but NOT required. A parent or designate volunteer (18 years or older), will assist the teacher and teacher's aide in your child's class. Due to licensing restrictions, **NO SIBLINGS ARE ALLOWED TO ATTEND** on days you may be volunteering.

Our license mandates that a teacher and an assistant and/or parent volunteer in possession of a valid criminal record check be present at every class. Failure to meet these requirements will result in the cancellation of class. In the event the Teacher or TA are ill or absent, we will require a parent volunteer or designate in order to proceed with class. We will make every effort to notify you as far in advance as possible should we have to cancel class.

When volunteering please arrive 10 minutes early to assist in class set-up and remember to sign yourself in/out in the École Parc main office. We recommend

wearing clothes that are suitable for assisting with crafts and getting down on the floor with the children. Please do not wear low cut tops, short skirts, high heels, etc. Please feel free to bring yourself a beverage and snack. We also ask that you refrain from using your cell phone while in the classroom; it is distracting for both the teacher and the students.

Parent volunteers can help out by vacuuming, wiping tables, helping with craft set-up, snack assistance, etc. Other than completing these to help the teachers, **HAVE FUN!** You are welcome to interact with the children as they learn and as you feel comfortable.

It is important that all observations and information gained about the children **DO NOT** leave the classroom. If you need to discuss an issue, please maintain privacy and contact your child's teacher after class. You can also contact a member of the Executive Board at any time if you have a concern.

General Classroom Information

Drop-off and Pick Up Times

Morning classes

- Volunteer may arrive at 8:25 am
- Class Begins at 8:35 am
- Prompt Pick-up at 11:05 am

Afternoon classes

- Volunteer may arrive at 12:15 pm
- Class Begins at 12:25 pm
- Prompt Pick-up at 2:55 pm

If you arrive early for class, please wait in the front entrance until one of the teachers comes to inform you that the classroom has been opened. This helps minimize the noise in the hall as the elementary classes are in progress during the preschool arrival/pick-up times. To respect Ecole Parc's janitors and our students play space we ask that you **remove your outdoor footwear** in the front entrance to help keep the floors clean.

ALWAYS sign your child in and out of class so that we can ensure everyone is safe in the event of an emergency.

Arrive promptly to pick up your child, as they can become anxious waiting while watching others leave. If your child is not picked up within 10 minutes of dismissal, you will be contacted. If you cannot be reached, we will contact your emergency contact to pick up your child. Repeated tardiness can result in suspension, fine and/or withdrawal of your child from the preschool.

Class Attire and Supplies

- Dress your child appropriately for the weather and provide adequate outerwear. We are lucky to have the use of the school playground, and we venture out in all seasons.
- Your child **MUST** have a pair of indoor non-marking running shoes for the classroom. Outdoor shoes are to be removed prior to entering class and placed on the preschool boot rack located at the bottom of the stairs in the corner.
- Due to our limited storage space, your child must take their indoor shoes home in their backpack after every class.
- Every child must have a kit or bag to bring their snack and water bottle to class. They also must have a backpack to carry home their personal items and any crafts they may have done.
- We never know when spills will happen – pack an entire change of clothes (including socks and underwear) for your child. We recommend you place the clothes in a large zip-close bag, to be kept in the bottom of your child's backpack.
- **LABEL all of your child's personal items** with his/her name to avoid loss or confusion.

Depending on the class your child is registered in you will be required to bring the following item on your first day of class:

- Monday/Wednesday AM-1 Box of Kleenex
- Monday/Wednesday PM-1 box Disposable cloths (J-cloths)
- Tuesday/Thursday AM- Package of glue sticks

Daily Routine

- Children arrive/Sign in
- Craft and Play Centres
- Circle Time/Calendar
- Group Art/Theme Work
- Bathroom break/hand washing (as needed)
- Snack time
- Gym
- Open play and Library
- Clean-up time
- Story time/Sign out

Upon arrival the children will leave their outside footwear in the red cubbies at the bottom of the stairs and enter the classroom. Upon entering the classroom please sign in your child and put on their name tag. Every child will have a hook where they may hang their outerwear, backpack, and place their snack on the ledge above.

Have your child visit the washroom prior to class commencing as multiple bathroom breaks are disruptive to the class.

During field trips or special events the daily routine will be adjusted accordingly. Drop off and pick up times may occasionally change on a special event day. Advance notice will be given to parents in regards to drop off/pick up times, snacks and clothing required on these days.

Snacks

We are a "Nut-Aware Program" within a "Nut-Aware" School. Check labels regularly as ingredients do change. Smell and touch with products that have been in contact with nuts can be enough to trigger a severe to fatal reaction in people with allergies. Please be diligent in your efforts.

Provide a nutritious snack and water bottle for your child each day.

No juice boxes please!

Cut up foods, provide easy-open containers to encourage independence, and avoid foods that could be a choking hazard, such as popcorn.

Field Trips, Class Parties & Birthdays

All field trips require a signed consent for your child to attend. Even if your child is NOT attending the fieldtrip, please complete the form and return it to the teacher. We require that a parent accompany each child (a ratio of 1 child to 1 parent). Please note that siblings are not allowed on field trips unless specified.

Inform your child's teacher if you would like to share a nut-free snack with the class on your child's birthday (note that grocery-store baking is not nut-free), but know that this is not necessary.

Prior to in-class holiday parties a listing will be posted for volunteers to provide snacks or assistance.

Give any invitations for private parties to the parent of the recipient, as it can cause hurt feelings to those not invited or get lost or left in the mailbox.

Communications

Email is the primary mode of communication between the preschool and parents. You must keep the executive board informed of any changes to the email address(es) you would prefer to receive communications. If you are not receiving emails from the board regularly, please inform us immediately. We recommend that you save the executive members' email addresses under your safe contacts list to avoid having important messages moved to junk mail.

Your child has a mailbox folder at the preschool, check it on your class days for event information, Scholastic and fundraising forms, and your child's crafts.

The Executive Board members also have mailboxes in class and we want to hear from you. Please drop a note, talk to, or email, any executive board member or the teachers at any time – we are parents too!

Don't forget to "like" our Facebook page! It's a great place to find last-minute reminders and to see photos of our activities.

Website: www.funwithfrenchpreschool.ca

Email: Executive Board - funwithfrenchpreschool@gmail.com
Teacher – funwithfrenchteacher@gmail.com

Facebook: Fun with French Preschool

Mailing Address: Box 3521 Fort Saskatchewan, Alberta T8L 2T4

Phone Number: (780) 716-7678

Remember in all communications regarding the preschool you respect other families' privacy, as you would want yours respected. Contact lists/mailboxes are not to be used to solicit business or referrals for home-based businesses.

Newsletter

A monthly newsletter is emailed to all families to keep you informed of what is happening in the class, as well as upcoming events, fundraising and teacher updates. The newsletter will be distributed via the email you provided at the time of registration, as well as on the preschool website.

Bulletin Board

There is a Bulletin Board located in the class. The master volunteer calendar is hung on this board. In the event that you need to change your volunteer day or sign up for additional days, please record the change on this calendar.

FFPS Policies

School Closure/Weather Policy

In the event that the teacher is unable to attend class and a suitable substitute cannot be found, an Executive Board member will contact you to confirm cancellation of class. This does mean that on occasion classes may be cancelled an hour before class starts if we are not able to find a substitute. Refunds will NOT be given in the event that classes are cancelled.

We are always looking for substitutes, so please let a member of the Executive Board know if you are interested. Candidates must have a current level 2 child care certificate and first aid with level 'C' CPR.

During inclement weather the Preschool will remain open **UNLESS** Ecole Parc buses are not running. During storms please listen for school closures on the radio or check www.eips.ca regarding bus cancellation; updates are posted by 6:30am.

Our preschool follows the Elk Island Public School (EIPS) calendar in regards to vacations and PD days.

Criminal Record Check Policy

Every person volunteering in the preschool classroom must have a criminal record check done with the RCMP. This check is free of charge and will help ensure the safety of the children.

Once we are given the name or names of people from a family who will be volunteering in the classroom, a letter(s) will be given to you to take to the RCMP to have the criminal record check completed. The original copy must be returned to FFPS, and you cannot use the check for any other purposes.

If a criminal record does show up on the record check, you will have a chance to explain the offence to the Executive Board. You may still be allowed to volunteer at the Board's discretion, provided both the Teacher and TA are present.

Parents who have not submitted a Criminal Record Check are still always welcome to observe or participate in the classroom, but only in situations where both the Teacher and TA are present.

Emergency Policy

In the event of a school emergency, the preschool will follow the policies of Ecole Parc. This applies to fire drills and lock-downs. For more information please reference www.ecoleparc.ca.

Medical Policy

It is your responsibility to inform the Teacher and the Registrar if your child has any chronic health problems, (e.g. allergies, asthma, epilepsy, etc.). We cannot be responsible for any medication administration while your child is in class. If your child is taking medications, we ask that you administer it at home. Please let your teacher and Registrar know what kind of medication your child is taking in the event that an allergic reaction occurs during class time.

Scrapes and small cuts will be dealt with in class and you will be notified upon pickup.

For more serious injuries you, (or your emergency contact if you are unreachable), will be called to take your child for medical care if warranted. In the event of a medical emergency the staff will call for an ambulance and then contact you, (or your emergency contact if you are unreachable), and you will be responsible for any incurred ambulance costs.

Any time first aid is administered, parents are required to sign the Incident Report the teacher has completed at the end of class.

If you need to change any of your personal information or emergency contacts, please contact the Registrar immediately. It is critically important that our records remain up to date and accurate.

Sickness Policy

DO NOT send a sick child to class. Children with fever, vomiting, diarrhea, or who are being treated for a contagious disease are not to come to class. If a child has had diarrhea or vomited, they must not return to school within 24 hours of the last episode. Should a child become ill during class the parent will be contacted and asked to pick the child up – if they cannot be reached, the emergency contact will be called.

If a communicable disease is suspected, the child will be isolated and supervised by an adult in the EPE sick room by the office until they are picked up. We are obligated in the event of a suspected communicable disease to inform the Health Unit and follow their recommendations.

We have a limited ability to find substitute teachers and cannot stress enough how one sick child can cause the cancellation of classes.

Toy Cleaning

Toy sanitizing is mandatory to our licensing. An external agent under Board supervision performs cleaning regularly.

Discipline Policy

Our teachers use a variety of discipline methods including redirection, clarification of choices, logical consequences, and helping the children to express their feelings to maintain safety and dignity in the classroom. An FFPS teacher will never use corporal punishment to resolve a conflict. In accordance with our licensing, children may be guided away from a situation, but we are unable to administer 'time-out's'. All issues regarding discipline of a child is to be handled by the teacher. At **NO** time is a volunteer parent to perform any discipline of a child attending the preschool. Any discipline will be practiced fairly and with caring reassurance.

Incidents will be communicated to the parent, who if needed will be expected to take a greater in-class role to assist in teaching acceptable behaviors. All incidents are recorded in the Incident Log Book. If the teacher and Executive Board members feel that the child is not adjusting to the program and efforts to change the child's behavior have failed, parents may be asked to withdraw the child.

Respectful Conduct Policy

All complaints and suggestions are welcome, but must be submitted to the Executive Board in writing via email or the classroom mailboxes. This allows us to accurately track and address concerns in a timely manner.

Verbal or physical abuse towards teachers, Executive Board members, parents, or children will not be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to, abusive emails or electronic postings on social media.

Failure to abide by the respectful conduct policy will result in suspension or withdrawal from the preschool.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Does my child need to know French before attending, or come from a French speaking home?

A. No your child doesn't need to speak French to attend our program. In fact, most of our families are not bilingual. Our program is designed to be an introduction to the French language. Because it is not an immersion program, children and parents can feel comfortable during this time of learning.

Q. Can I pay my monthly fees at once?

A. Absolutely! FFPS has several payment options, so simply select the one that best fits your family. Refer to the preschool website or the previous 'Fee Breakdown and Fines' section in this handbook for your options.

Q. Can I volunteer frequently?

A. Yes, you can. We do our best to ensure that all parents are given the opportunity to volunteer in the classroom. There is also a sign-up sheet in the classroom if you are free to volunteer "last minute" in the event that the Teacher/TA is ill or absent.

Q. Why does FFPS participate in fundraising?

A. We fundraise so parents are not required to roster. We fundraise to provide special events, new program materials and supplies. The majority of the funds raised go toward our teaching assistant's salary. The remaining pays for fieldtrips, and special event parties like Halloween, Christmas, graduation, and the year-end party. We provide all our families with a variety of fundraising opportunities throughout the year.

Q. What happens if I do not meet the fundraising requirement?

A. If a family does not meet their fundraising minimum by the required date, their fundraising cheque will be deposited.

Q. Who do I advise if I will be having another family/friend picking up my child that is not on the authorized pick-up list?

A. Contact the board by email funwithfrenchpreschool@gmail.com or call (780) 716-7678.