

Strathmore Little Flower
Pre-Kindergarten Program

Parent Handbook



The Society of Our Lady for Community Education

INTRODUCTION

The Society of Our Lady for Community Education operates the Strathmore Little Flower Pre-Kindergarten. This program has been organized to provide education and care for children. It is a provincially licensed, non-profit program administered by a Child Care Supervisor, under the day to day supervision of the School Principal of Sacred Heart Academy. The Parent Handbook of Pre-Kindergarten Policies & Procedures is a valid part of the enrollment agreement between the program and the parents or guardians of children who are enrolled in the program.

Goals

The Pre-Kindergarten Program will provide quality education and child care that parents can rely upon throughout the school calendar year, as defined by Christ the Redeemer Catholic Schools.

School Motto

“Precious in His Sight” reminds us of how precious each child is. Our pre-kindergarten program will mirror the motto, and the philosophy of our school.

Program Focus

Children in our pre-kindergarten program will be provided with individualized, play-based, early literacy programming in an environment of faith. Our program plan will meet the needs of children and their caregivers.

Communities Served

Our pre-kindergarten will serve the geographic areas of Standard, Cheadle, Rockyford and Strathmore.

Religious Focus

Sacred Heart Academy community is devoted to our Catholic Faith and empowers children in their personal quests in an environment that respectfully supports the community in Christ. We welcome and serve children of all faiths.

Sacred Heart Academy Philosophy

We meet the needs of children by providing appropriate learning experiences at the school site while also working with the families of children to provide support for the appropriate environments in the home.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Parents Expectations of the Program

Parents may expect that:

1. Their children are cared for in a safe, supportive environment that adheres to the Christian philosophies, values, and principles of the school district.
2. They may visit with the Caregiver about concerns related to their child or to the Program.
3. They will be told about any misbehavior on the part of their child, and invited to meet with the Caregiver in order to bring about improvement in the situation.
4. They will be informed promptly if their child does not arrive at the Program according to his/her enrollment information.
5. They will be regularly informed by the Caregiver about Program activities.

Programs Expectations of the Parents

The Program expects that parents will:

1. Pay fees as explained in the section titled Fees and Payment Policy.
2. Keep the child's records up-to-date as explained in the section titled Enrollment Forms.
3. Pick up children on time.
4. Follow health policy as explained in the section titled Health & Safety.
5. Contact the Caregiver if their child will not be attending on a scheduled day.
6. Pay attention to any communications from the Caregiver regarding their child's behavior and cooperate in efforts to bring about improvement in the situation.

Children's Expectations of the Program

Children may expect:

1. To have a safe, supportive and consistent environment that adheres to the Christian principles and practices fostered in the regular school programs.
2. To use all the Program equipment, materials and facilities on an equal basis.
3. To receive respectful treatment.
4. To have discipline that is fair and non-punitive.
5. To receive nurturing care from staff member who are actively involved with them.

Program's Expectations of the Children

The Program expects that the children will:

1. Be responsible for their actions.
2. Respect the school rules and Christian practices that guide them during the day and while at the Program.
3. Remain with the group and Caregiver at all times.
4. Take care of materials and equipment properly and return them to their place when done, or before taking out new ones.

Fees and Payment Policy

The Program salaries, supplies and administrative expenses are primarily supported by parent fees. Christ the Redeemer Catholic Separate Regional Division No. 3 provides the Program with space, utilities, and custodial services. A fee schedule is determined at the beginning of each year.

1. The monthly fee is \$150.00.
2. In September, parents are required to pay by automatic monthly withdrawals or post-dated cheques .
3. "Non-sufficient fund" cheques are held until cash or a money order is received by the Program to cover the amount of the cheque. Parents will be notified immediately upon receipt of the NSF notice by the program and shall have two school days in which to pay the charge and tuition fee in full by cash or equivalent.
4. If all of the child's required enrollment forms are not completed and returned to the school by the day the child is scheduled to start the Program, the child will not be allowed to attend until these completed forms are submitted to the Caregiver.

Registration and Enrollment

Registration

The parent must complete the registration form below and submit it to the School Principal or designate. Children who cannot be immediately enrolled will be placed on a waiting list.

Eligibility

Children must be 4 years of age by December 31 of the registration year.

Openings

Openings are determined on the basis of the number of full time equivalents (FTEs) permitted by the program's license. When openings occur, parents of registered children are contacted for enrollment on the basis of a first-come basis for the time slot according to the date of registration.

Enrollment

1. Parents will be provided with a set of enrollment forms for each child. All forms must be completed and returned to the office staff at Sacred Heart Academy before the child's first day of attendance.
2. A \$50.00 dollar registration fee will be payable when you formally register at Sacred Heart Academy, 709A – 2nd Street, Strathmore, AB.
3. Children will be allowed to attend the program only after all forms have been completed and returned, and payment has been submitted.
4. If the parent has not submitted completed forms or payment on the date when the child is scheduled to start attending, the parent will be responsible for payment of the tuition fee to reserve the enrollment spot until the completed forms and payment are returned.

Enrollment Forms

Parents will be asked to complete the following:

- ✓ Registration Forms
- ✓ Medication Authorization
- ✓ Travel Authorization
- ✓ Emergency Medication – if required

The Program expects the forms to be kept current. The parent must provide new information to the Supervisor regarding information on forms such as: emergency persons, names, employers, phone numbers, and arrival/departure changes.

Hours of Operation and Closing Time

The Program times are *8:25 am – 11:20 am and 12:10 – 3:10 pm.*

Children will typically remain in the same room for the Pre-Kindergarten Program.

Absences

If your child will not be attending the Program because of scheduled appointments, vacations, or other planned absences, please notify the Caregiver in advance. If your child is ill please advise the school. Absentees without prior notification may be mistaken for a missing child and unnecessary concern and time spent in searching for the child may occur.

Release of Children

Children will leave the Program according to the schedule written by parents on the Arrival/Departure Procedures Form. Children will be allowed to leave with persons other than the parent only if written permission has been given to the Caregiver on the enrollment form or in writing by the parent. If a one-time exception is made to this schedule, the parents should provide the Caregiver with a completed Exception to Arrival/Departure Procedures Form prior to the date.

If your child attends extracurricular activities or has any other kind of arrival/departure time change within the period he/she is enrolled in the Program, you must provide Caregiver with a completed Change of Arrival/Departure Procedures Form, prior to the date the change is effective.

Scheduled & Unscheduled No-School, School Opening Delays and School Closing

1. **Scheduled No-School Days** - The Program will notify parents at the beginning of the school year of scheduled no-school days such as conference days and teacher professional development days. No Pre-Kindergarten will be provided on these days.
2. **Unscheduled No-School Days** - There will be no Program on days when school is canceled due to water main breaks, heating failure, electrical problems, weather, etc.
3. **Unscheduled School Delays** - The Program will not be open if school is delayed due to water main breaks, heating failure, electrical problems, weather, etc.
4. **Scheduled Early Dismissal Days** - The Program will notify parents at the beginning of the school year of scheduled early dismissal days, on which there will be no Pre-Kindergarten Program.
5. **Unscheduled Early Dismissal Days** - The Program is not available when school is dismissed early due to water, heating, electrical problems, weather, etc.

Snacks

Morning snack is served in our program.

Parents will complete a form asking them to identify food allergies or any special diets. A list of the special food needs of individual children supplied to parents.

Visitors and Observations

Parents and community members are welcome to observe at the Program, but are requested to first check in with the Supervisor. Guests from the community may be invited to participate in the Program during special events and activities.

Child's Personal Property

Children's personal property, coats, clothing, school bags, etc. must be cleared from the child care room after each session of the program. Any personal property which remains after the session will be placed in our "Lost and Found" box. Although the Program attempts to help children stay organized, the Program cannot be responsible for lost personal property.

Children should not bring money, toys, food or other items not necessary for school activities to the program without checking with the Caregiver.

Field Trips

From time to time during the year, the children may go on field trips into the community. Parents will be notified at the beginning of the month of the date and time of such field trip experiences, and must sign a permission form to allow their child(ren) to participate. The staff will complete a Field Trip Form including the purpose and proposed activities for the Field Trip, and submit it to the School Principal. The children will be transported by school bus or will walk to the place of destination. *Transportation in personal cars is not permitted*, unless under extraordinary circumstances.

Insurance

The Program carries liability insurance through its agreement with Christ the Redeemer School District No. 3. Families are also encouraged to provide their own insurance coverage. School students may sign up for accident insurance in the fall of each year. Parents who wish to enroll should check with the school office.

Distribution of Medication

Whenever a child is to be given emergency medication, the parent must provide the program Caregiver with a completed, signed medication authorization form. The medication must be provided in the original or duplicate container, or a container accompanied by the doctor's directions.

If medication is to be kept at the Program for treatment of a chronic condition, no more than a one month supply should remain at the Program at any time.

Child Illness Policies

Please ensure we can reach you or a contact person at all times. It is the responsibility of the parents to ensure prompt attention to their children's needs.

Our Program requires that the following symptoms will be reason for a child to be absent for a period of at least 24 hours. We recognize some opinions may differ, but this is a firm policy.

1. Temperature of over 100 degrees.
2. Conjunctivitis, which is an eye infection commonly referred to as "pink eye". The eye is generally red with some burning and drainage from the eye.
3. Bronchitis. This can begin with hoarseness, cough, and a slight elevation in temperature. The cough may be dry and painful, but it gradually becomes productive.
4. Rashes that you cannot identify or that have not been diagnosed by a doctor.

5. Impetigo of the skin - shows up as red pimples. These eventually become small vesicles surrounded by a reddened area. When the blister breaks, the surface is raw and weeping. The lesions occur in moist areas of the body.
 6. Diarrhea which is watery or greenish bowel movements that look different and are much more frequent than usual.
 7. Vomiting.
 8. Severe cold with fever, sneezing, and nose drainage.
 9. With contagious diseases, a child must be absent from the Program for the length of time that covers the contagious and recovering periods. This will vary with the type of illness contracted.
- In some cases, we may require verification from a doctor to allow your child to return to the Program.

Health and Safety Policy

If your child has a known medical condition (asthma, diabetes, seizure disorder, etc.) please be sure the Caregiver knows what to do if a problem should occur during Program hours. Please supply the program with a personal health plan, if required. Please make sure that any medication is available and that the appropriate forms for its use have been completed.

If your child has any one of the following conditions, the parent will be notified to pick up the child immediately: **Contagious Disease, Fever over 100 F, Vomiting or Diarrhea, Accident Requiring Medical Attention.**

In case of accident or illness, parents of the child will be called immediately. In serious cases, the child will be taken to one of the local hospitals by emergency vehicle for treatment and the parents will be called as soon as possible.

Outdoor play will not be allowed when the temperature falls below -20 degrees C. The caregivers will use their discretion about allowing children to go outdoors when high wind chills, heat, rain, or snowy conditions prevail.

In the case of emergency, 911 will be called.

The Caregiver will make every effort to keep a child from getting into a car with a parent under the influence of drugs or alcohol. The Caregiver should call the police to give the child and parent a ride home. The Caregiver should not under any circumstances give transportation to a parent who appears to be impaired by drugs or alcohol because the Program insurance does not cover transportation related to the Program.

The Program's license requires caregivers to report suspected cases of child abuse. This includes the reporting of parents who appear to be impaired by drugs or alcohol.

Discipline Policy

Children are entitled to a pleasant and harmonious environment at the Program. This environment will promote a constructive approach to guiding behavior in which the children are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and to demonstrate socially acceptable behavior. Disciplinary action will be reasonable in the circumstances. Discipline procedures will be established to:

- ✓ keep the children safe - from physical and emotional harm from other children,
- ✓ keep the facility safe - from abuse or misuse by the children,
- ✓ teach the children self-discipline, self-control, and problem solving behavior.

The Program will stress methods that prevent misbehavior, such as:

- ✓ developing a stimulating program plan,
- ✓ providing a supportive environment,
- ✓ interacting personally and individually with children,
- ✓ balancing flexibility and consistency, and
- ✓ modeling problem solving behaviors for the children.

Caregivers will use the following developmentally appropriate guidance strategies in their interactions with children:

- ✓ positive reinforcement,
- ✓ active listening,
- ✓ negotiating,
- ✓ setting limits, e.g. giving information, suggesting choices, providing contingencies, consequences, and warnings, and
- ✓ withdrawing privileges.

Caregivers will initially guide behavior by using the least directive strategies and will use increasingly greater adult intervention in order to gain student compliance when the situation warrants these discipline methods.

The Pre-Kindergarten Program cannot serve children who display chronically disruptive behavior. Chronically disruptive behavior is defined as verbal or physical activity which may include, but is not limited, to such behavior that: requires constant attention from the staff, inflicts physical or emotional harm on other children, abuses the staff, ignores or disobeys the rules which guide behavior during the Program time. If a child cannot adjust to the Program setting and behave appropriately, then the parents may be asked to withdraw the child from the program.

There will be regular supervision visits from the School Principal and periodic meetings between the Caregiver, parents and appropriate school administration. These meetings will include discussions about the behavior of individual children and the management of the overall program. Feedback from parents will be solicited to determine their satisfaction with the implementation of the discipline policies in the Pre-Kindergarten Program. The child discipline policy will be communicated to parents at the Parent Information Night and in the Parent Handbook, staff will read the program plan and children will review policies as classroom rules.

Parental Involvement

All parents will be invited to be involved in the program in whatever ways they feel they are best able to serve the program and its children. A Pre-Kindergarten Group may be formed to act as an advisory committee.

Parents will be encouraged to participate in any of the following ways:

- ✓ volunteering in the program
- ✓ collecting materials for children's projects
- ✓ attending workshops/presentations
- ✓ helping with field trips and/or resource guest visitors
- ✓ showing ongoing interest in the children's projects
- ✓ keeping abreast of activities by reading the newsletter and regularly communicating with the caregiver

Parents are welcome to drop in to the program anytime and may attend any events happening in the Program.

Parents are kept informed of what is happening in the Centre in the following ways:

1. Monthly Newsletter and Calendar - presents a calendar of events as well as information of special interest to your family.
2. Bulletin Areas - display information, workshops, and children's art work.
3. Excursion Notices - notification of off-ground field trips.
4. Day-to-day contact with staff during arrival and departure.
5. Interviews with Staff Members - parents can request a meeting at any time to discuss their child's progress or any concerns they may have.