

Bright Beginnings

COMMUNITY PRESCHOOL

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(Enter at the back of the building)

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PARENT HANDBOOK

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Philosophy

The primary purpose of a Community Preschool is to aid in the development of the child; socially, emotionally, physically, cognitively and intellectually. **Children learn through play** and with age appropriate activities we aim to achieve the following goals:

Social

- to be responsible for one's own belongings
- to be cooperative and to share with others
- to be courteous, prompt, friendly and helpful
- to have healthy attitudes towards others
- to help the child find resolution for conflict

Emotional

- to express feelings in a socially acceptable manner
- to adjust to and be happy in a group away from home
- to overcome shyness and make new friends
- to control temper and tears
- to have a feeling of self-worth and competency
- to cope with feelings of jealousy, anger, etc.
- to take risks

Physical

- to develop large muscle control through games, creative movement, and use of apparatus
- to develop small muscle control through manipulative and coordination activities
- to establish desirable health habits

Cognitive

- to increase awareness of their environment and the people around them

Intellectual

- to develop language and listening skills
- to be able to think for oneself and to share ideas in a group
- to develop curiosity, creativity and imagination
- empowerment to make choices

Values and Goals

Bright Beginnings Community Preschool believes in the **importance of play, being outdoors and being part of the community.**

Here are a few ways they want to implement our philosophy:

- Allowing children to learn through play.
- Maintain a safe, supportive and stimulating environment.
- Respect children's uniqueness and recognize & celebrate their individual differences.
- Development of an environment that says "YES" to exploring and experimenting.
- Discovering, having fun with friends and being a child.
- Emphasis on the "process" rather than the "product."
- Use of positive language.
- Model empathy and compassion.
- Encourage children to take risks.
- Help children make a balance of choices.
- Keep a sense of humour and create laughter.
- Provide a "child-centered program" which evolves from the interests of the children, as well as successfully planned and implemented units.
- Cultivate a curriculum which is developed and revised to ensure a variety of developmentally appropriate experiences for children.

Curriculum and Schedule

- dramatic play- music- fine motor play
- block play- science/math- outdoor play
- gross motor skill building- pre-writing- free expression and planned art
- literature and pre-reading- group time
- small group learning activities- field trips/community exploring

CLASS SCHEDULE

Tuesday/Thursday AM - 8:45-11:15 AM

Monday/Wednesday/Friday AM - 8:30-11:30 AM

Monday-Thursday PM - 12:30-3:30 PM

DAILY ROUTINE

Our daily routine is as follows: Free play, group activity, circle time, snack, story time, outdoor or inside gross motor activities

This schedule is a general plan but is very flexible. Changes are made for special circumstances such as field trips, visitors, outside play, class projects and the general feeling of the class.

FIELD TRIPS

We try to go on one field trip per month to places such as the Salvation Army, the Fire Hall, Police Station, Fernie Public Library, Post Office, grocery store, Isabella Dicken Elementary School, Fernie Secondary School, the Arts Station, Trinity Lodge, the Water Park, the Ambulance Station, climbing wall and playgrounds (weather permitting). We also get visits from the Firefighters, Police Officers, a Yoga Instructor and Dental Hygienist, and of course Santa! Our field trips and visitors may change from year to year.

BIRTHDAYS

We will recognize birthdays during the school year with a song and you are welcome to bring in a special snack to share on this day. We will celebrate summer birthdays at our "Un-Birthday" party for ALL the children, towards the end of the school year. If your child is having a party and wants to invite someone from the school, we suggest you hand out the invitations to the parents before or after the class to avoid hurt feelings or lost invitations.

SCHEDULED HOLIDAYS

Preschool will be closed on all statutory holidays, 2 weeks at Christmas, 2 weeks at Spring Break. There may also be closures due to unforeseen circumstances and emergencies.

CLASS PHOTOS

Class photos will be taken each year and available for parents to purchase.

Administration

ADMISSIONS AND WITHDRAWALS

Only children who are toilet trained are eligible for admission into the preschool. In case of an accident with a toilet-trained child, the parent will be phoned to come in and change their child. If this becomes a frequent occurrence, the parents will be notified regarding the toilet training requirements. In certain circumstances this policy may be modified based on a child's development. If your child has special needs, please discuss with a teacher.

Parents are required to complete **all necessary enrolment forms** before their child is left at the preschool due to licensing regulations.

Children aged 2.5 years may attend, as long as they are turning 3 years old before December 31st of that year.

If for whatever reason, the preschool is no longer appropriate for your child, we require one month's notice before withdrawing your child. Your deposit of June's prepaid tuition will be kept in lieu of notice.

If you would like to pre-register your child we require a non-refundable \$50 deposit. 1/2 of the deposit goes towards your first month's enrollment fee.

FEES

Our yearly operating costs are averaged into ten equal payments so that even "shorter" months require the same fee. If your child is away due to illness, vacation etc. you are still required to pay for your child for that time frame. Our fee schedule is set up before September, based on our budget for current enrollment.

- The 2 days a week class (Tuesday/Thursday AM) will be \$127.00 per month.
- The 3 days a week class (Monday/Wednesday/Friday AM) will be \$220.00 per month.
- The 4 days a week class (Monday-Thursday PM) will be \$271.00 per month.

June's fee is required to be paid with your September fee as a deposit (so come June there will be no further payment). We will collect 9 post-dated checks at our Annual General Meeting (AGM) in September. (As June's fee is included on September's cheque). They must be dated the first of each month from September through May, unless you choose to pay monthly with an e-transfer. Annual or semi-annual payment may also be made in full by cash, check or e-

transfer if preferred (see below). Any other financing arrangements may be discussed with the Treasurer. Please speak with a teacher or treasurer if childcare subsidy is needed.

E-TRANSFER

If you choose to use e-transfer to make payments, please note the following details:

- Email address is brightbeginningstreasurer@gmail.com
- the answer to the security question = **fernie**

NSF CHEQUES

As the preschool is a non-profit society, there will be a \$10 charge on all NSF cheques. Immediate notice will be given when a cheque is returned unpaid. A new cheque is required plus \$10 charge, which must be received within seven days. Failure to reply will result in your child not being able to continue coming to class. If there is more than one NSF cheque in a year, all further payments must be made by cash or certified cheques.

LATE PAYMENT

- Fees need to be paid by the 1st of each month
- A \$25 late fee will be charged if you have not paid by the 5th of the month
- If you have not paid by the 15th of the month, your child will no longer be able to attend class
- If you are late to collect your child, there is a late pick-up fee you will be charged. Please see the Attendance section of the handbook for more details.

Affordable Child Care Benefit

You are encouraged to apply for the Affordable Child Care Benefit – a new program offered by the BC government started in 2018. How it Works:

Go online to gov.bc.ca/affordablechildcarebenefit

Use the online tool to determine if you are eligible for the program.

If yes, then fill out the online forms and submit them. We have already filled out a Child Care Arrangement form for you and enclosed it in the registration package – you will need to complete it and scan it to include with your online submission.

If your application is accepted you will receive a letter informing you of the monthly amount that the preschool is eligible to receive on your child's behalf. We will receive the same letter.

If you need help with completing the application for the Affordable Child Care Benefit please do not hesitate to contact the Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy. They have computers on site and can walk you through the process.

For local help with the application, just contact:

Elk Valley Community Literacy Coordinator

Chrissy Hill

250-946-7257

elkvalleycoordinator@cbal.org

CBAL Office:

A-402 Hwy 3, Fernie

Monday - Thursday 9 am - 12 pm & 12:30 pm - 3 pm

Friday 9 am - 12:00 pm

The BC government must receive your complete application BEFORE they issue payments so APPLY EARLY to make sure that you are covered for the full school year. There are no retroactive payments – so if you wait until November to apply you will not receive funds for September nor October.

Once we receive the letter stating that your child is eligible for a specific amount each month, then we are able to only charge you the difference.

UNTIL WE RECEIVE A LETTER STATING THAT YOUR BENEFIT IS APPROVED, YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FULL AMOUNT OF MONTHLY TUITION.

As we do not administer the Affordable Child Care Benefit we cannot advise you on how your application is being processed. Please contact the Child Care Service Centre directly with your questions at toll-free: 1-888-338-6622 between 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, Monday to Friday Pacific Standard Time.

APPLY EARLY to ensure that your **Affordable Child Care Benefit** is in place **BEFORE** registration in **September**.

What to Bring to Preschool

IN THE BACKPACK

Your child needs to bring a backpack to each class containing a **change of clothing**. **Please keep in mind the size and weight of the backpack**. **On our outings, the children carry their own belongings**. Please do not send toys from home, they often get misplaced or cause conflict.

Children should be in comfortable weather appropriate clothing for both inside and outside play. Remember hats, mittens, boots etc. We encourage self-help skills, so please send articles that are age appropriate. Keep in mind the children are active with their art projects and they tend to get messy, please send them in play clothes!

Please leave a pair of white-soled **Velcro-closing or slip-on runners** at the preschool, labeled with their name. No laces please!

SUNSCREEN

It is the responsibility of the parent to apply sunscreen on their child before leaving them at the preschool. This gives the sunscreen time to work and it makes sure no one is "overlooked".

SNACKS

WE ARE A NUT FREE FACILITY

Please check the contents on granola bars etc. Children bring their own nutritious snack each day. Healthy snacks = healthy bodies and minds! Please use re-usable containers, labeled with your child's name, instead of saran wrap. As for drinks, we strongly encourage a water bottle with water only (Please no juice or milk). Many times, we take our bottles outside and on field trips and water is much easier to clean up and refill.

Once a month we will have a snack sharing day and will ask three children to bring enough for the entire class. The teachers will keep track of who has shared and will notify parents when it is their child's turn.

Attendance

PHONE USE

The preschool phone number is **1-778-519-5288** (this is a landline) and is published in the yellow pages under Preschools. We would greatly appreciate a phone call (**not a text message**) if your child is going to be late or absent for the day.

Please **do not** rely on Facebook messaging or emailing the Preschool to get a message to the teachers – please call and leave a voicemail message.

Care and Respect

GUIDING AND CARING

- “With care and respect” describes the guidance and discipline techniques that we use at Bright Beginnings Preschool.
- We will be available when needed by the children; we will listen to and hear what the children are saying.
- We believe that children need to have clear, consistent limits. We will ensure that children know what behaviours are acceptable and why they are important. Limits will be phrased in a positive way, focusing on what the child needs to do rather than what they should not do.
- Providing choices for children most often avoids power struggles. Choices will only be given when a choice exists.
- Children react more favourably when they are offered warnings to help them prepare for change. Instead of expecting immediate results, children will be given time to respond. Positive reinforcement helps children repeat desired behaviour, focusing on the behaviour, not the child.
- At all times children will be made to feel safe, secure and important.

DISCIPLINE

Our program will help children learn to work through and handle social situations. To assist in this development, we will guide behaviour where necessary during class time. This guidance policy focuses on helping children to understand their own behaviour, to consider others’ rights and feelings, and to learn alternative approaches to resolving conflicts.

When certain situations arise, there are a variety of strategies that we use:

Remind - child will be reminded of appropriate behaviour in a positive way.

Redirection - sometimes a child’s activity needs to be redirected towards another that is in line with their needs.

Model Problem Solving - occasionally an adult is required to step in and offer assistance in choosing possible solutions to the problem.

Offer Appropriate Choices - when reinforcing limits, the adult can offer alternate choices to the child.

Time Away - children can determine where they would like to spend some time to feel better and gain control of their physical and emotional state. They will be invited to rejoin the group again when they are ready.

If a child has a difficult day, we will let the parent know. If there are ongoing concerns, we will meet with the parents to come up with possible solutions. We will respect each child's feelings and uniqueness to help them become a happy, healthy, independent individual.

If Bright Beginnings has a behavior issue with a parent or a child, a letter will be sent to the parents outlining the issue and the expected corrective actions. If the behavior does not change/improve, the child will no longer be allowed to attend the preschool.

Communication

(PLEASE MAKE SURE WE HAVE YOUR CURRENT EMAIL ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBERS)

CALENDAR

A monthly calendar is sent out by the teacher to all families. This calendar will contain special dates to remember, classroom events, special requests and theme building activities that will be taking place in the school. Please make a point of checking this daily. **Outside the preschool door is a white board with reminders and pick-up locations. Please check this daily.**

PHONE

The teachers can be contacted at 1-778-519-5288 (This is a LANDLINE so please do not text it.)
TIP: add our number to your cell phone so you know when we've called you.
You may also **text** the teachers; please ask for their cell numbers.

FACEBOOK

Please DO NOT use Facebook to contact us with any important information. We do NOT check Facebook during class time.

You can find us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/brightbeginningsferniece

Our teachers have a private account where we post daily photos of our activities and adventures. Look for StaceyJenna Preschool

PARENT CONCERNS

Concerns raised by parents or guardians involving their child's classroom experience should be resolved as quickly as possible. **Parents/guardians are urged to discuss their concerns directly with the Teachers when the concern surfaces.** Please talk to the Teachers or call to set up a time to meet after school hours. If the concern is not resolved at this level, the parent/guardian should then discuss the matter with the Board President. Matters involving fees are dealt with the Board Treasurer and fundraising concerns are dealt with by the Board Fundraiser.

CONFIDENTIALITY

This policy is very important. Whatever happens at the preschool is kept confidential. This applies to children, parents, teachers and board members.

Health and Safety

Bright Beginnings Preschool is a NUT and PEANUT FREE Zone

ILLNESS

We need to be aware of any physically limiting or potentially life-threatening conditions which may cause your child harm if handled improperly.

Observable symptoms: If your child has any of the following observable symptoms, he/she should not come to preschool:

- diarrhea-severe coughing
- difficult or rapid breathing-yellowish skin or eyes
- pink eye-unusual spots or rashes
- sore throat or trouble swallowing-infected skin patch
- unusually coloured urine or stool- headache or stiff neck
- vomiting in the last 24 hours-loss of appetite
- severe itching of body or scalp-temperature of 99 degrees or above
- severe nasal/sinus congestion-bright green or yellow mucous

The teachers can refuse to accept a child deemed too sick to attend. When a child becomes ill at the preschool, the teachers will notify the parent. If, for whatever reason, we cannot reach the parent, the emergency person will be called. The teachers will make the child as comfortable as possible, but cannot administer medication. Parents are expected to pick up the sick child from the preschool as soon as possible.

INJURIES

All teachers are required to hold a current St. John's Ambulance First Aid Certificate and an up-to-date first aid kit is on site, and will be carried on all field trips.

MEDICATION

The staff will not administer medication whether it is a prescription or not. In the case of an emergency, where prompt administration may save a life, the staff will use an epi-pen, asthma inhaler, or diabetic insulin, only if the parents have properly instructed them.

SMOKING - Smoking is prohibited on school grounds.

FIRE DRILL/ GAS LEAK EVACUATIONS

Regular fire drills/gas leak drills are held monthly. Emergency procedures are posted at both exits. In case of an actual fire or emergency, children will be evacuated to Isabella Dicken Elementary School on Second Avenue. Teachers will carry their personal cell phone at all times and if evacuated will contact parents as soon as possible.

Parent Involvement and Opportunities

FUNDRAISING

Through the direct efforts of parents we fundraise \$3000 - \$10,000 annually! This money is essential to the preschool - it helps us maintain toys, supplies, and equipment as well as attend special events and bring in special visitors. In the past our efforts have included silent auctions, bottle recycling, special events and workshops, letter writing and community grant applications. New energy and ideas are always welcome! Please contact the fundraising coordinator to be involved.

All families are encouraged to take this opportunity to go above and beyond, get out there and really embrace education in our small community. Thank you in advance for showing up, giving generously and getting dirty (when required)!

For those unable to participate in fundraising opportunities a FUNDRAISING OPT OUT FEE of \$100 per child is available to you.

BOARD POSITIONS/MEETINGS

As a non-profit preschool, we rely on community volunteers who are interested in donating some of their time to ensure the high-quality programming at our facility. Each school year we require the following positions to be filled: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Fundraiser and class representatives. Available positions must be filled by our AGM in September.

Monthly board meetings are about 1 hour in length and are usually held at the preschool.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

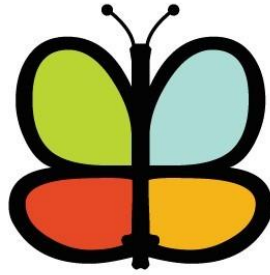
A schedule for washing laundry, washing dishes and making play dough will be posted on the Parent Information Board. The laundry soap and play dough ingredients will be supplied by the preschool, just pick everything up and return it on your child's next day. Thank you so much!

SPECIAL TALENTS/SKILLS

If parents have any special talents or work-related skills they would like to share, we would LOVE to have you! If you play guitar, teach martial arts, yoga, have an art idea, sing, ANYTHING! Let us know!

**Thank you for choosing BRIGHT BEGINNINGS
PRESCHOOL.**

We look forward to an exciting year!



Bright Beginnings

COMMUNITY PRESCHOOL

Preschool Registration Checklist

Please bring the items listed below with you to the AGM in September

_____ Post Dated Cheques - dated the 1st of each month (Sept – May)
(Please include June's fee on your September cheque as a deposit)

_____ Child's Personal Information Form

_____ 3 Current Photos of your child

_____ Photocopy of your child's birth certificate

**If your child attended Bright Beginnings last year and the school already has a copy of your child's birth certificate an additional copy is not required. **

IF ANY OF THESE ITEMS ARE MISSING YOUR CHILD CANNOT ATTEND CLASSES, AS THIS IS A LICENSING REQUIREMENT.