



# Preschool Parent Handbook & Policy Manual 2016-2017

**ÉCOLE J.H. SISSONS: 873-3477**

**MILDRED HALL SCHOOL: 873-5811**

**RANGE LAKE NORTH SCHOOL: 920-7567**



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## **Educational Philosophy**

YK1 aims to provide children with a happy and healthy learning environment that helps preschoolers transition from early childhood to kindergarten readiness.

Our goal is to prepare children for kindergarten by supporting their developmental growth within an environment that familiarizes them with school routines and staff. Through a mix of guided and self-directed activities preschoolers will have opportunities to skill build in the five areas of early development:

- Physical Development: Active play, healthy snacks, and fine motor crafts and activities
- Social Development: Learning to get along with others through group activities.
- Emotional Development: Learning to recognize and manage feelings
- Cognitive Development: Learning new things and strategies to problem solve.
- Communication: Learning how to understand and to be understood by others

We aim to provide these opportunities within a context that is reflective of the diverse needs and realities of children in the North while fostering:

- Self-reliance
- Responsibility
- Respect
- Generosity
- Wisdom

Each of the YK1 Preschool Programs explores these themes and opportunities in a way that is consistent with the school's culture.

## **Special Focus Schools**

- **École J.H. Sissons School**

This French Immersion School provides preschool children, who will be 4 years old by December 31, 2016, the opportunity to enjoy a bilingual experience and gain early exposure to French as a second language. This program will help children to develop French language proficiency through healthy, stimulating and fun activities in a safe environment.

- **Mildred Hall School**

This program incorporates a strong focus on Northern and Indigenous cultural identity and values. The school strives to provide a nurturing and holistic approach to education and stresses the importance of inclusivity and community membership.

## **Preschool Calendar 2016-2017**

All YK1 preschools follow the YK1 school calendar. The first day of pre-school begins when the YK 1 students return to school. Preschools are open normal hours during the regular school SIP and Professional Development days for teachers. Please check the YK1 school year calendar 2016-2017 for Christmas, Spring and other holidays when preschool will be closed.

## **Class Grouping**

In accordance with the Child Day Care Regulation:

- All children must be four years old by December 31, 2016
- Maximum of 18 children per class with a child to adult ratio of 9 to 1

## **Daily Schedule and Sample of Our Routine**

We believe that children respond best when they know what to expect and what is expected of them. We recognize that our programs serve to familiarize children with school routines. Our programs maintain routines that are predictable but feature activities that are flexible and somewhat child directed. The routine may vary according to the needs of the children, special events, the time of year, the weather and special projects or activities. What follows is a sample only.

- **8:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. Child Drop off**

Children must be signed in by a parent or authorized person. Children begin their day with

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supervised free play.

- **8:30 a.m. – 8:45 a.m. Circle Time**  
Children transition from free play into a guided “Circle Time” activity on the carpet. During Circle Time children will learn about the weather, days of the week, numbers, letters, listen to stories, sing songs and have time to share information with others.
- **8:45 a.m. – 9:45 a.m. Centers**  
Children are able to choose from a variety of activities set out by the teacher. These activities include: art, modeling, dramatic play, puzzles, floor toys, books, and science centers.
- **9:45 a.m. – 9:50 a.m. Clean-Up & Hand Washing**  
In preparation for snack, children are guided through cleaning up their activity, and then move to hand washing and retrieving their morning snack.
- **9:50 a.m. – 10:05 a.m. Snack & Book Time**  
Children sit and eat together during snack time, and those that finish early are able to tidy up after snack and move to the reading area until their friends join them.
- **10: 05 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. Prepare for Outside Play or Gym Time:**  
Children will transition to getting ready for outside play, unless environmental conditions exceed those determined by YK1.
- **10:15 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Outside Play or Gym Time**  
Morning physical activity will occur outside unless temperature or other environmental conditions exceed the criteria set by YK1. Please ensure that children are equipped with appropriate outdoor clothing. On days that children stay inside, opportunity for physical activity will occur in the gym.
- **10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Centers**  
Children are able to choose from a variety of activities set out by the teacher. These activities include: art, modeling, dramatic play, puzzles, floor toys, books, and science center.
- **11:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. Circle Time & Morning Student Departure:**  
This is a teacher directed activity on the carpet. Preschool students who are registered for part time morning spaces will have an opportunity to say goodbye to their friends and transition into getting ready for pick up. Students being picked up must be signed out by their parent or other authorized person. Children will learn about the weather, days of the week, numbers, letters, listen to stories, sing songs and have time to share information with others.
- **11:45 a.m. Lunch Time**  
Full time students will get ready and enjoy lunch.
- **12:10 p.m. – 12:20 p.m. Prep Time**  
Clean up lunch, brushing teeth and preparing for relax time

- **12:20 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. Rest Time**  
Children are able to rest on their cot or engage in a quiet relaxing activity.
- **1:00 p.m. – 1:50 p.m. Centers**  
Children are able to choose from a variety of activities set out by the teacher. These activities include art, modeling, dramatic play, puzzles, floor toys, books, and science center.
- **1:50 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. Prepare for Outside Play or Gym time**  
Children will transition to getting ready for outside play, unless environmental conditions exceed those determined by YK1.
- **2:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m. Outside Play or Gym**  
Afternoon physical activity will occur outside unless temperature or other environmental conditions exceed the criteria set by YK1. Please ensure that children are equipped with appropriate outdoor clothing. On days that children stay inside, opportunity for physical activity will occur in the gym.
- **2:15 p.m. – 2:20 p.m. Clean-up and Hand Washing**  
In preparation for snack, children are guided through cleaning up their activity, and then move to hand washing and retrieving their morning snack.
- **2:20 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. Snack and Book Time**  
Children will be provided time to sit at the table and eat with their friends. Those who finish early will have the opportunity to spend time looking at books.
- **2:30 p.m. – 3:25 p.m. Circle Time**  
This is a teacher directed activity on the carpet. Afternoon closing Circle will provide children an opportunity to learn about the weather, days of the week, numbers, letters, listen to stories, sing songs and have time to share information with others while readying themselves for pick up.
- **3:30 p.m. Home Time**  
Students not registered in the preschool's after-school care will be picked up and signed out by their parent or other authorized person.
- **3:30 p.m. -5:00 p.m. After-School Programming**  
Many of our preschools offer additional care following the regular school day. Children who remain at the program following the regular day are provided with supervised free play time.

*This activity schedule is a sample only.*

## **Program Design**

The preschool is a theme based program set out by the preschool teacher. The themes will revolve around the seasons, special events, children's interests or basic concepts.

We are open to change and enjoy finding out what interests the children, so all themes are flexible. If you or your child has a theme that could be added, please let the teacher know.

Some examples of activity themes which could take place:

- Family and Friends
- Health and Nutrition
- Safety
- Multiculturalism
- Transportation
- Bugs
- Kindergarten readiness:
- colours
- numbers
- letters
- shapes
- Seasons
- Easter
- Valentine's Day
- Mother's Day
- Father's Day
- Indigenous Culture

\*This is only a guideline for the program. We may cover more or less themes depending on the interest of the children.

Activities are modified to the extent possible so each child may participate. If a child requires specialized equipment to facilitate their participation, parents may be asked to provide it.

### **Health, Safety and Nutrition**

YK1 is committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment to all students.

#### **Nutrition**

Parents are asked to send nutritious snacks daily with their child and lunches for full-time pupils. Children also have access to the water fountain. **Parents should also be aware that due to peanut allergies it may be necessary to remove peanuts, other nuts, and products containing peanuts from your child's snacks and lunch.** Children are not permitted to come to school with pop, chips or candy in their lunches or snacks.

### **Student Health and Illness Policy**

It is the responsibility of the parent to provide in writing any information related to chronic health conditions or food allergies. They are also required to inform the school in writing of any medical, physical, developmental or emotional condition relevant to the child's care.

Government regulations do not permit children to attend preschool if ill. Children should be kept at or taken home if suffering from one or more of the following conditions:

- Pain - any complaints of unexplained or undiagnosed pain
- An acute cold with fever, runny nose and eyes, coughing and sore throat. Once temperature, well-being and energy are normal, coughing and runny nose may continue (depending on the suspect illness) without the child being contagious and the child may return to the facility. If symptoms are caused by a known allergic reaction, then the child is not contagious and may attend.
- Difficulty breathing, wheezing or a persistent cough.
- Fever (100 degrees F or 38 degrees C or more) accompanied by general symptoms such as listlessness, sore throat or trouble swallowing, infected skin or eyes or an undiagnosed rash, headache and stiff neck, unexplained diarrhea, or loose stool, combined with nausea, vomiting or abdominal cramps, or severe itching of body and scalp.
- Children with known or suspected communicable diseases.

Should a child develop any of the above symptoms, staff will contact parents/guardians and request they pick up the child. If parents/guardians cannot be reached, the emergency contact person listed on their registration form will be contacted. If they are not reached, staff may call the hospital.

Should a child become sick with a contagious disease, parent/guardians must notify the preschool within 24 hours so the staff can inform other families and Public Health. The sick child should have a doctor's approval in writing before returning to the preschool in the case where the illness was a contagious disease.

Ultimately the care of the child is the parent's responsibility.

### **Medication**

Should it become necessary for your child to be given medication at the preschool, parents must adhere to the following guidelines:

If your child requires any medication to be administered during school hours, whether prescription or over the counter, such as Tylenol or Aspirin, the medication must be accompanied with the appropriate completed medical form, and in its original container identifying the medicine, the child's name, doctor's name and dosage.

There are two different forms, one being for prescription medication, which requires completion by the family doctor and one being for non-prescription drugs which requires completion by the

parent or guardian. These forms are available from the preschool teacher.

### **Immunization**

Every child must have an immunization record from Public Health. The record should be updated when additional shots are given. If a child is not being immunized for religious, medical or conscience reasons, parents must provide written documentation.

### **Fire Drills**

Fire drills will occur on a monthly basis in accordance with Child Day Care Regulations. Children should be equipped with indoor and outdoor shoes. Each school holds fire drills and follows procedures approved by the local fire department. A record is kept of the date, time and number of children participating. Each staff member is familiar with this procedure and has specific instructions for moving the children safely out of the building. The procedures are posted.

### **Arrival and Departure Process**

Parents/guardians must be in control of their child during arrivals and departures. Parents/guardians must sign their child into the program upon arrival, and sign him or her out upon departure. During departures, children must be supervised and are not to leave the preschool until their parent/guardian leaves as well. Children must be supervised at all times.

### **Releasing Children to Authorized Persons**

Parent/s or guardian/s should inform the school authority of any person that is authorized or not authorized to pick up their child. A copy of any court order or custody agreement which restricts or prohibits a person from exercising access to the child or picking up the child should be provided to the school.

### **Suspected Child Abuse**

In compliance with the Child Day Care Act (2012), any staff member who has reasonable grounds to suspect a child has suffered from or may be suffering child abuse or neglect must report the suspected abuse.

A report of suspected abuse should be made orally by the staff on the day the suspicion occurs. The staff member is responsible for making the report to Child Protection.

### **Parent Information**

#### **Supplies**

All supplies brought to school should be marked with the child's name. Each child should have a complete change of clothes and indoor shoes (sneakers are best as these double as gym shoes).

#### **Extra clothing**

As the preschool encourages a variety of activities, please make sure your child is dressed in "play" clothes that can be easily washed. During the winter children should be dressed to play both indoors and outdoors (winter coat, ski pants, boots, hat, mitts and scarf). During the spring, please

send splash pants and rubber boots. An extra set of clothes is to be kept on each child's hook. Please label all items with child's name. All clothes must be free of profanities, images of weapons/violence or derogatory expressions.

### **Toys from home**

Please do not allow your child to bring toys from home, unless it has been requested as a part of an activity. The preschool encourages respect and sharing. Items brought from home are often very special to a child and they may not want others touching or playing with them.

We will have regular "sharing" days. These days will be marked on the monthly calendar. At this time children may bring something from home to talk about during circle time. The preschool encourages items which may relate to the theme or the environment. We encourage photos or a story about something special that may have happened. Children may bring toys which have "special meaning", but all toys must be weapon and violence free.

### **Separation**

It is normal for some children to have difficulty separating from parents, or not want to come to school. It is important that a child is reassured of your return, and school is a fun, safe environment. Please be brief (no more than 5 minutes) during morning and afternoon drop-offs. The longer parents/guardians prolong the departure, the harder it gets for the child. A smile, cheerful goodbye kiss and a reassuring word that the parent will be back are all that are needed to make a child feel comfortable.

\*The preschool has an open door policy and the parents are welcome to drop in as often as they like. If you would like to help in the class in any capacity, please feel free to talk to the teacher.

### **Transportation Policy**

- Although it happens infrequently, occasionally travel will require the use of vehicles. Often the parents will be asked in these situations to help provide the transportation. All vehicles must conform to the following guidelines:
  - All vehicles must have federally approved safety seats and/or safety belts with the exception of rented buses that don't have safety seat belts
  - Each child must be secured in the appropriate safety seat or seat belt.
  - Before any trip - ensure the vehicle is in good working order and that the vehicle contains nothing which might harm the children.
- Never transport children or adults in the cargo area of a station wagon or van.
- Never leave children alone inside or nearby a vehicle.
- Any sharp or heavy objects should be kept in the trunk to avoid any injury in case of a sudden stop.
- Load and unload children only when the vehicle is pulled up to the curb, side of the road or in a driveway and release them only to an authorized adult.
- Do not allow children to stick their arms or heads out of the vehicle.
- Doors should be locked before transport.
- Before departing, remind children of rules and the importance of behaving.

- Always find a safe place to pull over before dealing with problems in a vehicle.
- Do not give children food or drinks during transport.
- Place all hard objects (i.e. lunch boxes, backpacks) on the floor.
- Ensure all fingers and feet are well inside the vehicle before closing the doors.
- A driver will at all times follow and comply with the traffic rules and regulations when transporting kids. (i.e. speed limits, parking, etc.)
- All volunteer vehicles used in transporting children should have the compulsory minimum third party liability coverage as required by law. A copy of the insurance card and the registration of the vehicle must be provided to the school before the vehicle is approved for use in children's transportation.
- Rented buses used in transporting children should have a minimum of \$5M liability insurance coverage and certificate of insurance should be provided to YK1 District Office.
- YK1 District Office has an Insurance Liability of \$5M for children's transportation.
- Rented buses are not required to have safety belts when transporting children.
- **A Driver's Abstract and a Criminal Record Check are required for volunteer drivers. Volunteers will be reimbursed for these costs.**

### **Admission and Attendance Policy**

Each YK1 Preschool maintains a waiting list. The preschool will accept new children when there are vacancies in the class list. Preference will be given to fulltime students.

To register a child in any YK1 Preschool Program, an enrollment form must be completed and submitted to the office at the school, along with copies of the child's birth certificate, healthcare card, and record of immunizations or letter stating refusal of immunization. A child may not be admitted into preschool without these documents on file.

Each child registered requires permission from the parent to transport the child in a vehicle for excursions and to photograph or visually record the child. Authorization is included within the preschool enrollment form.

The preschool will provide an orientation for each family explaining the purpose and philosophy of the preschool. We will review the policies and give a basic outline of the program. Parents will be given a Parent Handbook to review and ask questions about. The preschool can provide assistance (including translation and clarification) in understanding the policies.

### **Arrivals and Departures**

The current preschool is **open** from 8:00 am until the end of each school day (3:30 pm). Parents who have not registered their child for the afterschool program must pick up their child by 3:30 p.m. Afterschool programs may be available for an additional fee.

Parents are asked to call the school by 9:00 am if their child is coming in late or will be absent for the day.

All children **MUST** be signed in and out each day. Only those people on the pick-up/drop-off list will be given permission to take the child. If a person needs to be added to the list, please give a written note to the teacher (this note will be attached to your child's file).

If a parent is late picking up their child and has not contacted the preschool, the staff will:

- (1) Try to contact parents at home and work
- (2) Try to contact emergency contact people

If the staff cannot reach anyone to pick up the child, the staff will contact Child and Family Services.

If an authorized individual comes to pick up a child and appears incapable of providing safe care to the child (i.e. due to intoxication) the staff will not release the child to that person and will contact the emergency numbers.

In a situation where there is a custody agreement, the preschool will release the child to the parent/guardian who has custody of the child, unless written permission has been given to the preschool.

### **Notice of withdrawal**

**The preschool requires one month's written notice, if a child is being withdrawn.** If a child is withdrawn without notice, one month fees will be required in lieu of notice.

### **Closure of Centre**

If the preschool is closed due to circumstances beyond its control, every effort will be made to notify parents as soon as possible. The preschool is not responsible for alternate childcare if closed. It is the responsibility of the parents to find alternative care.

### **Vacations/Illnesses**

The preschool is not able to provide refunds for vacations or illnesses. Fees will need to be paid regardless if the child attends or not.

### **Monthly Fees**

Monthly fees are required on the first school day of each month and these payments are processed at the District Office. Post-dated cheques for the year, or a Visa Authorization form, should be submitted to the office.

### **Program Fee Schedule**

<b>PROGRAM</b>	<b>MONTHLY FEE</b>
<b>8:00 a.m-3:30 p.m. (Fulltime)</b>	<b>\$618.00</b>
<b>8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. (Halftime Morning)</b>	<b>\$350.00</b>
<b>12:00 p.m.-3:30 p.m. (Halftime Afternoon)</b>	<b>\$300.00</b>
<b>3:30 p.m.-5:00 p.m. (Afterschool)</b>	<b>\$195.00</b>

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Please ensure that the post-dated cheques or visa authorization reflect the total monthly fee amount for the programs that your child accesses. For example if your child is registered in the Fulltime Preschool and Afterschool Programming, the monthly total would be \$813.00/month.

As noted in earlier sections of this handbook:

- We require written notice from parents/guardians withdrawing their child from any and all preschool program, if notice is not provided fees for the month will apply.
- Monthly fees will not be waived or reduced for child absences related to illness, vacation, etc. If your child is enrolled, the monthly fee applies.

### **Nonpayment of fees**

NSF cheques are subject to a **\$35.00** service charge. If two NSF cheques are received, parents/guardians are to pay with cash or money order only. School Administrators will pursue delinquent accounts by all legal means available. Parents who leave the preschool with an outstanding account will have 60 days from the last day the child is at the centre to pay the account in full or an additional 25% handling charge will be added to the account and referred to a collection agency.

### **Late Pickup Charge**

Fulltime and afternoon preschoolers are to be picked up at or before 3:30 p.m. unless the child is registered for the afterschool program. Pick up time for the after school program is no later than 5:00 p.m. Parents will be charged a rate of **\$15.00 per 15 minutes** of lateness. If lateness becomes an issue, parents may be asked to remove their child from the program.

### **Changes to Contact and/or Other Information**

Families frequently have changes, new homes, new jobs, new telephone numbers, etc. Please notify staff of any significant changes as soon as possible.

## **Communication**

### **Daily communication**

Communication between parents and preschool staff is very important. The preschool encourages parents to let staff know of anything that changes in a child's daily life. Please let staff know of any concerns you or your child may have.

### **Calendars**

A monthly newsletter and calendar will be sent home detailing the themes and special events to come. If you are aware of any special community event coming up and would like to add it, please let the staff know as soon as possible.

### **Concerns and Questions**

If parents have any concerns, and they are unable to discuss them with the staff involved, please contact the administration of the school.

### **Progress Report**

Parents will receive a year end progress report for all those children going to kindergarten next year. Staff will be available for parent meetings (by request). Please feel free at any time to make an appointment.

### **Volunteer Policy**

Parents are most welcomed and encouraged to participate and visit except when

- a court order or agreement restricts or prohibits parental access or
- the school has concerns based on a past visit, has notified the principal of those concerns, and the principal agrees the parent should not visit
- when their health may affect the quality of care or health of children

The preschool is a nonprofit agency, and relies heavily on volunteers and parent support. Parents may be asked to help with field trip supervision, craft making, or general classroom support. Volunteers will be required to provide a criminal records check, including a vulnerable sector search prepared by the RCMP before commencing to work as a volunteer. In the case of on-going volunteers, a criminal records check has to be provided every three years.

### **Confidentiality Policy**

It is the policy of YK1 Preschools to keep all information pertaining to children enrolled in the programs confidential. Parents or guardians may have access to the information as well as representatives from the Department of Education, Culture and Employment and licensing officers. Information regarding registration will not be accessible to other families.

### **Guidance and Behavior Policy**

The preschool's philosophy and practices with regard to guidance and discipline are always based on a positive, non-punitive approach.

Behavior management is a process by which children develop socially acceptable and appropriate behavior patterns. The preschool staff believes children are influenced by kind and continuing guidance and appropriate modeling. The staff recognizes the child as a unique individual and in doing so, needs to find guidance techniques to support appropriate behaviors.

In cases where "discipline" is needed, staff will acknowledge feelings, set limits, offer appropriate choices, and use natural and logical consequences. It will be a positive learning experience, reinforcing appropriate behavior.

### **Management Techniques**

If behavior is more significant, the following management action will be taken:

- (1) The child is removed from the situation to allow them time to calm down.

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- (2) The teacher will then discuss with the child as to why he/she was removed.
- (3) Depending on the regularity of the misbehavior, privilege loss may be used as a management tool.
- (4) A report will be written about the incident and will then be discussed with the parent.

In the event that the Preschool should ever find it necessary to terminate enrollment, the parent will be given **two weeks written notice except** for reasons such as but not limited to:

- Destructive, uncontrollable or violent behaviors
- Habitual tardiness in dropping off or picking up the child
- Excessive absences without notice
- Lateness of payment or nonpayment
- Lack of parental cooperation

### **On a final note...**

Some comments from our parents include:

*"This was a great program to get my child familiar with the environment and also be comfortable around new groups of kids. Also my child was very fond of her teachers."*

*"The program gave my son the opportunity to get used to coming to school, following the structure, listening to the teachers, getting along with peers, exposure to skill building crafts all in a comfortable, more play based environment. We have seen many positive changes in him and he really enjoyed the program. Thanks!"*

*"What an excellent program! The instructors were great, always offering suggestions and providing useful feedback. Our son always enjoyed going! It also confirmed that we were putting him in the right school for him, being the French Immersion. Thanks."*