

Parent Manual



Mission Statement

Tumbleweed Playschool will provide a safe, enriching environment for children to learn through open-ended play. We shall promote cognitive, emotional, social and physical opportunities for each child to grow at their individual pace.

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Tumbleweed Playschool is a non-profit society funded and maintained by parents during the school-term their children attend.

An executive board of parent volunteers organizes and administers the playschool, and the children's program is conducted by two trained ECE teachers. There is an open door policy and parents are encouraged to volunteer in the classroom.

Please note that when you register your child in the playschool, you automatically become a member of the Tumbleweed Playschool Society. This means sharing in the ownership of the facility, which will be maintained by the membership as a whole.

The playschool is licensed by the Provincial Community Care Facilities Licensing Board.

HISTORY

Tumbleweed Playschool was started in 1980 by a group of parents wanting to have their children play together. The school has undergone many changes, going from one teacher and three parent volunteers to two full time ECE staff members. Jennifer began teaching in 1991 and Ellen joined her in 2000.

The playschool focuses on a structured, play-based program with an emphasis on independent growth. An exciting new program emerged in the 2014-2015 school year: SEEDS OF EMPATHY. This involves in-depth programming through literacy, discussion, activities and baby visits. It fosters learning about feelings; their own feelings and the feelings of others.

OUR TEACHERS

Jennifer Redshaw moved to Merritt in 1990 and joined the staff at Tumbleweed in 1991. She brings knowledge and background to the playschool's present day development with her Infant and Toddler certification, received in 1988, and her ECE certification from Cariboo College, received in 1994. Jennifer's husband's name is Peter and she has three children.

Ellen MacLaren moved to Merritt in 1997 and joined the Tumbleweed staff in 2000. Her creativity and calm manner are an asset to the children, parents and staff. She received her ECE diploma as well as a Special Needs diploma in 1987 from Sheridan College in Oakville Ontario. Ellen's husband's name is Rob and she has two children.

As a team, Jennifer and Ellen provide a positive and successful early-learning environment.

TUMBLEWEED PLAYSCHOOL GOALS

Our aim is to provide children aged 3 to 5 with age appropriate opportunities to develop individually in the following areas, and to help serve as a bridge to elementary school:

SOCIALLY, for children to learn the value of discussion in decision making and problem-solving; to learn about sharing; to become aware of group welfare; and to learn more about authority as voiced by someone other than a parent.

EMOTIONALLY, for children to develop a feeling of belonging and learn to use creative expression in helping process intense feelings which may be generated in the course of everyday life, and to experience free dramatic play, allowing them to deepen and clarify life experiences as they are lived through dramatically over and over again.

PHYSICALLY, the children will be offered a minimum of 20 minutes of active play per class. Also for children to learn about the nature of physical objects in their surroundings as well as the spatial relationship between themselves and their surroundings. Also to develop different motor skills develop habits of eating, resting, dressing and toileting which represent a sound foundation for further growth.

INTELLECTUALLY, Tumbleweed Playschool has a no screen time policy. Tumbleweed is a place for children to learn basic academic skills; have opportunities to experiment with, manipulate, and create with materials; use imagination to express ideas, needs and feelings through use of materials; and to be encouraged and assisted in trying to solve problems and think independently.

As Tumbleweed Playschool Society is a parent participation school, we also strive to provide an environment where parents may amplify their knowledge of their own child and learn about child development techniques from other parents, the teachers, and school experiences. This also offers a wonderful opportunity for the school program itself to be enriched through parents sharing in their skills or interests for the benefit of the society.

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

DROP OFF AND PICK UP:

1. Parents must deliver as well as pick up their children safely and according to the class schedule.
2. Children must be accompanied inside the playschool.
3. Parents must sign children in and out of playschool.
4. Children must not be left unattended outside the playschool at any time.
5. By law, children can only be released to a responsible adult – those listed on our form (i.e. emergency contacts and those authorized to pick up). The centre will refuse to release a child to anyone who is perceived to be intoxicated or incapable of caring for a child.
6. Photo ID may be requested.

FOOD:

1. Snacks are provided by the school and planned by the teachers. They will consist of two food groups.
2. Allergy lists are posted in the kitchen and are taken into consideration when planning snacks.
3. Parents wishing to bring a snack for their child's birthday must make arrangements with the teachers prior to the day. **NO CUPCAKES**

CLEANLINESS:

1. Any toys that are exposed to saliva require immediate washing.
2. A complete cleaning of the facility will be done four times during the school term.
3. All children must be toilet trained prior to starting school.

ABSENCE

1. If your child will not be attending, please notify the school prior to the start of class.

IN CASE OF ILLNESS:

Please keep your child home if they have:

- A fever (100F/ 38.3C). **Keep home for 24 hours after the fever is gone.**
- Vomiting or diarrhea. **Keep home for 24 hours after last episode.**
- A severe sore throat.
- A rash with no known cause.
- A severe cough especially with other symptoms like runny nose and headache.
- Redness, swelling or discharge of the eyes, ears or skin, unless treated.
- Been acting unwell and have little energy to join in playschool activities.

Teachers should be notified promptly in all cases of communicable diseases and the child should not return to classes until cleared by a physician.

SCREEN TIME POLICY: There is **ZERO** screen time at the Playschool!

FEES AND PAYMENT POLICY

Tuition fees for the coming school term will be determined yearly at the April executive meeting.

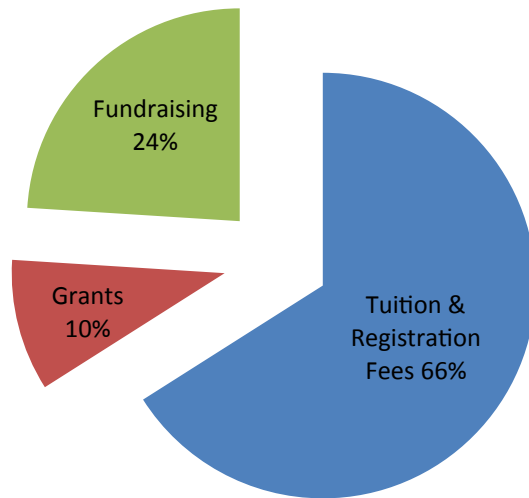
Fees are due and payable on the first of each month:

- Please bring postdated cheques on the first day of school.
- September and June's fees are to be dated for the first day of school.
- If fees remain unpaid past one week, you will be notified by telephone that your child may not attend playschool until payments are up to date.

Membership fees:

- \$60.00 per child and \$30.00 for each additional child in one family.
- Registration fees will be refunded if the child is withdrawn before August 15th. No registration fees will be refunded after that time.

REVENUE BREAKDOWN



The school's revenue, as a whole, covers costs for:

- ☐ Field trips
- ☐ Insurance
- ☐ Office/ bookkeeping
- ☐ Groceries
- ☐ School supplies
- ☐ Building maintenance
- ☐ Wages and salaries

Tuition and registration fees do not cover the full operating expense of the playschool. Without other sources of income, the school would be unable to offer the same excellent quality of services that it does.

ENROLLMENT AND WITHDRAWAL POLICY

All children of current members will have top priority for enrolment once they meet age requirements.

Parents are required to give one month's notice of withdrawal in writing to the school or pay one month's fee in lieu of notice.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

The most important attribute you can bring to the playschool is a cooperative attitude, both in the classroom and in the administration of the playschool.

A parent's involvement in the playschool includes but is not limited to the following:

1. Attendance at all planned orientation sessions.
2. Attendance at general meetings in the school term (children are discouraged from attending).
3. Sharing in fundraising efforts.
4. Accepting an Executive Position or a Parent Task

Please note: Parents are responsible for their child's belongings. It may be helpful to label these items. A lost and found box is located in the coatroom.

The playschool has and will maintain an OPEN DOOR policy.

CLASSROOM VOLUNTEERS

When a parent signs up on the volunteer calendar, the parent volunteer is expected to assist the teachers during the scheduled class time with a variety of classroom responsibilities such as

- helping prepare snack
- assisting with art
- washing dishes
- helping the teachers in any way asked.

No siblings may attend with parents on volunteer days.

GUIDELINES AND HINTS WHEN VOLUNTEERING

A POSITIVE APPROACH:

1. Expect co-operation and you will usually get it
2. Use positive phrases. Instead of:
 - "Don't", try "We do it this way at school" or "Remember the rule..."
 - "You'll fall", try "See how Kathy holds on there?" or "I'm down here if you need me".
3. Avoid terms such as BAD BOY, BEST, etc. but feel free to comment on a specific act:
 - "You chose lovely colours for that picture"
 - "You made Mary sad when you took her play dough"
 - "You did that all by yourself"
4. Children need constant reminders of the rules.

EVACUATION PLAN

In the event that the playschool must be evacuated due to danger (i.e. fire, gas leak, hazardous spill, etc.) the following will occur:

1. The children and teachers shall leave the premises and walk to the Interior Community Services (ICS) building 2975 Clapperton Ave. It is located across the parking lot
2. In the event that ICS is not an option our 2nd location will be 3018 Ponderosa Ave.

*****In ALL instances a group text shall be sent to inform parents of where to pick up their child. Please keep this information on your phone or in your glovebox for easy reference*****

FIELD TRIP GUIDELINES

1. It is recommended that each driver carry a minimum of \$ 2,000,000 liability insurance.
2. The first aid kit will travel with a supervisor on every trip.
3. All B.C. Provincial laws will be followed regarding seat belts, car seats and booster seats regarding weight.
4. Information will be provided to parents prior to each trip.
5. Attendance will be conducted before, during and after the trip.
6. When crossing intersections on foot, it is recommended that an adult enter the crosswalk and stop traffic in both directions in order to provide safe passage of the children.

MISSING CHILD PLAN

In the event that a child is missing from the school, the following will be done:

1. A search of the premises will be conducted
2. A search of the surrounding area outside of the school will be conducted
3. The police will be notified
4. The parents will be notified

In the event a child goes missing on a field trip the following will be done:

1. All children will be gathered in one area
2. A search of the area will be done
3. The police will be called
4. The parents will be called
5. All children will return to the playschool

GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE POLICY

1. All children attending the playschool shall be treated with kindness and respect
2. The supervisors will model a positive attitude for parents and be available to handle all disciplinary problems.
3. Praise will be given for appropriate behaviour (i.e. "I like your walking feet").

Inappropriate behaviours shall be handled by the following methods in most cases:

DISCUSSION: Having a chat with the child quietly about safety and inappropriate actions (i.e. block throwing).

REDIRECTION: Encouraging the child to find an appropriate activity to do (when throwing blocks encourage child to build a castle).

TIME AWAY: Only used when all else has failed. The child is placed on a chair away from the group but still within view and will sit for one minute per year of age to think about their actions.

Swearing for the most part will be ignored.

Spanking or other physical discipline will not be allowed by ANYONE.

ABUSE POLICY

When an allegation of abuse is made, a disclosure will be reported to the Executive, Licensing, and Child Welfare authorities for proper investigation. Abuse is a criminal offence and must be investigated by those who have the appropriate expertise and legal authority. This response will enable the society to cooperate with treatment professionals to offer the victim and the abuser the help and support they need.

Once a disclosure is made, the employee, against whom an allegation of abuse is made, will be suspended with pay from all positions within the Society. The employee will remain suspended with pay until charges are laid or cleared. Once charges are laid, the employee becomes suspended without pay. Being found guilty of the offense will result in immediate termination.

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RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE

COMMITTEES

EXECUTIVE AND

PRESIDENT

- Convenes and presides at all general and executive meetings.
- In partnership with the teachers, guides the policy of the group and is responsible for the administration of the playschool.
- The president abstains from voting.

VICE PRESIDENT

- Works alongside the president and, if the need arises, takes the place of the president chairing meetings, etc.
- Oversees the committees without an executive head.

SECRETARY

- Keeps a record of all executive and general meetings including the record of attendance,
- Deals with ALL correspondence as directed by the president, and is custodian of the playschool's official documents,
- Retrieves all mail from the post office.

TREASURER LIAISON

In partnership with the accountant:

- Presents a proposed budget at the annual planning meeting.
- Presents a financial report at each general and executive meeting.
- Ensures payment schedules are strictly followed.

ENROLMENT

- Plans and executes enrolment publicity.
- Receives all applications for enrolment.
- Answer emails/ phone calls regarding registration enquiries.
- Compiles and distributes copies of the current membership list for members and executive

PARENT EDUCATION

- Plans and maintains the monthly newsletter and the parent bulletin board in conjunction with supervisor.
- Plans and executes any educational opportunities for parents.

WAYS AND MEANS (FUNDRAISING (2 people)

- Is responsible for organizing and directing all fundraising activities.

PERSONNEL

- Negotiates the teachers' contracts and hires staff if necessary.
- Conducts a parent survey.
- Is the liaison between the supervisors and parents.
- In general, promotes understanding and unity within the membership.

FACILITY

- Is responsible for maintaining the playschool building and surrounding area. This involves checking the operation of smoke detectors, ensuring that all fire regulations are properly followed, that the components of the portable are in good working order and arranging for repairs as necessary.
- Plans scheduled cleaning of the school, especially, at the beginning, ending and two other set times in the school term.

PUBLICITY

- Oversees special events such as the parade.
- Makes and distributes posters, contacts newspapers regarding photo opportunities, and sends thank-you notes when necessary.