

HANDBOOK FOR PARENTS 2018-2019



FOOTHILLS CREATIVE BEGINNINGS KINDERGARTEN

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School Phone: (403) 851-5534

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Table of Contents

Our Kindergarten Program	3
Communication	4
Parent concerns	
Teacher concerns	
Newsletters	
Report cards	
Field Trips	
Professional days	
IPP days.	
Policies and Procedures	
Enrichment Fee	5
Student Information Form	5
..... Addresses	
..... Immunizations	
..... Alberta Health Number	
..... Medical Conditions	
Illness Policy: When should a child be kept home from school	5
Medical Emergencies and Accidents	5
..... First aid treatment	
..... Traumatic events	
..... Emergency Evacuation	
..... Medications	
..... Medical registration	
..... Insurance	
Bringing and Picking Up Children	6
..... Arrival	
..... Departure	
..... Late pick-up	
Discipline Policy	7
General Information	7
Class Lists	
Photos Policy	
Visiting Policy	
Clothing	
Footwear	
Bringing Things to School	
Beautiful Junk	8
Fundraisers	
Snack Program	9
Allergies	10
Funds for Special Needs	11

OUR KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

Our kindergarten is an independent Alberta Education Program whose mandate is to provide a strong readiness program particularly in the areas of reading, writing, and mathematics. Art and freeplay activities also address readiness skills and are included in the daily schedule.

Communication

PARENTAL CONCERNS

The classroom teacher invites you to discuss any concerns you might have about your child's classroom experience. Casual chats can occur when you bring or pick up your child. Serious concerns should have a private space — just mention it to your child's teacher. If an issue can't be resolved easily, you are encouraged to speak to the principal.

TEACHER CONCERNS

If the teacher has any concerns about your child's adjustment or progress at kindergarten she will arrange a time for a mini-conference with you.

NEWSLETTERS

A newsletter is prepared for the beginning of each month and will be placed in your child's mailbox. It will contain special dates to remember, program highlights and notes, parent and community resource information.

REPORT CARDS

There are two written report cards which are sent home early in December and mid-June. We also have one interview day in March.

OUTDOOR AND OFF SITE ACTIVITY SUPERVISION POLICY

Routine off-site activities

For routine outdoor activities, such as games on the lawn, walks in the neighbourhood or visits to the nearby community play ground, parents will provide written approval in advance for the school year (and will update in January). When off-site the teacher will take a portable records file, cell phone and mini first aid kit. The teacher will prepare the children for the outing by discussing where they will be going, safety rules and to whom they will need to listen. In the event of an accident the teacher will ensure that the child receives first aid/medical treatment as necessary and that the child's parent is notified.

Trips requiring transport:

3 -4 field trips are planned throughout the year. Examples of field trips we have taken are the Fire Hall, the grocery store, the library, and the Gymnastics Centre at Spray Lakes. At least one week before the outing a written description of the trip, activities planned and transportation plan will be provided to the parent. The parent will be required to sign a consent form before the child will be allowed to attend the activity. Parents are encouraged to attend and transport their own child(ren).

Any change to the transportation plan will require advance notice to the parent. Parental approval of the change will be documented on each child's signed permission slip.

Children will be properly restrained at all times in private vehicles. A portable record of each child, first aid box and cell phone will be taken on the trip.

Staff will prepare the children for the outing by discussing where they will be going, what will happen, safety rules and to whom they will need to listen.

Foothills Creative Beginnings Kindergarten 2018-2019

In the event a child experiences an accident or serious illness while on the excursion the teacher will ensure that the child receives first aid and/or medical attention if necessary and that the child's parent is notified.

PROFESSIONAL DAYS

We belong to C.R.E.C.T.A. (Calgary and Regional Early Childhood Teachers' Association)
Teachers attend C.R.E.C.T.A workshops on these days.

There will be school on these days. A substitute teacher is provided.

Friday, October 19, 2018

Friday Feb. 1, 2019

Friday April 12, 2019

Friday June 7, 2019

FCB Professional Days – In House October 18 Play workshop

There will be no school on this day.

IPP DAYS (Individualized Program Plan)

Thursday, Oct. 25 and Friday Oct. 26

Thursday, January 24 and Friday, January 25

Thursday, May 9, and Friday, May 10

These dates are set aside to meet with learning teams for children with special needs.

There will be no school on these days.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ENRICHMENT FEE

An enrichment fee of \$400 is payable in one lump sum, \$40/monthly paid by post-dated cheques or e-transfers. These funds cover field trips and art materials. In addition it covers an introduction to French and specialized music instruction which are unique to our program.

STUDENT INFORMATION FORM & Alberta Education Transportation Grant

Please complete these e-forms and submit. You are eligible for The Alberta Transportation Grant if you live more than 2.4 kilometres from the school.

www.creativebeginnings.ca Find e-forms, scroll down, fill out form, and submit.



No child may attend without a completed form



ADDRESSES

Complete addresses of home, places of work and caregivers are required.

Should there be a change in any information such as address, phone number or caregiver during the year, please notify us. Should an emergency arise we will need to reach you. You will be requested to update this information in the New Year.



ALBERTA HEALTH NUMBERS

Alberta Health numbers are optional (FOIP) but would be helpful to the hospital should your child need emergency transport and treatment.

MEDICAL CONDITIONS:

If your child has a medical condition such as asthma, allergies, diabetes, etc. that could require medication such as inhalers, epi-pens, sugar etc., a special permission form is required to allow the staff treat your child.

ILLNESS POLICY

WHEN SHOULD A CHILD BE KEPT HOME FROM SCHOOL?

- Please keep your child at home if he/she has any of the following:
 - a fever
 - green or yellow discharge from the nose
 - Vomiting or diarrhea within the past 24 hours.
 - An infection that requires antibiotics Pink eye and strep throat are two such infections. Follow the advice of the doctor about returning to class.
 - Any communicable disease. Follow the advice of the doctor and Health Link about when to return to school.

When in doubt, it is probably better to error on the side of caution, both for your child's comfort and for the health of classmates and teachers.

If your child becomes ill while at kindergarten you will be called to pick up your child.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES / ACCIDENTS

Foot Hills Creative Beginnings Kindergarten 2018-2019

FIRST AID TREATMENT

At least one staff member with a valid First Aid in Child Care Certificate is available whenever children are present. For minor injuries such as scrapes or bumps kindergarten staff will give necessary first aid.

■ **TRAUMATIC EVENTS**

If a child has been involved in an incident which seemed particularly unsettling to the child, the parent will be informed and the incident recorded. Signatures of parent and teacher are required.

■ **MEDICAL EMERGENCY**

Should a serious medical emergency arise, the staff would give first-aid treatment, call the parent or emergency contact person and if necessary, call the ambulance.

Our normal order of calls, until we make contact, will be: home phone - mother's cell - mother's work - nanny or sitter - father's cell - father's work - emergency contact. If this does not work for your situation, please make a note on the registration form.

■ **EMERGENCY EVACUATION**

Should there be a situation where the school must be evacuated, the children would be taken to the Boys and Girls Club. The parents would be contacted to pick up their children. Full details of the procedure are posted. Fire drills are held monthly.

■ **MEDICATIONS**

We do not administer medications such as Tylenol or antibiotics. We are permitted to administer emergency medications such as inhalers or epi-pens if we have the medication and the permission form. If your child requires such medication, we have a special permission and direction form for you to complete.

■ **DAILY MEDICATION REGISTRATION**

The adult delivering your child to preschool is required to list, on a daily basis, any medication the child has taken (cough syrup, antibiotics, inhalers etc.) and the condition being treated. Please pass any such information on to the person bringing your child to school. The attendance book has a space for such information.

■ **INSURANCE**

The school carries general liability insurance. Parents waive all claims against the school in excess of the liability coverage. You may purchase individual or family accident insurance privately.

BRINGING AND PICKING UP CHILDREN

Doors will be open from 8:40 – 9:30 and 11:15 – 11:50.

12:40 – 1:30 and 3:15 – 3:45 The doorbell will need to be used when the door is locked.

■ **Please respect school hours and teacher preparation time.**

ARRIVAL

Kindergarten sessions begin at **8:50 AM** and **12:45 PM**.

When you arrive please bring your child into the classroom and record your child's arrival in the classroom attendance book and greet the teacher. (Also see medication registration on page 5)

■ Please phone the school if your child is going to be absent.

DEPARTURE

Kindergarten dismisses at **11:40 AM** and **3:35 PM**.

You will sign the attendance book indicating that you have taken your child. Signing the attendance book releases the child to your care, responsibility and supervision.

■ **No child will be released to any person other than a parent without authorization.**

Please check your child's mail box for notices and projects.

LATE PICK UP

If you have not picked up your child within 15 minutes, we will call:

Foothills Creative Learning Center Kindergarten 2018-2019

1. Home phone
2. Parents' cells
3. Work number(s)
4. Emergency contact

DISCIPLINE POLICY *“Discipline is the slow, bit-by-bit, time consuming task of helping children to see the sense in acting a certain way.” (Dr. James Hymes)*

Kindergarten children are learning and practicing skills in cooperation, sharing and assertiveness as well as respectfulness. We believe our code of discipline is reflective of this.

Our first concern is that all the children in the center are safe, comfortable and feeling free to develop their imagination and explore with a sense of confidence.

Discipline is not punishment. The most important aspect of this definition is that behavior is not changed by punishment, but by helping children discover that it feels good to act in a way that brings approval and a sense of confidence.

Discipline for us is a four step approach:

- **Anticipate.** We prevent problems by having enough equipment and activities and by setting the ground rules before the problem arises.
- **Hesitate.** We stand back for a moment and watch. If neither child is coming to harm, we allow the children to work out the problem with their own solutions.
- **Investigate.** We are careful not to blame either child, especially when we have not seen what has happened from start to finish. We allow each child the opportunity to talk so we can understand the situation.
- **Communicate.** We encourage the children to generate their own solutions. If this is unsuccessful the teacher will explain the problem and offer one or two choices. If the child is unable to make a choice, the teacher may remove the child from the activity for a short time to calm and reconsider his/her options. You, as the parent, would be informed so that together we can work towards a solution.

GENERAL INFORMATION

■ CLASS LISTS

It is our policy to prepare class lists (including the child's name, parents' names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses) copies of which are given to the parents in your child's class. We do this so that you may exchange snack dates with other parents or to arrange play dates, parties etc., with your child's school friends.

If this is not acceptable to you or if you would like certain information excluded please phone or email Maxine Mendritzki 403-481-3371 or maxine.mendritzki@foothillscreative.org

Also please indicate this request on your child's registration form.



■ PHOTO POLICY

The teachers may take photos of the children as a form of documentation of each child's achievements and discoveries. Sometimes we post these photos within the classroom and in hallways. The pictures are given to the parents at the end of a project. If this is not acceptable to you, please indicate on the registration form and talk to your child's teacher.



■ SCHOOL PHOTO DAY

School Photos will be taken in the fall . A school photographer will take the photos. Proofs will be sent home for you to examine and decide if you wish to purchase. There is no obligation to purchase.



■ VISITING POLICY

In order to ensure a consistent program we do not depend upon volunteer help. We do, however, maintain an open door policy, which invites your participation. We are open to suggestions on ways you can be involved in the program. E.g. Special talent, arrange a field trip

There are occasional special days such as field trips when each child requires an adult to attend with him/her. If the parent is unable to attend a special friend, grandparent etc. may substitute.

Foothills Creative Beginnings Kindergarten 2018-2019

■ CLOTHING

It is recommended that the children come dressed in play clothes as they will be involved in messy projects using glue, paint and play dough. Pants and short or easily rolled sleeves are suggested for both boys and girls.

We have changes of clothes for those who get wet at the water table or have toileting accidents. If clothes come home on your child, please wash the clothes and return them to school. If you have outgrown play clothes, sizes 4-6, that you could add to our emergency box, it would be much appreciated.

■ FOOTWEAR

Non-slip shoes such as runners are a necessity at school for safety reasons. Children will not be allowed to participate in gym activities without appropriate shoes for the same reason. No sandals, flip-flops or fancy dress shoes, please. If you leave home without your child's shoes we have a box of extras to lend.

■ BRINGING THINGS TO SCHOOL

We request that the children do not bring toys to school as these tend to get broken and/or lost. We do make concession for "security" blankets, and scheduled "show and share" items etc.

■ BEAUTIFUL JUNK We gladly receive:

Metal lids from frozen juices	Toilet rolls
Styrofoam egg cartons	Yogurt containers
Wrapping paper	Ribbon
Wool	Buttons
Beads	Feathers
Seeds	Sea shells

Uniforms that could be remodeled into dress-up costumes
Clothes suitable for the dress-up center

■ FUND-RAISERS

Foothills Creative Beginnings Preschool promotes several small fund-raisers throughout the year. We use the funds to purchase new equipment, books and to fund special events. This year we will be presenting:

Scholastic Books

Sept. - June

Any of the items ordered/purchased are returnable for full refund or exchange.

Parents are not obligated to purchase or sell to family, friends or neighbours but if you or someone you know would like the product that is great. Just do what is convenient and comfortable for you and your family.

NUTRITIOUS SNACK PROGRAM

■ GOALS

- To provide a nutritious snack
- To enjoy the sociability of eating together
- To share and encourage good manners
- To taste a variety of foods.

■ PROCEDURE:

You will receive a snack calendar, which will designate your day to provide a snack.

If this day is not convenient for you, please accept the responsibility of trading a day with someone else in the class. A class list will be provided.

You are requested to provide a snack for your child's entire class, based on the food group (vegetables, fruits, breads and dairy products) indicated on your snack calendar. We have bowls, spoons, glasses, napkins, a refrigerator and freezer.

■ FOOD SUGGESTIONS:

Over all please try to keep the snacks simple and healthy.

Some suggestions are:

Fruit: bananas, apples, raisins, watermelon, oranges, grapes

Possible accompaniments: crackers, cheese

Vegetables: carrot sticks, cucumber, celery sticks

Possible accompaniments: dip, crackers, cheese

Breads: whole grain, cheese or raisin breads, muffins, crackers, fruit loaves

Possible accompaniments: cheese, fruit

Dairy: cheese, yogurt, puddings, mini-go, yogurt tubes,

Possible accompaniments: crackers, fruit, vegetables.

■ SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

Vegetables and fruit may be peeled and cut at home, using good sanitary procedures. Please take care not to use a knife that has just been used to spread **peanut butter**.

Cantaloupe is known to carry Salmonella. Please wash it before peeling and keep cantaloupe refrigerated at all times.

■ FORGOT THE SNACK?

If you forget to send the snack on your day, we always have a snack in store. Please send a package of cookies or crackers to replenish our emergency supply cupboard.

■ BIRTHDAYS

When it is your child's birthday, please feel free to send small muffins, cookies etc. for the class. Please do not send party hats, favors, candles.

NO PEANUTS!! Because peanuts are a common and often severe allergy even to touch or smell, no peanuts or peanut products are allowed at our school.
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ALLERGIES:

We have several children and a teacher with severe (life threatening) allergies. This year these allergies are to peanuts, nuts, seeds (such as sesame), milk and eggs.

These children bring their own safe snack from home but this is not enough to keep them safe. If an allergic child should play with a toy that has been handled by a child with one of these products on his/her hands an allergic reaction could be triggered in the allergic child. If a non-allergic child has immediately eaten peanut butter and breathes on an allergic child it could trigger an allergic reaction.

If an anaphylactic reaction is triggered in one of these children it means that the teachers will have to administer a painful shot to the allergic child and call the ambulance. Such an event would be terrifying to the children and perhaps more so to the teachers. We have never had such an occurrence but it is one of our greatest concerns.

Nut products can appear in surprising places such as in chocolate, granola bars, frostings, candy, fried foods, flavorings, even lip gloss and shaving cream.

For the safety of all we have the following rules:

- Children on special individual diets will not include nuts or peanuts in their snacks
- Please have your child wash hands and brush teeth after eating / before coming to school, particularly if they have had peanut butter for breakfast or lunch.
- Please do not include peanuts, nuts or seeds in the snack that you send to school for your child's class.
- Please take care when cutting something for school that you do not use a knife that has just been used to spread **peanut butter**.

FUNDS FOR SPECIAL NEEDS

By virtue of our operation of a kindergarten program under the aegis of Alberta Education we are able to access funds for children with special needs.

Role of Foothills Creative Beginnings:

- To administer the funds for PUF and MILD/MODERATE programs.
- To develop an Individualized Program Plan for each child.
- To provide assurance to Alberta Education of the quality of the program and financial accountability.

MILD / MODERATE FUNDING

This level of funding provides for children with mild to moderate delays in one area such as speech or motor development. These funds provide for regular visits to a professional therapist during the school year. This funding is available for 2 years only, one of which must be the kindergarten year.

To qualify for mild/moderate funds:

- The child must be at least 3 years 6 months and less than 6 years on September 1 of the program year to qualify.
- The child must be registered with Foothills Creative Beginnings by September 30 of the year when this funding is accessed.
- The initial request for therapy can be based on opinions of the parents and FCB personnel or a referral from a speech clinic or Children's Hospital. This will then be confirmed by one of our therapists.

Mild/Moderate Funds provide for approximately 18 therapy sessions. Parents pay the school fees. No assistant is provided.

PROGRAM UNIT FUNDING (PUF)

PUF is the most generously conceived of comparable provincial programs in Canada. The total funds made available depend on the needs of the child, although there is an upper limit.

PUF seeks to provide for the needs of children with disabilities requiring additional support above that offered in a regular preschool or kindergarten program. The PUF program we administer is designed to provide families with as much participation as possible in their child's program.

To qualify for PUF Funding:

- Assessment/diagnosis from appropriate professional(s) is required prior to submitting an application. This is imperative for an initial application and it is very helpful if these assessments can be completed before September.
- The child must be at least 2 years 6 months and less than 6 years of age on September 1 of years when PUF is accessed. PUF is available for a maximum of three years. Care should be taken in deciding when to start PUF. The
- child must be registered in and attend a preschool or kindergarten program.

PUF funds provide for:

A classroom assistant and necessary therapies.

An Individual Program Plan (IPP) with developmentally appropriate goals developed in consultation with teachers, therapists, parents and teaching assistants. The parents must be actively involved in this process.

Please contact Jane McKeown at 403-474-0851 if you have questions with regard to funding and/or services provided.