McKenzie Lake Community Association Child Care Program



McKenzie Lake Preschool

Parent/ Guardian Handbook

I have read and understand the information in this parent/ guardian handbook.

I will comply with the outlined guidelines to ensure that my child(ren), preschool staff and other parents/ guardians will enjoy a wonderful preschool experience.

Policies and Procedures updated: January 27th, 2022

Polices and Procedures updated by: Alvina Merchine (preschool teacher)

Welcome to McKenzie Lake Preschool!

**Preschool Contact Information**

Address:

McKenzie Lake Preschool

16198 McKenzie Lake Way SE

Calgary, AB T2Z 1L7

Contact Phone Number:

403 257 3263

Website:

[www.mckenzielakecommunity.com](http://www.mckenzielakecommunity.com)

Preschool Teacher Email:

mlcapreschool@telus.net

Facility Manager Email

mlcafacilities@telus.net

Facility Administrator Email:

mlca2@telus.net

McKenzie Lake Preschool Program Policy & Procedures (Online only):

[www.mckenzielakecommunity.com](http://www.mckenzielakecommunity.com)

Please print a copy of this handbook for your records and reference during the school year. This is a valuable, informative and useful document that you can refer to during the year with any questions that you might have during your child(ren) enrolment at McKenzie Lake Preschool.

Updates, corrections and revisions to this document will be conducted on a yearly basis however if a change is made during the school year, families will be contacted via email about the update.

Please read, understand and adhere to this handbook as we want to create a fun, safe and caring environment for all children, preschool staff, parents/ guardians and guests that join our class throughout the year.

If you have any questions, concerns or need clarification, please feel free to contact the preschool teacher.

***The McKenzie Lake Community Association Board of Directors reserves the right to change any policy or procedure upon board decision at anytime.***

**Teacher’s Message**

Dear parents and guardians,

My name is Miss Alvina and I am a preschool teacher. I am very exited to see what the upcoming year will bring to us. I started my journey as a McKenzie Lake Preschool teacher in 2019 and then went on maternity leave. I came back in 2022 and I am very happy to be surrounded by great children and the best teachers aids Miss Saima and Miss Barb.

I graduated from Bow Valley College with diploma in Early Childhood Education and Development. I believe that professional development is very important for all the teachers, and it is a never-ending process. I continue to do workshops that help to improve my skills and become a better teacher for all the children.

I am honored to have the opportunity to be your child’s teacher.  My personal belief is that every child is unique and can learn.  As educators, it is our responsibility to provide each of them with an equal opportunity to succeed in school and to fully prepare them for kindergarten.  Our success is based on your child’s success.  I am fully committed to this job and will work collaboratively with my aids to ensure each family and child has a positive early educational experience.

Collaboration and communication are very important aspects of preschool success and teamwork.  Please note that main form of communication with reminders, questions, and preschool information will be through the teacher email **mlcapreschool@telus.net****.**

I look forward to meeting and getting to know you and your child!

Sincerely,

Alvina Merchine

Preschool Teacher

**Mission Statement**

McKenzie Lake Preschool creates a safe, fun, caring and positive environment that enables the child to have a positive early educational experience.

**Philosophy**

For children, ages three and four, this is a time of wonder, questions and curiosity as well as cognitive, social, emotional, physical learning and development.

The philosophy of the McKenzie Lake Community Association Preschool program is:

**POSITIVE EXPERIENCES THROUGH PLAY**

**AND GUIDED INSTRUCTION**

In keeping with this philosophy, the program is designed to offer children the freedom to choose from a variety of experiences such as, play, craft time, and circle time which provides stimulating and interesting opportunities to expand their knowledge and skills, as well as build confidence at their own individual pace.

The staff will utilize these activities to further the children’s learning by encouraging them to use their skills and develop their imagination, while providing a welcoming and stimulating environment.

All children need unconditional love and acceptance to develop a sense of personal worth. This comes from the acceptance of the child as a worthwhile individual and the feeling of confidence and self-acceptance gained from being encouraged to choose from and succeed at various activities.

It is the Preschool Policy to provide a quality program for children, rich in experiences and opportunity, while always keeping in mind, ***KIDS CAN BE KIDS***.

**Preschool Information**

McKenzie Lake Preschool is not- for- profit community based preschool program. We welcome all children both in and out of the McKenzie Lake community. The primary purpose of the MLCA Preschool is to aid in the development of the three and four-year-old child; cognitively, socially, emotionally and physically in a happy and engaging environment. McKenzie Lake Preschool offers an exciting program, which includes but is not limited to crafts, play centres, songs, stories and special visitors.

Preschool Hours of Operation

We offer 4 different program options:

4 yr. old program

 Monday/ Wednesday/ Friday from 9- 11am

 Monday/ Wednesday/ Friday from 12:30- 2:30pm

* + Children must turn 4 yrs. old on or before December 31 of the current school year to enrol

3 yr. old program

 Tuesday/ Thursday from 9- 11am

* + Child must turn 3 yrs. old on or before December 31 of the current school year to enrol

3/4 yr. old program

 Tuesday/ Thursday from 12:30- 2:30pm

* + Children must turn 3 yrs. old on or before September 1 of the current school year to enrol

Our program follows the Calgary Catholic Board of Education Traditional school year calendar. We operate from after the September long weekend, until the 3rd week in June. We are closed over traditional school year holidays for both school boards, professional development (PD) days and all statutory holidays.

A detailed calendar will be given out at the start of each school year that includes:

* Professional Development Days
* Statutory Holidays
* Closures for Holidays

**Key Dates for the School Year**

Please see a list of important dates for the school year, exact dates will be provided in Preschool calendar that can be found in the Parent Package all families will receive on their first day of school.

Dates are subject to change

* If a date or special event changes or is cancelled parent/ guardian will receive a minimum of 1-week notice

First Day of School

*\*\* All preschool classes will begin after the September Long Weekend\*\**

3 yr.old Tuesday or Thursday

4 yr.-old classes start - Wednesday

Preschool Closures Dates

 *\*\* Subject to Change without notice \*\**

 *\*\*Specific Dates can be found on the preschool calendar, given at the beginning of the year in the Parent Package\*\**

* Labour Day- September
* National Day for Truth and Reconciliation- September
* Various Professional Development Days (PD Days) throughout the year PD Day
* Thanksgiving Monday- October
* Remembrance Day- November
* Winter Break- approximately 2 weeks, end of December and into early January
* Teacher’s Convention- February on both Thursday and Friday
* Family Day- February
* Spring Break- approximately 1~~-~~ week, mid to end of March to early April
* Good Friday- March or April
* Easter Monday- March or April
* Victoria Day- May

Preschool Christmas & Year End/ Graduation Celebration Dates

Details will be sent out via email prior to the events.

* Christmas Party- prior to the start of Winter Break
* Year End/ Graduation Celebration & Last Day of School

**Preschool Registration, Payments & Withdrawal**

Registration

* Preschool Registration will open on the February 1st for the upcoming school year, which begins in September
* Registration will be available online only
* $50 non-refundable registration fee will be required at the time you enrol to ensure your spot is held
* Registrations for the current school year will not be accepted after February 1

Registration Package

Parent/ Guardian will be required to complete a detailed registration package that must be returned to the preschool prior to their child(ren) attending preschool. Preschool registration package information is designed to meet our licensing requirements as well as to help provide the preschool teacher current information and background on your child, so we can provide him/ her with the best care at preschool.

Monthly Tuition Fee

Parent/ guardians will be required to provide a VOID cheque or detailed banking information for monthly withdrawals from September to June

* Payment will be withdrawn on the 1st of each month
* 4 yr. old program $185/ month
* 3 yr. old program $160/ month
* 3/4 yr. old program $160/ month
* NSF cheques and returned direct withdrawals will be charged a $25 service fee
	+ You will be required to pay the $25 fee and your outstanding monthly tuition fee immediately by cash, debit or credit card by the 15th of the month or your child will be unable to attend preschool until the outstanding service fee ($25) and monthly fee are paid in full
	+ You will be removed from the automatic withdrawal program for the remainder of the year and will be required to pay your monthly tuition fee in the office by the first Friday of the month going forward.  There will be a $5/day late fee for all payments made after the first Friday of the month.

MLCA Annual Membership Fee

All families that attend McKenzie Lake Preschool will be required to purchase a Community Membership. The cost of the membership is $25 annually. This allows you join in activities that the community centre puts on throughout the year.

Community Membership are valid from August 1 until July 31 each year. Memberships can be purchased online or in the community centre office. If your membership fee is not paid by September 15, your child will not be able to attend preschool until your fee has been paid.

Preschool Tuition Receipts

Receipts are given out twice per school year

* Receipt #1- September to December
* Receipt #2- January to June

A $10.00 charge per receipt that needs to be reprinted will be charged

Waitlist

If a class you are looking to register for is currently full, you can contact the office at 403 257 3263 to have your name put on the waitlist. Open spaces in a program class are filled in order of those on the waitlist. If you receive a call you have 48 hours to contact the preschool to accept the open spot. If you do not contact the preschool within 48 hours your spot will be offered to the next person on the waitlist.

Pre- Registration

Families currently enrolled in the program will receive early pre- registration for the upcoming preschool year in January, as registration does not open to the public until February 1st. Families will be guaranteed a spot in the next class option (eg. currently enrolled in 3 yr. old class from 9-11am guarantees a spot in 4 yr. old class from 9-11am) If a family would like to switch to another program time (eg. currently enrolled in ¾ yr. old split class from 12:30- 2:30pm and would like to be moved to the 4-yr. old class from 9- 11am) or repeat a year of preschool (eg. currently enrolled on 4 yr. old class from 9- 11am), the child will be put in the first open spot available for the age group (eg. 4 yr. old class from 12:30- 2:30pm or ¾ yr. old split class from 12:30- 2:30pm) and will be put on the waitlist until a spot becomes available for that class they prefer.

Families will also be eligible to enrol a sibling(s) at the time of pre-registration if the sibling will be continuing directly following the currently enrolled child(ren). We will do our best to try and accommodate a families first choice of program time. We will waitlist any family who does not receive their first choice and contact them if a spot becomes available. If there is a year that no child from your immediate family will attend McKenzie Lake preschool they are not eligible for pre- registration.

Registration for Public

For Parents/ guardians looking to enroll their child in McKenzie Lake Preschool, registration will open online on February 1st at 9am.

Subsidized Children

McKenzie Lake Preschool is a licensed Preschool Program and therefore Alberta Child Care subsidy is available for families needing financial assistance. For general inquires about child care subsidy, call 1-877-644-9992 or visit [www.child.gov.ab.ca](http://www.child.gov.ab.ca) for further information.

Preschool Withdrawal

**We require a one month written notice to withdraw your child from our program (eg. January 10- February 10, you will be required to pay your monthly tuition for both January and February). Withdrawals received after March 1st of the current school year will not release you from your financial obligation for April, May and June fees (eg. Withdraw March 15- April 15, you will be required to pay your monthly tuition for March, April, May & June).  If you choose to withdraw in March, April, May or June you will not be refunded any of the remaining fees for the current school year.  You are required to submit a written 1 month withdraw notice for all withdrawals from the program.**

Termination from Program

Our ongoing relationship with the preschool families is a key basis for a great program. We make every effort to build and maintain a caring, supportive and cooperative relationship. However, we do understand that there may be situations where our program is not the best fit for some preschoolers and families. McKenzie Lake Preschool may terminate the relationship between a family and the program under the following circumstances:

* If fees are not paid in full and/ or on time or if suitable arrangements cannot be agreed upon
* If in the assessment of the preschool teacher, a child is not able to be managed safely in a group of children in the given staff child ratio
* If the program cannot satisfactorily resolve a problem with a family
* If a child demonstrates aggressive behaviour (eg. striking, hitting staff or another child, etc.)
* Abusive or foul language by a child or parent/ guardian
* Destruction of preschool or community centre property
* Failure to follow the rules, regulations, guidelines, policies and procedures as outlined by the preschool and within the documents provided and associated with McKenzie Lake Preschool

Grievances

At McKenzie Lake Preschool, we strive to maintain the highest quality care and programming for our preschool families. Provided are the steps parents/ guardians can take if they would like to discuss anything regarding the staff, the program, specific classroom activities, facility or any other questions and concerns. We want parents/ guardians to feel comfortable bringing all questions, comments and concerns to the attention of the teacher. Open communication creates a welcoming environment for the children, parents/ guardians, staff and all those that join the preschool community during the year.

Please note the steps for anything you would like to address to the teacher:

* Step #1- Communicate all information to the Preschool Teacher either orally or written
* Step #2- Preschool teacher will acknowledge the above questions, comments or concerns addressed and implement a resolution approved by the parent/ guardian in agreement with the policies and procedures outlined and within the needs of the preschool, children, parents/ guardians, staff and any others that might be affected
* Step #3- Based on the outlined issue, if an adequate resolution cannot be established or the issue requires further input, the facility manager will be informed of the situation and a parent/ teacher/ facility manager meeting will be scheduled to discuss and resolve the outlined issue

**Preschool Program**

First Day of School

The first day of preschool can be an exciting, overwhelming and uncertain day for both parents/ guardians and their child(ren). Once preschool begins the teacher will welcome each child into the class. The teacher and teacher aides will then assist all children with their new experiences at preschool. We understand children can exhibit many different forms of behaviour and emotions. We ask that parents/ guardians give hugs/ kisses at the door and allow the preschool teacher to assist the children once inside the classroom. Parents/ guardians are unfortunately unable to stay with their preschooler. At the end of each day the children will then be called individually to their parents/ guardians waiting outside the door.

Preschool Schedule

Free Play

 Building, crafts, painting, play-doh, puzzles, books, dramatic play, etc.

Circle Time

 Calendar, Numbers, Letters, Topic for the day (based on what our Theme is for the month)

Craft Time

 Based on our topic for the day

Book Time

 Children can look at books on their own without teacher direction

Circle Time

 Preschool Teacher reads books to the children

Snack Time

 Provided by each family for their own child(ren).

Home Time

Birthdays

Each child will receive a birthday headband and small gift from the preschool. They will also get to be the leader for the day when applicable. They are encouraged to bring in their favourite book that will be read by the teacher at story time and they can also bring in a small item for Show N’ Share. Special treats such as cupcakes or cookies etc. are welcome as long as a list of ingredients are included and the treats are nut free. Even store-bought treats will need to have a list of ingredients. If more than one birthday falls on the same day, we may celebrate more than one on that day, or spread the celebrations out over the birthday week.

Parent/ Guardian Involvement

Parent/ Guardian involvement is an important part in the early years of your child’s growth and development. We also know that parents/ guardians are a great addition and support to the preschool program as well as the preschool community.

Here is a list of parent/ guardian requirements and opportunities:

* Parent/ guardian will complete a full registration package prior to their child’s first day of preschool
* Parent/ guardian will be required to provide a Nut Aware snack based on the guidelines provided in the parent/ guardian handbook.
* Parent/ guardian will receive an information package at the beginning of the year that includes a calendar, parent/ guardian quick reference guide, online link to preschool program policies and procedures and parent/ guardian handbook
* Parent/ guardian may be welcome to join the class (COVID restrictions permitting) on these special days:
	+ Christmas Party
	+ Year End/ Graduation Celebration
	+ Mother’s Day Tea
		- All details can be found in the calendar given out at the beginning of the school year

Preschool Parent Information Evening

As part of your Childs first steps into preschool, we want all parents/ guardians both new and returning to feel informed, comfortable and knowledgeable about where they have chosen to send their child for preschool. All families will receive a child registration package, parent/ guardian quick reference guide, online link to our program policies and procedures and parent/ guardian handbook, and opportunity to attend our parent information evening. The information evening will be held at the very end of August by the preschool teacher giving families the opportunity to meet the teacher and learn about the upcoming information for the new school year. If families are unable to attend the parent information evening packages will be given out on your Childs first day of school.

As always if parents/ guardians have any questions, concerns, comments or feedback, please feel free to contact the preschool teacher at anytime throughout the year.

**Child Attendance, Supervision & Drop Off/ Pick Up**

Prior to entering the MLCA building, all adults and children who will access the preschool should be screened for symptoms of illness using the applicable checklist for their age group. Please screen your child’s health prior to entering the MLCA building.

The preschool door will remain closed until the start of class. Children will not be accepted early into the classroom as stated in our licensing regulations.

Parent/ guardian must park their vehicles in the assigned parking spots, not in the fire lane. A sticker is required to park in the designated handicapped spot and must be visible at all times. Children are NOT to be left outside the classroom door unattended. All children must be supervised at all times by a parent/ guardian.

Preschool staff will take each child’s temperature prior to them entering the classroom. Any child with a temperature 38 degrees or over, will not be able to attend the program and can return after 48 hours without symptoms of fever or sickness.

McKenzie Lake Preschool does not assume responsibility of any child until the program time has started and they are signed in by the preschool teacher.

Each child must be accompanied by an adult upon drop off and pick up.

Drop Off & Pick Up

\*The Calgary Board of Education has mandated that all children in K-12 come to school wearing masks. We will follow the COVID protocols that are set in place for preschools. Currently preschoolers are not required to wear masks. That being said, we will support each family with their choice and preference for their child to wear a mask or not.

\*\*Our downstairs hallway does not allow for social distancing. Until the Calgary Board of Education allows children into their schools without masks, the following pick up and drop off routine will be followed:

At drop off, please line up outside the building along the foot markers. The teachers will open the door at class start time and will take each child into the front foyer where they will have their temperatures taken. Once the entire class is inside, the teachers will guide them down into the classroom.

At pick up, please wait along the foot markers and introduce yourself to the teacher, as well as who you are picking up. They will confirm you as a proper pick up and will release your child to you. Children will not be released to you unless you make contact with the teacher and are close to the door. They cannot release a child to you if you are standing off to the side.

***Once The Calgary board of Education has removed the requirement to wear masks in K-12, an email will be sent to all families and the following procedures will be followed:***

At Drop Off, the preschool door will be closed

We ask that you take this time to:

* Find a cubby with your child(ren) name in the coat/ boot room, help your child(ren) take off their coat and outdoor shoes and put on their indoor shoes
* use the bathroom,
* stand in a line-up outside the preschool door until the preschool teacher opens the door.

Once the door has opened the preschool teacher will greet each child as they enter the room. If you are running late and the door has closed, please feel free come in and drop your child off and preschool teacher will assist them once inside.

At Pick Up the preschool door will be closed

We ask that the parents:

* stand in a line and wait for the teacher to open the door once again
* children will then be called to come and greet their parent/ guardian along with picking up his/ her belongs from their day at preschool.

We understand that parents/ guardians are not always able to pick-up their child from preschool. On your registration form you compiled a list of additional people that you have approved to pick-up your child. If someone on your list comes to pick up your child, we will be asking them for photo ID. If a person comes to pick up your child and the parent/ guardian has not mentioned a change, or they are not on your list, we will contact the parent/ guardian until we can confirm that this person is authorized to pick-up your child. Please remember that if there are any changes to the Pick-Up Authorization it is the parent/ guardian responsibility to advise the preschool of these changes.

If any person (including the child’s legal guardian) arrives to pickup the child and staff have reason to believe that the individual is under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, staff are directed to call the facility manager. If staff feel they or the child(ren) are at risk or if any person become abusive or aggressive police shall be called.

Your child’s safety is our number one priority!

Reporting Absences

If your child will not be attending preschool on a given day/ days, please email the preschool teacher at mlcapreschool@telus.net to advise them of the reason and date(s) your child will away.

Custody Issues

In case of separation when one parent/ guardian want the preschool to withhold their child(ren) from another parent/ guardian, legal council should be sought. The preschool cannot assume responsibility for withholding the child(ren) from either parent/ guardian without a copy of a court order to that effect. In the case where one parent/ guardian has legal custody, the staff will release the child only to the people authorized by the parent/ guardian. A copy of the agreement must be placed in the child’s file. Child safety is extremely important to the program; your child(ren) will only be released to the persons listed on the pickup authorization form unless otherwise added in writing.

Late Pick-Up Fee

We understand that unexpected situations arise, and you might not be able to pick your child up at the designated time. If you are going to be late we ask that you **call the preschool at 403- 257- 3263** and advise us of the situation. If situations continue and parents/ guardians are constantly arriving after the other children have been picked up, a Late Fee will be charged to the family. The charge will be $20 for the first 15 minutes late & $1/ minute after that until pick-up.

Eg. Preschool Class time ends at 2:30pm, parent/ guardian arrives at 2:50pm to pick up child, parent will be charged $25

Payment will be due prior to start of the next class. Payments can be made by cash, debit or credit card. Failure to make your payment may result in your child being unable to attend preschool until the outstanding fee is paid.

**Communication Policy**

McKenzie Lake Preschool strives to create an open, caring and friendly relationship between the parents/ guardians of all our children. We believe that open communication between children, families, special guests and those that work within the program is key to building a strong program as well as a great foundation for the preschool.

Written Communication

Information that pertains to all preschool families will be made available on a regular basis. It will be distributed through email or the community gazette. The preschool teacher will provide the following for parents/ guardians to be informed about preschool happenings throughout the year:

* a contact email and phone number at the beginning of year for the preschool teacher
* online links to the parent/ guardian handbook and program policy and procedures (will be provided at the beginning of the school year)
* bi- yearly receipts
* weekly emails that provide information about happenings in the class, reminders about activities, PD Days, Preschool Closures, theme days, community reminders, etc.
* monthly inserts submitted to the McKenzie Lake Community gazette
* accident/ illness forms
* incident forms
* registration packages

Verbal Communication

Verbal communication will be used to establish an open, caring and positive relationship with each child and their family both new and returning to the program. The teacher will greet each child upon their entry and exit from the program each day. Teacher and the teacher’s aides will build relationships with each child through communication and engage in topics relevant to the child and classroom discussions as well as interests that the child might enjoy further exploring.

Parent/ Guardian Communication

McKenzie Lake Preschool understands that all families have different needs and abilities to interact within the program. We try to create as many communication opportunities for parents/ guardians to be aware and knowledgeable of all aspects of the program. The teacher will provide parents/ guardians with the opportunity to offer their feedback regarding the program in a few ways:

* conversations with the teacher
* invitation to any open MLCA board meetings
* parent/ guardian orientation evening, held at the end of August prior to the first day of school
* parent/ guardian who have any skills or talents they would like to share with the program are encouraged to the chat with the teacher

Information discussed between any parent/ guardian and the teacher will be received and considered accordingly, information may be discussed with the facility manager.

We thank all parents/ guardians for their feedback and all comments and suggestions will be considered on an individual basis.

Teacher & Parent/ Guardian Communication

The teacher will be the primary communicator of all information. To ensure that McKenzie Lake Preschool holds all communication to the highest standard, communication will be conducted by email, phone or at the preschool. The teacher’s aides will be given information relating to the child and their family at the discretion of the teacher. Teacher’s aides will not be permitted to discuss any child(ren) with the parent/ guardian. Teacher’s aides will direct all inquires, comments, questions or concerns back to the teacher. At any time, if the teacher feels unsure about a conversation with a child, parent/ guardian or another adult interacting in the program, the facility manager will be brought up to date on the situation and included in all communication going forward.

McKenzie Lake Preschool wants to ensure:

* communication with parents/ guardians is done in an open and positive manner regularly
* staff will not be judgemental towards parents/ guardians and respect all family’s individual needs
* staff and parents/ guardians will treat each other with respect, courtesy, understanding and appropriate language
* staff will accept families rights to individual practices in raising their child(ren) and any related cultural differences
* the teacher will discuss the child’s behaviour either positive or negative
* that all parents/ guardians are aware of all forms of communication
* that staff are required to maintain confidentiality at all times
* that staff will support an open-door policy

Communication expected from Parent/ Guardians

* parents/ guardians are required to complete a registration form providing information about their child
* parents/ guardians are required to inform the preschool about any changes to their child(ren) Preschool Registration Forms (eg. change of phone number, health information, pick-up authorization, etc.)
* parents/ guardians will inform the preschool about any matters that may affect the behaviour or well being of their child during the program
* parents/ guardians are required to ensure the program has current contact information in the event of an emergency concerning their child
* parents/ guardians are required to inform the program of any custody or access arrangement
	+ relevant and required documentation will be provided by parents/ guardians
* parents/ guardians are required to email the preschool teacher advising if their child will not be attending preschool and if ill, to advise the nature of the illness and whether the illness is contagious

**Staff/ Child Interaction Policy**

Communication and Interactions with children will be friendly, respectful and helpful to the child(ren). They will focus on the social, emotional and cognitive development of the child.

* Staff will model and treat all children and adults with respect always
* Staff will engage and show interest to the child when interacting with them
* Staff will acknowledge and listen attentively when a child is talking to them
* Staff will assist child(ren) in building age appropriate problem-solving skills
* Staff will attempt to build relationships with the child through conversations, interactions, and individualized topics of interest
* Staff will be accessible to the children during their program time
* Staff will use appropriate voice tone, level and language when talking to the children
* Staff will build an environment where children feel safe, secure and free to express themselves
* Staff will encourage respect and positive interactions between children and help them
* Staff will build and develop a foundation where children feel free to communicate with each other and begin to develop skills to work together with their peers
* Staff will present new opportunities and experiences to the child(ren) and encourage them to try these experiences in a safe and secure environment
* Staff will provide positive feedback as often as possible
* When engaging with the child communication will be expressed at the Childs age and developmentally appropriate level

**Discipline Policy**

McKenzie Lake Preschool believes that providing an established set of rules, guidelines and expectations helps build a positive, safe and engaging classroom environment. Rules, routines and guidelines are presented to the children at the beginning of the school year, through conversations as well as through hands on demonstrations, interactions and experiences. Children are provided daily reminders when needed and encouraged to become responsible for their actions and behaviours.

A child exhibiting any unacceptable behaviour, such as behaviour that is disruptive, destructive or harmful to another child registered in the program, will always be brought to the attention of the parent/ guardian by the preschool teacher

* Unacceptable Behaviour is:
	+ Hurting or hitting others
	+ intentionally damaging McKenzie Lake Preschool or McKenzie Lake Community Association property
	+ Screaming or yelling

Discipline will always be brought to the attention of the teacher who will act appropriately according to the nature of the behaviour:

* Explanation to child of inappropriate behaviour, that includes words, feelings and emotions both relatable to the child and any other child(ren) involved
* Child may be required to leave from a certain task/ activity where the situation occurred until proper behaviour as previously identified can be demonstrated
	+ Parents/ guardians will be advised of the situation if the behaviour becomes repetitive (2 or more times shown in each class time)
* Teacher may ask the parent/ guardian to remove the child from class immediately and/ or from the upcoming schedule class(es)
* Facility Manager will be notified of the situation if a child is asked to be removed from a scheduled class or from the program
* If behaviour continues, teacher and/ or facility manager may determine that the child is not ready to attend preschool; if determination is made, parent/ guardian may be asked to remove their child permanently from preschool

Children will never be reprimanded for accidents (eg. spilling drinks, breaking toys, or bumping into others, etc.)

Staff will NEVER be allowed to:

* Use any method of corporal punishment or physical abuse
	+ Spanking, shoving, hitting, shaking, etc.
* Inflict or cause to be inflicted any form of physical punishment, verbal degradation or emotional deprivation
* Deny or threaten to deny any basic need
* Use or permit the use of any form of physical restraint, confinement or isolation
* Subject child(ren) to cruel or severe punishment (eg. humiliation, verbal abuse, or neglect)
* Deprive child(ren) of snacks, use of the toilet or any other daily need as a means of punishment
* Discipline a child for soiling or wetting ones’ clothes
* Use any physical restraint unless the child’s safety is in danger
	+ Written documentation will be required by a professional
* Unacceptable behaviour is defined as any behaviour that is disruptive, destructive or harmful to another child registered in the program

We will assume that any child disciplinary action taken is reasonable in the circumstances.

McKenzie Lake Preschool children are rewarded for acceptable behaviour with praise, thanks and classroom appropriate privileges.

**Zero Tolerance for Child Abuse**

We strive to ensure that the children under our care are free from abuse in all forms. McKenzie Lake Preschool staff, parents/ guardians and other adults interacting in the program are required to treat children with respect and dignity. Child abuse of any kind is not tolerated. McKenzie Lake Preschool Teacher, McKenzie Lake Facility Manager and Board of Directors will attend to all reported and suspected cases of abuse immediately. All employees must sign a Staff/ Child Interaction Agreement. This agreement will be retained as part of their personnel file.

**\*\* AT NO TIME IS THE USE OF PHYSCIAL OR MENTAL ABUSE ACCEPTABLE AT MCKENZIE LAKE PRESCHOOL\*\***

**Confidentiality**

McKenzie Lake Preschool collects personal information for the needs within our program outline to provide the best care to the child(ren) within our program. We are committed to upholding privacy and confidentiality to all families which means we will not use, collect, or disclose your Childs personal information for any purpose other than those identified to you, subject to exceptions permitted by law. All preschool staff working with the children are aware of and understand the requirement of confidentiality and have signed a Preschool Confidentiality Agreement. This agreement will be retained as part of their personnel file. If you have any questions about our privacy policy or practice, or if you would like to review your personal information at anytime during the school year, please contact the preschool teacher.

**Child Records**

Information Changes to Registration or Portable Records

It is the parent/guardian responsibility to promptly notify the program in writing of any changes to an address, contact phone numbers, health information, emergency contacts or authorized pick up contacts. For your child(ren)’s sake we ask that all information in your file be kept current and updated, to ensure that staff can contact parents/ guardians in a timely manner in an emergency. If parents/ guardians do not provide updated information or submit completed registration forms/ portable records, your child may be denied entry into the program until such information is obtained. It is a licensing requirement that parents/ guardians provide specific pertinent up to date information.

**Health & Medication Policy**

McKenzie Lake Preschool understands that health and wellbeing is a very complex issue. In developing our health policy, we want all children, adults and those engaging in the program to feel comfortable in a safe and healthy environment. We feel that all those participating in the program, both children and adults, need to be at their best both physically and mentally. The following considerations were made when establishing the policy:

* Is the child able to fully interact and participate in the program?
* The need to protect all children from potentially communicable diseases and illnesses
* Parents need for a guideline to assist in deciding when to bring a child that ‘doesn’t feel good’ to the program

Becoming Sick at Preschool & Temporary Supervised Care

If a child becomes sick/ ill at preschool we do not have the ability to care for them long term and it puts the other children and adults at risk for potentially becoming sick themselves. If a child becomes sick at preschool, parents/ guardians will be contacted immediately and asked to come and remove the child(ren) from the program immediately. If the parent/ guardian is not available, the listed emergency contacts will be contacted and asked to come and remove the child(ren) immediately.

A preschool staff member will remove the child from the other children in the program and a staff member will be assigned by the teacher to supervise the child until a parent/ guardian arrives to pick them up.

If the parent/ guardian is not able to remove the child immediately from the program in a timely manner and the child is not able to stay in the program area with a supervised preschool staff member, under the opinion of the teacher, the child will be moved to the community centre administrative office and be supervised by the community centre facility administrator.

The child will be made as comfortable as possible and receive direct supervision always.

Standards for Preschool Program Care

McKenzie Lake Preschool will not admit a child with any of the following conditions:

* Fever- over 38 degrees Celsius and low energy- if medication is controlling a fever, this is an indication that your child is fighting an infection and should be seen by a doctor
* Cold, fever, runny nose and eyes, coughing, sore throat
* Sore throat, difficulty swallowing
* Stomach ache
* Extremely itchy body or scalp
* Unexplained aches or pains
* Vomiting (2 or more times in 24 hr period)
* Diarrhea (2 or more watery stools in 24 hr period)
* Unexplained rash
* Unexplained cough
* Rash or red eyes (pus draining from eye(s), thick mucus)
* Exhibiting any other illness or symptoms that staff believe to indicate the child might need more care than can be provided
* Exhibiting any other illness or symptom that prevents the child from participating in the program

Children must be symptom free for a minimum of 24 hours before returning to the program. Parents/ guardians are strongly encouraged to keep their child home to help prevent the spread of illness.

Children might not always exhibit signs/ symptoms of a specific illness yet and not be able to handle the daily program at preschool. The teacher will decide whether a parent/ guardian will be called to pick up their child.

Communicable Disease

Childhood illness and disease are a natural part of life. When a child(ren) contract a communicable illness/ disease (eg. measles, chicken pox, strep throat, headlice, pink eye, hand/ foot & mouth disease, etc.) parents/ guardians of the child must IMMEDIATELY notify the preschool. Preschool families will be notified in accordance with the guidelines established by Alberta Health Services. Children who are absent due to any childhood disease or illness will require a doctor’s statement indicating they are no longer contagious and are able to resume regular activity. If any discrepancies occur between the preschool and parent/ guardian regarding the child’s health, the parent/ guardian must have the child examined and provide a doctor’s statement regarding the condition before they will be allowed to re-enter the program. Program items that the child(ren) might have encountered will be cleaned and sanitized immediately to help eliminate the spread of the identified communicable or infectious disease

McKenzie Lake Preschool reserves the right to close the preschool based on any health condition to clean, maintain and prevent the spread of any illness to children, staff or other adults that may participate in the preschool program. Closures will take effect immediately and may occur without any long-term warning or notification. Parents/ guardians will receive notice of any health or preschool closures via email and signs will be posted

Pre- Existing Health/ Medical Condition(s)

McKenzie Lake Preschool provides an open and inclusive program to all children and families. We know that some children may be attending the program with pre-existing health/ medical conditions. Parents/ guardians will meet prior to school starting with the teacher to discuss the child’s condition and document how to best support the child as they attend the program and what steps might additionally need to be taken and/ or required so all children in the program receive the best care, attention and support. McKenzie Lake Preschool reserves the right to re- evaluate a child’s condition at anytime if we believe that the child’s needs are not safely being met, if the teacher believes the program does not fit the child’s needs anymore, etc.

Each child’s needs will be evaluated on an individual basis with the teacher.

Medication

Preschool Staff do our best to provide all children within the program a safe and secure environment for playing, growing and learning. We understand that unforeseen circumstances may occur, and medication may need to be provided to a child. A doctor’s statement may be required, at the discretion of the preschool, outlining the reason for the medication, if it is unclear. A pre- meeting with the parent/ guardian is held prior to receiving written consent outlining the steps and procedures that will be taken if a child needs their medication administered during program time.

Medication maybe administered to a child if:

* parents/ guardians have signed written consent prior to any medication being administered
* medication is in its original packaging with proper identification

Medication consent forms are included with child’s file and a copy is attached to the child’s portable record file. If medication is administered during the preschool program, date, time and staff information is documented on the form and parents/ guardians are contacted immediately. A child’s medication will be required to be with them always while attending the program. The medication will be brought with them upon arrival and handed directly the teacher and will be returned to the parent at the end of each day. The identified medication will be stored in the Childs backpack and located on the classroom hooks which are out of reach of all children in the program at all times but accessible to all staff.

If medication is administered, Emergency Medical Services (911) may be contacted at the discretion of the teacher/ facility manager

If a child arrives to preschool without their medication the child will not be permitted into the program until they have their medication. If the medication cannot be retrieved for the child to attend preschool, the child will not be granted access as we do not want to risk the health or wellbeing of any child.

*\*\*Medical Form cannot indicate ‘if needed’ or ‘as needed’ \*\**

*\*\*McKenzie Lake Preschool Staff are not authorized to determine if a child needs the medication, these indications are to be determined in writing by the parent\*\**

*\*\*Medication will NOT remain on the program premises overnight\*\**

McKenzie Lake Preschool will not, without consent from parent/ guardian, give specific information and instructions on administering medication or give the child any form of medication other than emergency medication, (where time is of the essence). The most common medication that falls under this description will be those to treat allergies:

* EpiPen
* Anaphylactic
* Asthma and diabetes

Ongoing conversations and updated information between the teacher and parent/ guardian will be maintained on an ongoing basis, to ensure that both parents/ guardians and the teacher are aware of when medication should be administered. It is the responsibility of the parent/ guardian to notify the teacher immediately should any changes occur to the administration of the medication.

Preschool Staff administering any medication will hold a current and valid First Aid & CPR – C & AED (Automated external defibrillator) certificate.

**Food Policy**

Food, eating and socialization are a great part of the preschool program and a part many children enjoy. However, for some children and families it can also be an unsettling part of the program as children may have allergies or dietary needs/ restrictions that need to be taken into consideration. We do our best to ensure that all children have an enjoyable snack time experience.

Parent Provided Snack

Families are responsible for packing a nutritious snack each preschool class throughout the school year. When preparing snack, we ask that parents/ guardians send the snack into class in a ready to serve form (eg. Carrots peeled and cut, oranges peeled, grapes pulled off vine and cut in half), if items have not been sent in ready to serve they will be sent back home, as the teacher’s aides unfortunately do not have time to prepare these items during class. If any beverages (eg. juice or milk), yogurt tubes and fruit cups are sent they will be returned home. Please send in a water bottle with lid for each class.

Please take care to ensure items have not been contaminated by nut products (e.g., peanut butter on knife, cutting board or counter). When cutting food, keep in mind that a child’s windpipe is about the size of your ‘pinkie finger’. Please cut items length wise (carrots and grapes especially), if the preschool feels the items are unsafe for the children to eat safely, they will be sent back home with the child.

We enjoy home baked treats if they are **NUT FREE** (including nut oils and milks). Please read labels to ensure this.

McKenzie Lake Preschool does our best to ensure that all items provided for snack meet the healthy and safety guidelines established. If item(s) that we feel do not meet these guidelines or could potentially cause a healthy concern to those eating the product it will not be served (preschool teacher discretion) and will be sent back home with the child (eg. package expiration has passed, item previously used, etc.).

KIDS LOVE CREATIVITY with Snack

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Preschool Snack Suggestions:** | **Items to Include:**- Fruit or Vegetable- Treat of some kind- Napkins- Forks/ Spoons (if needed) | **Snack Option A:**Cut GrapesCut CucumbersCrackers- 2 different kinds  | **Snack Option B:**Cut ApplesCut CarrotsCheese SticksGold Fish CrackersCheerio’s |
| **Snack Option C:**Cut BananaCut Peppers Yogurt tubesGranola Bar  | **Snack Option D:**Cut StrawberriesCut PicklesCheese piecesPretzels  | **Snack Option E:**WatermelonYogurt cupsBanana Bread | **Snack Option F:**You create your own designCreativity is the best |

Fruit/ Vegetable Suggestions-

Grapes (cut in half), watermelon, strawberries, oranges, bananas, carrots, cucumbers, pickles, tomatoes, peppers

Dairy Suggestions-

Yogurt , cheese cubes, cheese sticks

Carbohydrates-

Crackers, Nutra Grain bars, cheerio’s, cereal, rice cakes, animal cookies, bear paws, arrowroot, teddy grahams, pretzels, banana bread, muffins, cookies, rice crispy square

Water-

Please back a non-spill water bottle with lid

Please do not send any juice or milk, it will be returned unopened

*\*\*McKenzie Lake Preschool is a NUT AWARE PRESCHOOL\*\**

*\*\*Nut Aware includes all peanuts, tree nuts and coconuts are not to be used in any products, items that openly contain these items will be returned home\*\**

Children with Allergies or Dietary Needs/ Restrictions

Children who have been identified to have allergies or dietary needs/ restrictions are taken extremely seriously. Parents/ guardians will meet prior to their child’s first day of school with teacher to discuss and provide written documentation about their child’s allergies and/ or dietary needs/ restrictions. If a child has needs that may require doctor prescribed medication, a medical form will be completed and maintained on the child’s registration package and in their portable records. A list will be displayed outlining each child’s food allergies and what they will be excluded from based on their individual needs. Since our families provide snack we do our best to make sure that each child can share in the experience with their peers, however, if an item is brought to the preschool and parents/ guardians have expressed that they do not want their child to have this, it will be removed from their plate at snack time. If the preschool staff is unsure as to the contents of an item (eg. Homemade muffins), the item will not be given to the child. If a child with allergies or dietary needs will not be able to safely join in the preschool snack, alternative options will be suggested by the preschool teacher to the family (eg. child brings their own snack from home, child may sit at an alternative area from their peers, etc.). Parent/ guardian will be made aware of these alternative options and understand and acknowledge in writing the steps the preschool will take to provide safe and positive snack experience.

Preschool Party with our Families - **TBD**

**Bathroom & Clothing Policy**

Toileting is a huge milestone and accomplishment to many children. All children must be fully, completely toilet trained and independent in the washroom prior to starting in the 3-yr. old or 4 yr. old preschool program.

McKenzie Lake Preschool defines toilet trained and fully independent in the washroom as:

* not needing any assistance from an adult
* Children can get on and off the toilet by themselves
* Children can pull their clothes on and off by themselves
* Children can wipe themselves after they have used the toilet
* Children can wash their hands after they have used the toilet
* Children are dressed in age appropriate undergarments- no pull-ups or diapers

**Should an bathroom accident occur parents/ guardians will be called to come and change their child into dry clean clothes. Thank you for your cooperation!**

If parents/ guardians cannot be reached, then your emergency contacts will be called. Parents/ guardians being contacted to change their child if there is a bathroom accident is to protect the child and preschool staff from any questionable encounters. There is no scheduled bathroom time during our program, children will be taken to the bathroom when they ask. Prior to the first day of preschool we strongly encourage parents/ guardians to teach their child to ask to use the bathroom and explain to them to ask the teacher or teacher’s aides when needing to use the bathroom to eliminate the possibility of a bathroom accident occurring. Children will be accompanied and supervised always in the bathroom by a teacher aide.

Children will never be reprimanded for any toilet or bathroom accidents

Clothing

Children will be exposed to many types of art, sensory and free play materials. Please ensure that what you send your child to preschool in can get messy and/ or dirty, we do our best to try and provide items to protect the children’s clothes however, we cannot guarantee that they will remain clean at all times.

Please make it easy for your child(ren) to dress and undress themselves when using the washroom; consider things that may be difficult for them to do by themselves such as:

* Belts
* Overalls
* Snaps
* buttons, etc.

Footwear is extremely important at preschool, as children are always moving around and exploring both on the tables and the floors. To ensure that all children have proper footwear, we ask that children have shoes that will remain securely fastened to their feet. This is a requirement in case we need to leave the preschool in an emergency. Shoes that have a hard-sole bottom with Velcro or slip- on are great (eg. runners)

No Flip flops, slippers, robeez, etc.

*\*\* Please include a change of clothes in your child’s backpack, in case the parent/ guardian needs to come and change them \*\**

**Interviews/ Assessments**

Informal assessments will be done one on one with each child at the beginning of the school year and again near the end of the school year. This will give families and teachers a snapshot at what the child has been practicing as well as areas where they may need more time and assistance. The preschool teacher will also be making observations on each child throughout the year. We will be looking at how they are developing social/ emotionally, cognitively and physically (Fine and Gross motor).

I am always happy to chat with parents/ guardians during the year about how their child is doing. If you would like to schedule a parent/ teacher interview to gain some insight into how your child is progressing, please contact me at anytime either for a meeting or by phone or email.

**Scholastic Book Monthly Fundraiser- Optional**

Each month a book order form is sent home with families. This is an optional opportunity for you to purchase books for your family’s home library. Parents/ guardians that would like to order books either online or by the form and cheques only (payable to Scholastic Canada) must have everything returned on the set date (teacher will advise parents/ guardians of the date on the weekly email) For online, please use the teacher name when searching.

When families order books, the preschool receives points for us to go and purchase items for the classroom, e.g. Books, puzzles, games, art materials, etc. This is a great opportunity to help support your Childs classroom literacy program.

**Yearly Preschool Program Review**

The program will be reviewed annually by the teacher and facility manager to maintain the highest quality of programming, updates to licensing regulations, updates to health standards and to enhance the quality and enjoyment of the program for the children, families and staff.

**Program Policy & Procedure Amendments**

Program Policy and Procedures can be found online. The online link can be found in the Parent/ Guardian Handbook and in Parent/ Guardian Quick Reference Guide. Program Policies and Procedures will be reviewed at the end of each school year to ensure that McKenzie Lake Preschool is providing the most current and up to date program based on our program needs and our Child Care License from the province of Alberta. If a policy or procedure needs to be updated during the school year, parents will be notified via email about the change.

Parents/ guardians are welcome to discuss any policies with the teacher at any time during the school year.

**Parent/ Guardian Handbook Amendments**

Parent/ Guardian Handbook can be found online. The online link can be found in the Program Policies and Procedures and in the Parent/ Guardian Quick Reference Guide. Parent/ Guardian Handbook will be reviewed at the end of each school year to ensure that McKenzie Lake Preschool is providing the most current and up to date program based on our program needs and our Child Care License from the province of Alberta. If a handbook policy needs to be updated during the school year, parents/ guardians will be notified via email about the change.

Parents/ guardians are welcome to discuss any handbook policies with the teacher at anytime during the school year

**Community Involvement**

Fundraisers

We hold a few community centre fundraisers each year. We do a Cookie Dough fundraiser in September and a Flower Basket fundraiser in May. A larger based fundraiser is our Casino, which is the Community Association’s main fundraiser. Our McKenzie Frenzie is held in early September. We require many volunteers for each of these events, if you can help with the Casino or McKenzie Frenzie, please contact the office. Fundraising efforts require volunteer time from our parents and community members. We try to offer a variety of opportunities in hopes that families will be able to become involved. This fundraiser helps to provide extra funds for community centre programming.

Community Resource Numbers

Emergency Medical Services Call- 911

Poison Control 403- 994- 1414

Child Abuse Hotline 1 800- 387- 5437

Calgary Health Link 403- 943- 5465

### 24-hour Health Information

Communicable Disease 403- 944- 7075

Child Care SubsidyToll Free Phone- 1- 877- 644- 9992

 Email- hs.childsubsidy@gov.ab.ca

Address- Child Care Services
Human Services
PO Box 1641, Station M
Edmonton AB T5J 2N9

Family Violence Info Line Toll Free Phone- 310- 1818