



Polka Dot Parent Handbook

Philosophy

It is our privilege to teach your child at Polka Dot Preschool. The goal of our character-building readiness program is to help each child at our school to believe that he/she is special through a loving and caring environment. We provide a positive learning environment in which your child can reach his/her optimum level of development in all areas: cognitively, socially, emotionally and physically. In light of this tremendous goal, we have several key objectives for our children at Polka Dot Preschool.

- 1) To help each child experience cognitive growth and educational stimulation with a positive attitude. This can be accomplished through experimentation, participating in language activities, sensory awareness and many other creative and educational activities.
- 2) To help each child to become socially well adjusted by building positive relationships with the family, peers and adults. By being in a group situation, he/she will learn to respect others, co-operate and participate with others, and to share and care for the belongings of others.
- 3) To help each child to become emotionally sound by building in him/her a positive, healthy self esteem and by developing a confidence in him/herself and others because of experiencing success. We encourage the children to build empathy for the feelings and emotions of others.
- 4) To help each child to acquire a physical well being by developing large and fine muscle control and co-ordination. We establish desirable health habits, positive attitudes toward bodily functions, exercise, their bodies and nutrition.

Welcome to Polka Dot Preschool!

When your child is new to our Centre, it is best if parents allow their child to explore at their own pace. Remain with your child until you feel comfortable leaving; do not hesitate to discuss your feelings or concerns with a staff member. Take time to enjoy this new and exciting experience. Each child is unique; some children enjoy group environments immediately, while others take time to adjust to new surroundings and new individuals.

Our Program

Your child will have many new experiences at our Centre. We encourage your child to explore, create, talk, touch, listen, build, manipulate, experiment and join in with group activities. Throughout the day, a child is given many opportunities to choose from a variety of planned activities. The Centre offers care from 7am-6pm, Mondays to Fridays and we are opened 12 months of the year.

We offer the following programs at Polka Dot Preschool:

- **TODDLER CLASSROOM (18 months up to 30 months)**
- **PRESCHOOL CLASSROOM (30 months up to 6 years)**
- **KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOM (44 months up to 7 years)**

Children should be at the Centre by 9.00am as classes begin to hold creative activities and programming at this time. The Kindergarten children are required to be at the Centre by 8.30am for their programming. This is imperative for your child in order for him/her to receive the full benefit of the program.

According to the Early Years Act, all children must have regular outdoor play times all year round....weather permitting. Please be sure that your child wears appropriate clothing every day and have an extra change of clothing in his/her cubby at all times.

How Does Learning Happen? Is the foundation of our Program.

Using the common framework articulated in How Does Learning Happen? Our Centre will support the children to achieve the following Goals and will meet the Expectations for programs building on our Four (4) foundations for healthy growth and development:

Foundations	Goals for Children	Expectations for Program
Belonging	Every child has a sense of belonging when he/she is connected to others and contributes to his/her world.	Cultivate respectful relationships and connections to create a sense of belonging among and between children, adults and the world around them.
Well-Being	Every child is developing a sense of self and health and well being.	Nurture children's healthy development and support their growing sense of self.
Engagement	Every child is an active and engaged learner who explores the world with his/her senses, bodies and mind	Provide environments and experiences to engage children in active, creative, and meaningful exploration and learning
Expression	Every child is a capable communicator who is able to express himself/herself in many ways	Foster communication and expression in all forms

**** Our full Program Statement is included in our Enrollment Package. ****

Fees

1. Fees are based on a daily rate and are payable the 1st day of every month.

Toddler Daily Rate: \$ 54.00

Preschool Daily Rate: \$ 48.00

Kindergarten: \$ 48.00

2. A non-refundable Registration Fee of \$50.00 must accompany the application forms. In addition, a non-refundable Security Deposit in the form of two (2) weeks fees. The Security Deposit will then be applied to your child's last month at the Centre. The Security Deposit can be refunded once one (1) month's written notice is given prior to your child's withdrawal date.

Field Trips & Special Programs

Throughout the year, trips are made to special places on interest. A notice will be sent home in advance of the excursion, informing you of the destination, time and date. Parents are welcome to accompany us on our field trips and a parent sign up list will be posted for each trip. A Calendar of Events will be given to you at the beginning of your child's enrollment, which details all field trips, other special events and school closures. There are additional costs for these special programs and field trips for the children and parents who are attending. Be sure to mark these on your calendar. We also have weekly Music & Movement classes for the children. Preschool & Kindergarten - \$ 16.00 per month (Every Thursday) and Toddler - \$ 10.00 per month (Every Thursday) will be added to your monthly invoice.

Discipline

Our goal is to help children to achieve a sense of self discipline by accepting the consequences of their own actions. Limits on behaviour are set with the health and safety of your child in mind.

The program at Polka Dot Preschool is arranged appropriately in order for the children to know what is expected of them and where. The staff remain consistent in their discipline which promote a sense of security amongst the children. Children are encouraged to express their emotion, but in an appropriate manner. They are encouraged to verbalize their feelings of frustration and if unable to manage at an activity, they are gently removed from the situation and redirected to another. **Physical punishment is strictly prohibited and never used at Polka Dot Preschool.**

Prohibited Practices

Polka Dot Preschool strictly prohibits, under any circumstances:

- a) Corporal Punishment of a child.
- b) Deliberate harsh or degrading measures to be used on a child that would humiliate a child or undermine a child's self-respect; and
- c) Deprivation of a child of basic needs including food, shelter, clothing or bedding,
- d) Any person to lock or permit to be locked for the purpose of confining a child, by using the exits of the day nursery.
- e) Any person to use a locked or lockable room or structure to confine a child who has been withdrawn from the other children.
- f) Any child to be left unattended.
- g) Use of any abusive language, yelling or screaming.
- h) Any use of physical restraint such as confining a child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purpose of discipline or in lieu of supervision.
- i) Inflicting bodily harm and forcing a child to eat or drink against their will.

Wait List Management Procedures

The Centre's Supervisor maintains a waiting list for each of the child care programs offered by the Centre. Each waitlist is administered in accordance with the following rules:

- A child's name will be added to the Management's Wait list in order based on the date the Centre receives the completed Registration Form. The parents will be given a corresponding number in order to maintain confidentiality and privacy of the other children on the list.
- The date of registration on the waitlist will reflect the date the registration form is received by the Centre.
- A child's space on the waitlist is not transferable to another family.
- When a space becomes available, the Supervisor will offer the family of the child whose name/number is at the top of the waitlist, a space in the child care program(subject to priority rules set out below) by telephone at the number provided on the registration form. It is the responsibility of the parents to call or email their contact information if their information changes for any reason.
- A family that is offered a space in the Centre, will have up to three (3) days to accept the offer.
- If the family declines the offer, or fails to respond within 3 days, the space will be offered to the family of the child whose name is next on the wait list (subject to the priority rules set out below.) In such cases, the child's application will be placed at the back of the waiting list.

WAIT LIST PRIORITY

When a space becomes available, families will be offered a space in the Centre on the basis of the applicable waitlist, subject to the following priority:

- Siblings of children already attending the Centre whose names/numbers are on the applicable waitlist will be offered a place in priority to all other children on the waitlist.
- Each child on the waitlist will be placed numerically and will be given a corresponding number at the time they are placed on the Waitlist. Parents will have the opportunity to check on their status based on their number. This will maintain confidentiality and privacy of the children listed on it.

Volunteers & Field Placement Students

1. ***Under NO CIRCUMSTANCES will direct unsupervised access be granted to anyone under the age of 18 years old and who is not an employee of Polka Dot Preschool.*** Volunteers and Field Placement Students are not counted as ratios and are not left alone with the children. Students and Volunteers will always be supervised by an Employee of Polka Dot Preschool at all times.

Addressing Parents Issues & Concerns

At Polka Dot Preschool we make it a priority to consistently handle complaints, issues or concerns in a timely and appropriate manner. The procedures will help support both staff and families in making decisions. Complaints can be made on the grounds of dissatisfaction with care, with service, or with a decision made by staff, management, or if an individual/family believes they have been treated unfairly or not respectfully.

All complaints will be taken seriously by the Centre and will be considered as opportunities for Centre development and staff training. A full copy of our Complaint Resolution Procedures is attached.

Emergency Management Policies & Procedures

At Polka Dot Preschool we have an Emergency Management Policies & Procedures which provide clear direction for Staff and Licensee to follow in order to deal with Emergency Situations. The Procedures set out steps for Staff to follow to support the safety and well-being of everyone involved. In the event of an Emergency, parents will be notified immediately once the children have been evacuated safely by either email or phone. You will be notified of the incident and next steps.

Toileting

Children being enrolled at Polka Dot Preschool are not required to be toilet trained at the time of enrollment. However, the children are encouraged to begin the toilet training process once the teachers notice signs of readiness. They will notify the parent and we will work in partnership with the parents to help the child become toilet trained.

Snack and Meal Times

Regular snack and meal times are set throughout the day. If your child is arriving at the Centre between 7.00am-8.30am, we encourage you to give your child a light snack before coming to school as your child will not have snack in his/her class until 8.30am. Weekly menus are posted at the front entrance and may be referred to at any time. We plan a Spring/Summer Menu and a Fall/Winter Menu which are rotated accordingly. Hand and face washing before and after eating are part of our routine.

Arrival Procedures

It is imperative that you escort your child into the Centre. ***Do not, under any circumstance, leave your child in the hallway unattended.*** Each parent must inform a staff member once they have arrived and your child will be signed in by the teacher. Only at this time does our responsibility of your child begin. Please give the staff any relevant information concerning your child's well being. There may be something which has upset your child either at home or on the way to school. If so, please be sure to tell a staff member so it can be talked about with you and your child will be comforted.

Please do not forget to say good-bye to your child. Perhaps, if your child is upset, which can happen, you could tell him/her that you will be leaving in 5 minutes. This gives your child time to adjust and expect your departure.

Departure Procedures

All parents are required to inform a staff member when you are departing with your child. **Do not, under any circumstances, remove your child from his/her classroom without verbally notifying a staff member.** This allows the teacher time to say good-bye to your child and speak to you, the parent, to inform you of his/her day. At this time, your child will be signed out and your responsibility begins. This also ensures that the staff knows which children are leaving and who they have left with. Check your child's art file or cubby for art work and letters which needs

to go home and don't forget to look on his/her cubby for soiled clothing to be washed. Please be sure to replace this clothing the following day.

Closures

2. ***The Centre will be CLOSED on the following Statutory Holidays:***

- **Family Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Victoria Day, Canada Day**
- **Civic Holiday, Labour Day, Thanksgiving Day**
- **1 week at Christmas**
- **1 Professional Development Day – Staff Recertification and Seminars**

Parents will be informed in advance of scheduled school closures and special events. In the event of a natural disaster, including snow storms, the Centre will be subject to closing based on the severity of the incident.

Late Charge

A late charge of \$ **15.00** for the first ten (10) minutes and then a \$ 2.00 per minute thereafter will be charged for any child(ren) who are not picked up by 6.00pm. For siblings who are not picked up on time, the late charge will be \$ 15.00 for the first 10 minutes (10) minutes per child and then a \$2.00 per minute per child. Please understand that this fee is for the extra service which has been provided beyond the designated pick up time. All children **MUST** exit the building at 6.00pm, as the staff must lock the facilities before their departure. Our insurance agreement does not permit parents and children to remain in the building past our 6.00pm closure. The late fee charge will be strictly enforced for anyone who has not exited the building by 6.00pm.

Parents

As parents, we value your input and involvement in our program. Your co-operation in our field trips, special events and parent meetings are vital in maintaining a high quality program. You are a valuable resource and we welcome your ideas and contributions to our program.

The Centre reserves the right to terminate services to the parent with two (2) weeks of notice or if the situation is severe, termination will be effective immediately with no notice given.

- The parent(s) fail(s) to follow the policies of the Centre.
- Fees are not paid or are continuously paid late.
- A parent intervenes in the discipline through verbal means or physical mistreatment of a child in the Centre's enrollment.
- Verbal or physical mistreatment towards any of the teaching staff.
- Failure to follow and abide to the Centre's policies and procedures.
- Depending on degree of situation, action may be immediate.

Three (3) weeks are given as an adjustment period for each child. If he/she is still having a difficult time settling in after the three (3) weeks period, the Director has the right to terminate the service to the parent with no notice being given. This decision will be made in the best interest of the child.

Clothing

Children should be dressed comfortably in play clothing so that they are free to explore without fear or getting dirty. Shoes should be suitable for play, both inside and outdoor play. The shoes should be durable with soles that will give your child traction when running and walking. **Open toe shoes and crocs are not permitted as it does not offer proper support and safety for the children when they are running.** Remember that outdoor play is a regular part of our program and clothing for all weather should be kept in your child's cubby. Be sure there is an extra set of clothing in your child's cubby, should your child need to be changed. Children wear protective smocks during messy activities. Please label all of your child's possessions so the teachers can identify them and make sure they don't get misplaced

In Closing.....

We know that your child's time at Polka Dot Preschool will be a warm and enriching experience. Although progress reports are completed twice a year for each child in our care, we want you, as parents, to feel free to talk to the teachers at any time. If you have concerns or questions, please do not hesitate to speak to the staff. It is our privilege to care for and teach your child and we are extremely pleased that you have chosen Polka Dot Preschool for your child's education!!