



**BELGRAVIA CO-OPERATIVE PLAYSCHOOL
PARENT HANDBOOK**

11540-73 Avenue
Community League Building
Edmonton, AB
T6G 0G1

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1. INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Belgravia Co-operative Playschool! We are a “not-for-profit” co-operative school promoting “learning through play”. We strive to give children the tools to choose their own educational direction and the confidence to explore the world around them. Our objective is to provide children with the opportunity to develop to their full potential physically, socially, emotionally and intellectually.

Belgravia Co-operative Playschool recognizes that children are unique individuals. All aspects of their growth follow a pattern, but all development is at an individual’s own rate. Children learn best through play. We therefore endeavor to provide an environment and a curriculum that is developmentally appropriate for preschoolers, yet flexible enough to cater to individual needs.

1.1. Facilities

The school is located at 11540-73 Avenue in the Belgravia Community League Building. It is a bright, sunny classroom with access to a full kitchen upstairs as well as a large space for gym-type activities. It is located beside a recently renovated playground and skating rink. Belgravia Elementary School is right next door.

1.2. Educational Program

A professionally trained teacher and one or two parent(s) run each session. We are delighted to have our teacher, Monika Fouad, a Belgravia resident and mother of two young boys as our playschool teacher. She is a wonderful, loving and gentle teacher, full of enthusiasm and creative ideas. She was trained at the Pedagogical University of Weingarten (Germany) as an elementary school teacher. The focus of her education was on "Musisch-astetischem Gegenstandsbereich", a holistic approach integrating fine arts, music and movement to promote aesthetics perception, creativity and to foster the expression of feelings. She also obtained a certificate in counseling and adult teaching. The 2008 – 2009 school year will be Monika’s fifth year at our playschool.

The teacher plans daily activities based on the expressed interests of children as well as introducing topics she feels may be of interest to them. Some activities are teacher-directed, but the majority of the children’s time at school is self-directed. A wide range of materials, arranged at various centres throughout the classroom, is aimed at giving each child the opportunity to follow their own interests while still participating in the program as a whole. Centres available on a daily basis include art, dramatic play, blocks, manipulatives (i.e. puzzles, small blocks, stringing beads, etc.), and a book area. Daily activities usually include songs, stories, finger plays, music, large muscle and/or creative movement activities and sensory activities such as the sand or water table. Weather permitting, children also have outdoor playtime daily.

1.3. Class Size

Enrollment is limited by law to 16 children per session.

2. PROGRAM AND POLICIES

2.1. Hours of Operation

Class time: 8:45-11:15 a.m.

Children attend half-days in a morning program. Four-year-olds attend on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Three-year-olds attend on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Playschool begins one week after the public school classes start in September and ends one week before the public schools break for the summer in June. The Belgravia Co-Operative Playschool follows the public school calendar of Belgravia Elementary School.

2.2. Arrival And Departure

Parents are asked to bring their child to the playschool no earlier than 8:45 a.m. in order to respect the teacher and the duty parent's preparation time for all children involved in the program that day.

Parents should bring their child into the building and help them remove their outerwear. Please label all outerwear as well as indoor shoes.

Children should be picked up promptly at 11:15 a.m. Both the teacher and the duty parent are required to stay until each child has been picked up. Late pick up is inconvenient for both parents and teacher, please endeavour to be on time! In winter, it is recommended parents arrive early to assist their child in putting on their outerwear.

Pickup after 11:20 a.m. will result in a \$20 late fee – you are required to bring cash or a cheque and give it to the teacher on the day that you are late.

Licensing regulations require that we keep attendance records and that parents sign their children in and out on each day of attendance. Children will only be released to an adult who is listed on the "Access to Child" portion of the registration form. Advance notice must be given if someone other than those listed will be picking your child up.

Parents are responsible for the transportation of their children to and from the school.

2.3. Age Requirements

Children must be at least 36 months old to enroll.

2.4. Toilet Training

Children must be toilet-trained to attend Belgravia Co-operative Playschool.

2.5. Fees

i. REGISTRATION FEE: \$50 per child (*non-refundable and non-transferable, required to hold a spot for child*)

ii. MONTHLY FEE (September – June):

3 Year Old Program – Tuesdays & Thursdays – \$80 per month/\$800 per year

4 Year Old Program – Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays – \$120 per month/\$1200 per year

Single day – \$50 per month/\$500 per year

iii. FINE CHEQUES:

Cleaning Day Fine: \$50 (Postdate for December 31)

Duty Parent Fines: 2 cheques of \$75 each (Postdate for September 1, and January 1)

Late Fine: 2 cheques of \$25 each (Postdate for September 1)

Notes and conditions:

- Make cheques payable to **Belgravia Co-operative Playschool**.
- *All fees and fine cheques are due on registration.*
- The Executive Board, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to make changes to fees and fines for any upcoming school year.
- Monthly Fees payment may be made by a single cheque for the entire year (dated September 1), 2 cheques (annual fees divided by 2, dated September 1 and January 1) or by postdated monthly cheques for the whole year.
- A \$30 fee is charged for NSF cheques.

- A fine cheque is cashed only if a parent does not complete the related duty (i.e. fails to attend a scheduled cleaning day, or help on scheduled duty days). Un-cashed cheques will be destroyed at the end of the school year unless you specify that you want them returned to you.
- A non-refundable enrollment fee of \$50.00 is required to secure available space. One half of the registration fee will be used for the purchase of permanent equipment while the other half will be put towards the programming of special events for the children.
- Children may attend only those days for which they have been registered at the beginning of each term.
- If a place is booked before playschool commences in September, cancellation must be made before August 15th to ensure return of September fees. After August 15th, the one-month notice applies and September fees are non-refundable.

2.6. Community League Membership

As Belgravia Co-operative Playschool is a program of the Belgravia Community League, all families registered at the playschool must be a member of the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues. If a family's area does not have a community league they may become associate members of Belgravia's Community League. A valid Community League membership number for the academic year of enrolment must be provided on your registration form. Should you register for playschool prior to the memberships being on sale, you are required to provide the number to the Registrar prior to the first day of classes.

2.7. Discipline of Children

Children need guidance to help them make appropriate behaviour choices. Child care staff, including the duty parent, have both the opportunity and responsibility to use child guidance strategies that encourage self-control, self-respect and respect for others. Any child guidance needs to be reasonable in the circumstances and consistently followed by all staff. When necessary, children are disciplined in order to promote self-control, to ensure health and safety for themselves and others, to learn to respect others' rights, and to maintain equipment. They are disciplined in a positive manner at a level that is appropriate to their actions and their ages. The BCP child guidance strategies are posted in the school's coatroom for parents to review.

Under no circumstances is corporal punishment, abusive language, ridicule, harsh, humiliating, or frightening treatment permitted. "Corporal Punishment" is defined as any type of physical punishment. It includes shaking, pushing, slapping or spanking. Any form of contact that is intended to ridicule, humiliate, degrade, insult or undermine the dignity and self-worth of a child is also a form of "corporal punishment".

When the appropriate measures (as determined from the "Licensing Standards and Best Practices In Child Care" by Alberta Children's Services, April 2007) have been consistently applied and have failed to produce a change in a child's behaviour to the satisfaction of staff, the Teacher will meet with the parent. The situation will be discussed and both parties will agree to a mutually agreeable course of action. (If necessary, assistance can be sought from an outside referral agency.) Where there is no evidence that the measures taken are having the desired effect and there is concern for the health and safety of the child, or that of another child or the group of children, the parent will be asked to remove the child from the program. The final decision to withdraw services will be made jointly by the Teacher and the President or her designate from the Board. The Board will advise the parent in writing of the decision.

The use of corporal punishment is prohibited under any circumstances.

2.8. Withdrawal Or Dismissal Of Children

Notice of withdrawal must be given in writing to the Registrar one month in advance. The member will be responsible for the payment of that month's fee.

In the event that the program is not appropriate for the needs of the child, the teacher, with Executive Board approval, may ask that the child be withdrawn from the program.

2.9. Field Trips

Field trips are based on class topics. Local is best! You will receive a notice form several days before any out-of-class field trip. Parents must sign a permission slip for their child to be able to participate in these outings. In the event of a field trip where transportation is required, provisions will be made to provide adequate and safe transportation for all the children. Parent help is welcomed (and usually necessary) on field trips.

2.10. Snack Policy

A snack is served at every session. The duty parent is responsible for providing the snack for all the children at playschool that day. The snack should consist of at least two food groups. It is highly recommended that you bring fresh fruits or vegetables. Clean up after snack, wipe the tables, clean, dry and put away any dirty dishes. Parents should take any leftover snack home with them.

Licensing regulations require that we keep records of snacks served and that parents record the day's snack in the "snack calendar" (located on the clipboard, under the sign in/out sheet).

- We are a nut free school! Please ensure you do not send nuts or products that may contain nuts in your child's snack. A brochure on nut-free snack suggestions is available through the Elementary School Office. CRACKERS AND COOKIES SOLD IN BULK SHOULD BE AVOIDED because they may have come in contact with other items containing peanuts. IF IN DOUBT READ THE INGREDIENT LABELS – avoid any ingredient named hydrolyzed plant protein.
- Keep the snack simple, light and nutritious - something that won't require a lot of time for them to eat.
- Drinks are limited to water only. Parents are responsible for providing a cup for their child which is to be taken home for cleaning after every session.
- Suggested snack foods: fruit, vegetables, cheese, yogurt, melba toast, stoned wheat thins, Goldfish crackers, bagels.

2.11. Birthdays And Other Special Celebrations

Birthdays are important days in the lives of young children and we share your desire to make your child's day a special one. This is a time where you are welcome to bring home-baked goods to celebrate the occasion.

2.12. Clothing

Children have a busy morning at playschool, running, painting, eating, climbing and many other fun-filled activities. Licensing regulations require that every child wear a pair of indoor shoes while at the school. We recommend closed-toed shoes with rubber soles. These shoes may be left at the school at the beginning of each term.

It is also advisable to dress children in appropriate outerwear, especially on days when they'll be taking the fun outdoors. Please be advised that your children's clothes may get dirty and stained due to the crafts and activities they will be performing. Play clothes are recommended. You may choose to send your child with a complete change of clothing in your child's backpack. There is no available storage for extra clothing.

2.13. Health Records and Allergies

A detailed list of each child's health information is required on registration. This includes all medical information, allergies, and emergency contact numbers, as well as all requirements related to treatment.

2.14. Health + Medical Emergency Policy

If your child has any health problems, parents are responsible to inform the teacher. A child who cannot play outside or who exhibits the following symptoms is considered too sick to attend school:

Diarrhea or vomiting

Fever of 38° C or more

Persistent cough, sneezing, runny nose

Infected nasal discharge, e.g., thick, colored nasal drainage

- Infected eyes
- A communicable disease, e.g., chicken pox, mumps, whooping cough

Please keep your child at home for 24 hours after symptoms end.

Do not bring sick children to school. Whether or not a child should be in class is at the discretion of the teacher. Please respect their decision and take your child home and/or seek medical attention.

If your child has been in contact with someone with a communicable disease, please inform the teacher.

If a child becomes sick while at school, but does not require medical treatment, the child will be isolated from the other children until the parent(s) arrives. A special mat for resting shall be provided.

In a medical emergency:

If an accident of medical emergency occurs at school that requires a child to be rushed to the hospital, the Teacher or Teachers Aide will accompany the child. The parents will be contacted immediately. If unable to contact parents, the emergency contact will be notified.

Parents will be responsible for bearing the cost associated with transporting their child by ambulance in an emergency situation where the teacher deems ambulance transportation to be appropriate.

Our default medical center is:

Stollery Emergency Department
University of Alberta Hospital
8440 – 110 Street
Edmonton, Alberta

2.15. Medication Policy

Due to the short time children are present in the program, regular medication will not be administered. Where emergency situations demand, medication (for example, Ventolin, Epi-pen), will be administered with written permission of the parent/guardian. Emergency medication must be clearly labeled and stored so it is easily accessible to the teacher but not to the children.

3. CO-OP MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents are an important part of Belgravia Co-operative Playschool; parental participation is an integral part of the classroom atmosphere. The quality of the school is directly related to the commitment and enthusiasm of the parents. There is always a minimum of one parent “on duty” per session. Parents who are not the duty parent are always welcome to stay and join in the days activities. Your annual responsibilities in the co-op are:

- Volunteering on a committee or on the Board
- Working one cleaning session
- Duty parenting

3.1. Parent/Staff Communication

There are three general meetings, in September, January and June of each program year. Due notice of meeting dates will be provided. Parents are welcome to attend Board meetings and bring forward motions that Board members can present. Members are welcome to participate in discussion and present opinions and input. However, only Board members may vote at Board meetings.

Please take time to read the parent notice boards and the school newsletter. Not only do these keep you up-to-date with what your child has been doing at school but also the teacher will post reminders for needed materials for art projects and upcoming events.

3.2. Board/Committees

Belgravia Cooperative Playschool operates by a series of volunteer positions. Each family is required to take on a position on the Board or on a committee.

Board positions: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Registrar.

Committees and other volunteer roles: Volunteer Coordinator; Cleaning Day Coordinator; Duty Roster Calendar Coordinator; Scholastic Books Coordinator; Social Events Coordinator; Marketing/Open House Coordinator;; Laundry; Newsletter; Sewing; Auditor; ; Fieldtrip Coordinator; Librarian; Classroom Organizer; Photographer; Hallway Decorator; Fix-it Person; Class Historian; Floor Cleaning Specialist; Bottle Drive Coordinator Fun Auction Liaison.;; . Other parent positions may be identified as needs arise – feel free to suggest and/or volunteer for other duties or activities.

3.3. Cleaning Days

One member from each family must attend one of two annual cleaning days, on the assigned date, where a thorough cleaning is given to everything from the toys to the rugs. The cleaning session lasts about three hours. If you are not able to attend your scheduled session, you may switch with another family.

Note: If you do not participate in your scheduled cleaning session, your cleaning fine cheque will be cashed.

3.4. Duty Parenting

- Belgravia Co-operative Playschool is a parent run co-operative.
- We value a gentle, nurturing environment in which our children can learn through play.
- Duty parents bring new and interesting perspectives to the class every day for our children to explore.
- When children share the joys and accomplishments of their school experience with their caregiver, they feel a strong sense of pride.

Belgravia Playschool offers an excellent program with a dedicated teacher and parent helper. Every family enrolled is expected to participate in duty days. The classes depend on volunteer parents to ensure the low adult/child ratios; parent involvement also promotes an environment that so strongly fosters a love of learning and exploration.

One parent attends each Monday/Wednesday/Friday session.
Two parents attend every Tuesday/Thursday session.

You can expect to have a duty day approximately once every three to six weeks. You are a duty parent only on the days your child(ren) attends. As duty parent, you rotate with the families registered in each session your child attends.

The Duty Roster Calendar Coordinator will hand out the next month's duty day calendar by the 15th of each month.

It is each parent's responsibility to arrange for a replacement on his or her given day if needed. A duty parent can be a parent, family member, or friend.

A parent phone list is provided so that you may switch days with another parent in the same session. If a switch is made, please indicate it on the Master Duty Roster on the bulletin board inside the classroom so that the teacher is aware of the change.

Cheques for 'Duty Parent Fines' are required at the time of registration. If you fail to attend your assigned duty day and do not make alternate arrangements, your duty day fine cheque will be cashed. Failure to attend three assigned duty days will result in the review of your continued membership. At the discretion of the board, you may be asked to withdraw from the school.

3.5. Duties Of The Helping Parent

The Teacher is the primary staff member and the duty parent fulfills the role of the 2nd adult who must be available at all times to provide assistance to the primary staff member as required. Because the parent's first priority is to assist the teacher with the playschool program, parents should not bring younger siblings along on their duty days. Duty parents will follow the Teacher's direction as asked, and are required to ensure the children's safety and initiate appropriate child guidance strategies as necessary.

On days where there are two duty parents, one will assist the teacher with the children as outlined following, while the other will focus on craft preparation, room cleaning + organization and curriculum preparation as directed by the teacher.

8:35 Please arrive at 8:35 a.m. Assist the teacher where needed to help set up the room. Crafts may need to be organized for the day. Ask the teacher if you're unsure of how you can best help.

8:45 Free play time. Greet children and other parents as they arrive. Help children get involved in an activity: read a book, draw a picture, work on a puzzle, paint at the easel, etc.

9:00 Assist children as they participate in various activities offered that day. As needed: complete any special tasks such as posting artwork, taking down a bulletin board or cleaning window sills. Ask the teacher how you can help.

9:30 Clean up and circle time. Put all toys and equipment in proper storage areas. Children will assist in putting toys and equipment away.

9:45 Craft time. Assist children with the craft of the day as needed. Try not to improve or correct their work. There is no wrong way to do a craft!

10:00 Movement/music time. This activity is done upstairs in the community hall. While the children go upstairs you will have time to clean up the craft table and prepare the snack. Be sure all tables are clean, especially making sure that glue and paint are wiped up. Prepare and clean a table (using the disinfectant provided) with enough chairs for all the children for snack time. Finish snack preparations. Help the children wash their hands.

10:30 Help children settle down for snack. Join children for snack. When the majority of children are finished, go ahead and start cleaning up and wash the dishes as necessary. Wash the table and sweep under and around the table. Please wash any dishes or supplies used for morning activities.

10:45 Story time and Show and Tell. Participate if you'd like or if you have a lot of clean up left just continue with that. The child of the duty parent brings show and tell for that day.

11:00 Help children put on outdoor wear and prepare for going outside. If any crafts/pictures need to be sent home with the children, assist in laying things by their coat hook. Assist in getting children safely out the door. Return indoors to finish with clean up. Vacuum if needed. This is a shared space so we must leave it clean (the Kindercare program uses the room in the afternoon). Please check bathrooms and make sure that they are clean and tidy. If the upstairs kitchen was used that day, please ensure it is left clean and tidy.

11:15 Parents pick up children. Please go outdoors to supervise and play until all children have been picked up. If necessary, sweep the hallway of the coat room.

11:30 Relax! You've probably had a very busy morning!!

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