

Ellerslie Road Preschool

Parent Handbook

Your Guide to a Positive Journey



Where Curiosity Leads The Way

780-988-5515



www.ellerslieroadpreschool.ca

Table of Contents

Welcome	3
Program Hours and Days	4
Drop off and Pick-up	5
Registration Process	5
Tuition and Fees	6
Withdrawal Process	6
Snack Information	7
Clothing, Toileting and Birthdays	8
Communication	9
Sickness Policy	10
Preparing for a Successful Start	11
A Day at Preschool	12
Development	14
Inclusion and Diversity	17
Community and Family	18
Staff and Volunteers	19
Child Guidance Policy	20
Offsite and in School Activities	23
Medication and Healthcare	24
Supervision	25
Records and Emergency Procedures	26
Code Of Conduct Policies	28

Ellerslie Road Preschool

Welcome to Ellerslie Road Preschool!

We are absolutely delighted to welcome you and your child to the Ellerslie Road Preschool family. We know that choosing a preschool is a significant milestone, and we are honored that you've chosen us to be a part of your child's earliest educational journey here in South Edmonton.

At Ellerslie Road, we believe that childhood is a time for wonder, discovery, and—most importantly—play. Our dedicated team is committed to creating a warm, inclusive, and safe environment where your little one feels empowered to explore their curiosity and build lasting friendships. Whether they are busy at the sensory table, building masterpieces in the block corner, or sharing stories with new friends, our goal is to foster a lifelong love of learning and a strong sense of belonging.

As a licensed preschool center, we follow the Alberta Childcare Licensing handbook, the Early Learning and Childcare Act, as well as all the Alberta Health Care regulations.

This handbook is designed to be your go-to guide for everything you need to know about our program, from our daily routines to our school policies. We believe that a strong partnership between home and school is the "secret sauce" to a successful preschool experience, so our door is always open for questions, feedback, or a quick chat.

Warmly,
The Ellerslie Road Preschool Team





Ellerslie Road Preschool

Program Days and Hours

Program

Tuesday/Thursday AM or PM
Monday/Wednesday/Friday AM or PM
All Weekdays AM or PM

Child must be at least 3 years of age (as of December 31) and potty trained to attend our program.

School Hours

Morning Classes: 9:00AM - 11:30AM
Afternoon Classes: 12:15PM - 2:45PM

Preschool Year

Our Preschool year runs from September through until the end of May. We typically follow the Edmonton Public School Board calendar (except for PD days). We are closed on Stat. holidays, 2 weeks at Christmas, and Spring Break. We are also closed during Teachers Convention and will have 1-2 non-instructional days a year. Our website will have the year at a glance calendar with any important dates.

Drop Off and Pick Up

Prior to class, Teachers are busy getting the classroom ready. We ask that you arrive no more than 5 minutes prior to the start of class. Please park in the designated parking area on the east side of the building, closest to the south doors. The doors will be unlocked 5 minutes prior to classtime and locked 10 minutes after class begins (additional information can be found in the security section). We ask that you make a stop at the bathroom with your child prior to class. **We must be able to reach a parent during classtime.**

Your child is your responsibility until class begins, please do not allow your child to run in the building or climb on furnishings. We want to be respectful of the building, and those who work there.

Registration Process

Registration will typically open up at the end of January for the September start. A link to register will be posted on our website and once you click there, it will take you to our childcare app (Brightwheel). You can then create a username and password and complete your child's registration and pay the non-refundable registration fee.

Tuition and Fees

Our tuition is noted on our website along with our registration fee information.
Government grants are also available.

Late Fees:

We expect parents to be on time. If parents are late picking up their child, there will be a charge of \$25 after 10 minutes and \$25 for every 15 minutes thereafter. These charges will be applied and charged through our Brightwheel program. If parents are continuously late, a discussion will be held with the program director to come up with a solution.

Withdrawal Process

We understand that life brings changes—whether it's a big move or a new family schedule. If you find that you need to withdraw your child from our program, please notify us via email or through a Brightwheel message.

To allow us time to bridge the gap and offer the spot to a family on our waiting list, we require one full calendar month's notice. This helps us ensure a smooth transition for your child and the classroom. Thank you for your cooperation and for being part of our community!

****Note:** A "calendar month" means if you plan to leave on February 1st, notice must be received no later than January 1st. Notice given mid-month (ex. - January 15th) would apply to the following full month.

Snack Time



Information

To keep our little learners fueled and ready for a day of play, we have a dedicated daily snack time. Please pack a small, **healthy snack that your child can comfortably finish within 10 minutes**. Nutritious, simple options like sliced fruit, crackers, cheese, or yogurt are ideal for this time. To ensure the safety of all our students, **please remember that we are a strictly nut-free facility**.

In addition to their snack, each child should bring a water bottle every day to stay hydrated. To help our teachers stay organized and ensure your items return home, **please clearly label both the snack container and the water bottle with your child's first and last name**. If your child's snack requires a spoon or fork, kindly tuck a labeled one into their bag as well!

Each morning when you arrive, please place your child's labeled snack and water bottle in the designated bin located beside the classroom door. To ensure no child is missed, **we ask that parents take a moment to check off your child's name on the sign-in sheet to confirm their snack is in the bin**.

We know that busy mornings happen and things can occasionally be left behind! If your child forgets their snack, we will gladly provide a small one for them so they don't go hungry. However, **if forgetting a snack becomes a frequent occurrence, a \$5 charge will be added to your account to cover the cost of the provided food**. This helps us ensure we always have enough backup supplies on hand for everyone.



Key Policies You Should Know

Clothing

Preschool is a place for hands-on exploration, so please dress your child in comfortable clothes that are okay to get messy or wet. While we use smocks, accidents happen, so please keep a full change of labeled clothes (shirt, pants, socks, and underwear) in their backpack. We also require a pair of clean indoor shoes for classroom use.

To help your child build confidence, please practice "getting ready" at home. For winter gear, we teach the children to dress in this specific order: snowpants, boots, jacket, hat, and then mittens. Please ensure every item is clearly labeled with your child's name so we can keep their belongings organized and accounted for.

Toileting



To help your child feel confident, we require that students be fully toilet trained, including the ability to wipe independently. You can support their success by sending them in simple, easy-to-manage clothing and practicing zippers or buttons at home. If an accident occurs, we will contact you. Please always keep a labeled change of clothes in their backpack so we can get them back to playing quickly!

Birthdays

We love making our students feel special! To ensure everyone is included, we celebrate all birthdays for the month during one shared monthly celebration. We will all enjoy a small treat, such as a cookie or fruit. If it's your child's birthday, they will get to pick a special surprise from our birthday bin! Your child's teacher will let you know when the birthday celebrations are happening on their communication whiteboard outside the classroom.



Staying Connected

Communication is Key



We strive to be responsive and transparent, ensuring every family feels heard and informed. Our Preschool Director is available throughout the year to answer specific questions, while our program staff are accessible during drop-off and pick-up for daily updates and inquiries.

We are committed to a high standard of care and actively seek your feedback through ongoing conversations and year-end surveys. To maintain full accountability, all licensing, health, and fire inspection reports are posted on our bulletin boards. We also ensure families are promptly notified of any updates to our policies, procedures, or Handbook.



Clear communication is key to a wonderful preschool experience! We will keep you updated through monthly newsletters and our daily whiteboards outside the classroom, which share activities, outdoor plans, and reminders. For direct updates, parents can use the Brightwheel app to message us or notify us if a child will be late or absent. While teachers are available for quick chats at drop-off and pick-up, we encourage email for more detailed questions. Please reach out with any concerns or changes at home—we are here to support your child!



Our Sickness Policy

To keep our classroom healthy and happy, we ask that you keep your child home if they are feeling unwell. If your child develops a fever, cough, vomiting, sore throat, rash, diarrhea or any symptoms of a contagious illness, please notify us via the Brightwheel app as soon as possible.

Children should be symptom-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medication) before returning to school. If a child becomes ill during the day, we will contact you immediately for pick-up. We appreciate your help in preventing the spread of germs so our students and teachers can stay healthy!

The health of our school community is a shared responsibility. In alignment with Alberta Health Services (AHS) requirements, if a child displays symptoms of or we are made aware of a communicable illness—such as head lice, chicken pox, impetigo, pink eye, or other serious illnesses—the classroom teacher will send a notification email to the entire class. This allows all families to monitor their own children for potential symptoms.

Please be assured that your privacy is a priority; all matters regarding your child are handled with the utmost confidence, and specific names are never shared in these community alerts.

Specifically regarding head lice, we ask that you check your child's hair regularly at home. If you discover lice, please notify us immediately so we can fulfill our reporting requirements. Your child is welcome to return to school as soon as they have received their first full treatment. Thank you for your transparency and for helping us keep our learning environment safe and healthy for everyone!



Ellerslie Road Preschool

Preparing For A Successful Start

Starting preschool is a big milestone, and it is completely normal for both parents and children to feel a little bit of anxiety. To help your child feel ready, we recommend talking about school often and keeping the conversation positive and exciting. Reading books together, such as *The Pigeon HAS to Go to School!* by Mo Willems or *Llama Llama Misses Mama* by Anna Dewdney, is a wonderful way to help them understand what to expect.

When it comes to the first few days, we have found that a quick, upbeat goodbye is usually best; once you head out, our trained staff are experts at stepping in to comfort your child and help them settle in. Finally, maintaining consistent attendance and being on time for both drop-off and pick-up helps your child build a sense of security and routine. We are here to support you both through this transition!





A Typical Day At Preschool

Children thrive when they know what to expect. Establishing a consistent daily routine is essential as it helps relieve stress and provides a sense of security, allowing children to confidently anticipate what comes next. To support this, each classroom features a visual schedule that the children can see and participate in, helping them navigate their day independently. Our carefully planned routine incorporates a variety of activities designed to support the development of the whole child—nurturing their social, emotional, physical, and cognitive growth in a balanced and engaging way.

- Arrival & Warm Welcome: Staff greet families at the door and officially check each child in on our attendance records to start the day.
- Self-Directed Play: Our classroom is organized into various centers to encourage exploration and independence. Children are encouraged to try different activities of their own choosing, and staff are always on hand to facilitate play and assist with problem-solving. Floor centers include building blocks, animals, dollhouses, trains, and large floor puzzles, while tabletop stations offer manipulatives, puzzles, and focused art activities. Children may also explore sensory play at the rotating sand and water table, engage in imagination at the dramatic play area, or enjoy quiet reading in the cozy story corner
- Story & Circle Time: The class gathers for a group session designed to develop language and social skills. This time includes singing, stories, puppetry, and interactive games. It also provides opportunities for children to share their ideas and may occasionally include "Show and Tell."





A Typical Day

At Preschool (Con't)

- **Extended Self-Directed Exploration:** During this second block of free play, we introduce new and rotating activities to keep learners engaged. This is where we bring out fresh experiences like playdough, specific art projects, or new tabletop activities designed to teach specific skills.
- **Gym or Outdoor Time:** Physical activity and fresh air are essential parts of our program.
- **In the Gym:** We utilize our large gym to learn basic skills, such as dropping and catching a ball, and to play with a variety of specialized equipment.
- **Outdoors:** We head outside to enjoy exercise and explore the world around us. We bring equipment outdoors but also encourage children to appreciate nature through exploration and occasional nature walks.
- **Goodbye Circle & Dismissal:** We end our day together by gathering for a final circle to sing a goodbye song and enjoy other musical activities. For a safe and orderly transition, children remain in the circle while staff dismiss them to their parents one at a time, checking each child out on our attendance records as they depart



Our Philosophy Development

Supporting Mental Development

Our preschool is dedicated to nurturing the "whole child" by providing endless opportunities to explore, experiment, and share ideas in a non-judgmental and supportive environment. We believe that mental development is deeply rooted in communication; therefore, each class is designed to strengthen language skills through meaningful interactions with both staff and peers. We celebrate the diversity of our community, appreciating many different social, familial, and cultural backgrounds, and we encourage every child to proudly embrace their heritage.

A key focus of our program is supporting children as they develop essential self-regulation skills. We guide them in adapting their behavior, attention, and emotions to the world around them—whether that is learning to sit during circle time, lining up for the gym, or following simple instructions. To build strong problem-solving and social foundations, we model positive language and cooperative play. By using phrases such as, "I'm not finished with this yet," or "When I'm finished, would you like a turn?", we help children navigate turn-taking and develop the confidence to express their needs respectfully.

Our Philosophy Development

Nurturing Emotional Development

Every family should feel certain that their child is safe and secure. When children feel safe, they build a foundation of trust that fosters healthy self-esteem and confidence. This positive environment empowers them to explore more complex levels of thinking, movement, and creativity. We provide a non-judgmental space where children are free to express their emotions. Our staff supports this growth by modeling self-regulation and teaching positive strategies to manage feelings, helping children navigate their world with resilience and a sense of belonging.

Spiritual Development

Each child is celebrated for their uniqueness and the individual spirit they bring to our school. We believe that kindness, compassion, empathy, and an awareness of others are essential qualities that help us grow together. Our staff fosters a welcoming environment through active listening and genuine curiosity. We encourage children to freely express their beliefs and opinions as they discover their special place in both our local community and the world at large.



Ellerslie Road Preschool

Our Philosophy

Development

Supporting Physical Development

We provide varied opportunities to develop both fine and gross motor skills. In the classroom, children refine fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination through activities like using scissors, puzzles, and manipulatives. These tasks help perfect the perceptual skills necessary for early learning.

Gym time focuses on gross motor development through songs, games, and skill-building. Children learn to follow instructions and work as a team while building balance and coordination using specialized equipment.

Outdoor play is vital in every season. Children build independence by practicing dressing themselves for the weather while exploring nature through walks, games, and sensory play. In our safe environment, children are encouraged to move freely and take calculated risks that challenge both their minds and bodies.



Our Philosophy

Inclusion and Diversity

We celebrate each child's unique personality and strengths, working closely with families to ensure every individual need is met. To help children achieve their goals, we partner with supportive organizations such as Children's Autism Services Edmonton, Community Options, Kids Included and the Seden Centre. Our staff is also proactive in making referrals whenever a child might benefit from extra support.

We honor each child's familial, Indigenous, and cultural heritage, ensuring it remains central to their safety and development. We are proud to be located on Treaty 6 land and deeply value the heritage of our Indigenous families. It is essential to us that every child, including those who are vulnerable, sees themselves represented in our books, activities, and environment. By fostering this inclusive atmosphere, we help all children grow their awareness of social responsibility and the beautiful diversity of their peers.





Ellerslie Road Preschool

Our Philosophy

Community and Family

Community Engagement

At Ellerslie Road Preschool, we value strong community partnerships. We encourage families to access Provincial Family Resource Networks and the public library, and we maintain positive relationships with our host churches. Upon request, we are happy to recommend local supports and family-friendly programming.

Each year, we participate in Operation Christmas Child and The Edmonton Food Bank. These initiatives help children develop global awareness and a spirit of giving, teaching them the importance of supporting both local families and the world around them.

Family Connections

We believe parents know their children best and value open communication to meet each child's unique needs. We invite families to share their skills and professions through classroom visits, as these partnerships greatly enrich our program.

Throughout the year, we build community through events like our Christmas Concert, Celebration of Learning, and wind-up picnic. Our staff is also dedicated to connecting families with professional supports whenever helpful for a child's development. We look forward to partnering with you to create a supportive environment for your child.





Our Philosophy

Staff and Volunteers

To ensure the highest level of safety, every staff member and volunteer with unsupervised access to children must provide a current Criminal Record Check (CRC). These checks are conducted prior to hiring and are updated every three years. We maintain these records on file to confirm that all team members have been thoroughly vetted to care for children.

★ Additionally, all new staff and volunteers provide at least three professional references to verify their suitability for working with children. Each new hire also completes a comprehensive interview with the Program Director to ensure they align with our standards of care and well-being.





Our Philosophy

Child Guidance Policy



At Ellerslie Road Preschool, we guide children toward positive choices rather than using discipline. We believe a well-designed environment prevents challenging behaviors. Each classroom is age-appropriate and engaging, featuring varied activities and small-group centers designed to set children up for success. Predictable daily routines also help children build trust and confidence.

Problem Solving and Emotional Support

Our staff models positive language (ex., "I'm waiting for a turn") to teach problem-solving and conflict resolution. We encourage "turn-taking" over forced sharing, and help children communicate directly with their peers. Recognizing that frustration can drive behavior, we validate children's emotions and encourage their efforts, focusing on building genuine self-esteem rather than using rewards or excessive praise.





Our Philosophy

Child Guidance Policy



Addressing Challenging Behaviours

- **Redirection & Communication:** Staff speak with the child at eye level, actively listen to find a solution, or redirect them to another activity.
- **Parent Collaboration:** Staff document repeated behaviors and consult parents via phone, email, or at drop-off/pick-up to share insights and strategies.
- **Professional Referrals:** If behaviors stem from developmental needs (such as speech delays or ASD), referrals are made to supportive partner agencies.
- **Incident Reports:** If aggressive behavior occurs (ex., biting or hitting), an incident report is completed, discussed, and signed by both families.
- **In-Class Support:** Parents may be asked to attend one or more classes to support their child. As a last resort for ongoing aggression, a child may be asked to leave the program.



Ellerslie Road Preschool



Our Philosophy

Child Guidance Policy

Safety and Protection

We strictly prohibit corporal punishment and the isolation of children. To ensure a safe, transparent environment, staff remain in the hallway during bathroom times; they will assist with zippers or buttons while staying fully visible to others.



Our Philosophy

Offsite & In School Activities

We do not offer formal, off-site field trips. Instead, we enrich our program by bringing the community to us with in-school field trips, hosting special guests like firefighters, police officers, or beekeepers. We also utilize the green spaces and paths surrounding our buildings for walks and outdoor activities. Parents sign a consent form for these local spaces at registration and are notified of planned outdoor time via our daily whiteboard, newsletters, or emails.

Safety and Supervision

To ensure a safe environment during outdoor walks, staff use strict supervision strategies:

- Headcounts: Roll call and counting take place before leaving the building and immediately upon arriving at the outdoor space.
 - Line Positioning: One staff member leads the line and the other follows at the end, keeping all children safely visible between them.
 - Active Boundaries: Staff position themselves apart from one another to maintain continuous visibility, often using cones or visual markers to establish clear, safe play boundaries.
- 

Our Philosophy

Medication and Healthcare

Medication is only administered with written parental consent, which is kept with the medication. Most medication at our preschool is emergency-related (e.g., EpiPen, Ventolin, Benadryl) and is stored out of children's reach in a clearly marked, portable classroom backpack used for both indoor and outdoor activities. Non-emergency medication is stored in a locked box. All medication must be in its original, labeled container and will be administered strictly according to the directions.

Records & Emergencies

- Tracking: When medication is given, staff record the name, time, dose, and administrator, and notify the parents.
- EpiPen Protocol: If an EpiPen is administered for anaphylaxis, staff will call 911 immediately, followed by the parents.
- Complex Needs: For complex medical conditions, parents, teachers, and the Director will consult to document a detailed medical plan.
- Accidents & Serious Illness: First-aid-certified staff will administer care and immediately contact parents (or emergency contacts if parents are unreachable). If necessary, 911 will be called right away.

Our Philosophy

Supervision

To ensure a safe and alert environment, we track and count children continuously throughout the day:

- **Attendance & Tracking:** Arrival and departure times are logged in our attendance binder. The current number of children in the room is kept on a whiteboard by the door and updated instantly if a child leaves the room (e.g., for the bathroom).
- **Classroom Positioning:** Staff position themselves to maintain clear sightlines of the children and entry doors, remaining actively engaged while staying alert to the environment.
- **Transitions & Moves:** When moving between spaces (like the classroom, gym, or outdoors), children walk in a line between the Teacher at the front and the Teaching Assistant at the back. Headcounts are taken immediately before leaving and upon arrival.
- **Safety Boundaries:** In the gym, staff position themselves near exits. Outdoors, staff spread out to form a visible safety boundary around the children.
- **Emergency Preparedness:** Whenever leaving the classroom, staff carry a portable backpack containing emergency files, contact information, the attendance binder, required emergency medications, and a first aid kit.



Our Philosophy

Records & Emergency Procedures

We maintain both digital and hard copies of all registration and emergency records. Hard copies are kept in the classroom and in our portable emergency backpack, which travels with staff whenever they leave the room. Teachers carry cell phones at all times to ensure immediate communication with parents and EMS.

Fire & Evacuation

- Drills: We conduct six fire drills annually, two of which include full evacuations to our Muster Point, the east grass area). Parents are notified in advance of all drills.
- Emergency Evacuation: In a true emergency, parents will be contacted immediately with instructions on where to pick up their children.



Our Philosophy

Records & Emergency Procedures

Security & Facility

- Lockdown: In the event of an intruder, staff will move children to a lockable room and remain in contact with EPS.
- Building Access: To ensure safety, outside doors are unlocked 5 minutes before class and locked 10 minutes after it begins.
- Closures: If the preschool must close unexpectedly, we will notify families via email, phone, or a notice on the door.



Our Philosophy

Code of Conduct Policy

Staff and parents must behave professionally, take responsibility for their actions, and treat all children, staff, church personnel, and families with respect at all times.

If these standards are not met, the supervisor or director may implement any of the following disciplinary measures:

- Verbal reprimand
- Written reprimand
- Suspension or expulsion from the premises