

Blessed Sacrament School's
Little Steps
Preschool
Parent Handbook
2022-2023 School Year



Little Steps Preschool Parent Handbook

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Welcome to Little Steps! We are delighted that you have chosen this program for your child. Research into early learning states that much of your children's cognitive abilities are learned at a young age; we are here to help make this happen in a fun, age-appropriate way. We are fortunate to be a part of Blessed Sacrament School, and therefore are able to embrace the faith formation of the school's Catholic identity, as an appeal to build morals and values in our children.

Little Steps Open House

Thursday, September 1, 2022*

We would like to give your child an opportunity to come and check out the classroom and meet the teachers before the first day of school so they are more comfortable when the big day comes. An email will be sent out with more information closer to the date.

Classes Begin

3 Year Old Class on Mon. Sept. 12/22*
(Monday Morning 9 AM - 11:30 AM)

3 Year Old Class on Wed. Sept 7/22*
(Wednesday Morning 9 AM - 11:30 AM)

4 Year Old Class on Wed. Sept. 7/22*
(Monday/Wednesday Afternoon 12:30 PM - 3:00 PM)

4 Year Old Class on Tues. Sept. 6/22*
(Tuesday/Thursday Morning 9 AM - 11:30 AM)

4 Year Old Class on Tues. Sept. 6/22*
(Tuesday/Thursday Afternoon 12:30 PM - 3:00 PM)

****Note about long weekends: If your class is on a Monday and it's a long weekend, your class will be made up on that Friday.**

****Last week of classes will be June 12-15, 2023****

******Please note that dates are tentative and may change******

Class Times

Morning classes will run from 9:00-11:30 and afternoon classes from 12:30-3:00. The doors will open at 8:50 and 12:30. Please pick up your children in a timely fashion. If you happen to be running late please phone the school and let us know. 780-842-3808.

Programming Outline

The 3 Year Old Program will be based on age appropriate activities and different from our 4 Year Old Program. We follow the Play, Participation, and Possibilities curriculum framework for Alberta. Both classes will be included in appropriate school wide assemblies and/or special events which include a modified Terry Fox Run, Reading Buddies and some school presentations.

It is important to mention that our Four Year Olds participate in a writing readiness program called Handwriting Without Tears. All elementary students at Blessed Sacrament School follow components of this program. Our preschool uses the writing and counting introduction component to prepare the children for Kindergarten. Specific strands of their programming coincides with our Kindergarten.

HALF DAY ACTIVITIES FOR THE 3 YEAR OLD PROGRAM

- Students Sign-In by learning how to identify their name on the SmartBoard
 - Fine motor work (puzzles, play-doh, coloring, lacing, etc.)
 - Sing Oh Canada
- Carpet Time- Good Morning Song, Attendance, Calendar, Alphabet Song, Story
- Thematic Learning Activity- an activity or art project based on a particular theme.
 - Centre Time- Open play with activities around the classroom.
 - Gym Time (mix of structured/unstructured games)
 - Bathroom/Wash/Snack
 - Library
 - 'Class Pet'/ Music
 - Storytime
 - Goodbye Song and a Stamp to dismiss.

HALF DAY ACTIVITIES FOR THE 4 YEAR OLD PROGRAM

- Students Sign-In on the SmartBoard
- Fine Motor activities (File Folder Games, drawer games, puzzles etc.)
- Carpet Time- Hello Song, Attendance, Calendar, Phonics Song, Weather
 - Handwriting Without Tears work
- Centre Time- Open play with activities around the class.
 - Gym Time (mix of structured/unstructured games)
 - Bathroom/Wash/Snack

- Library
- 'Class Pet' / Music
- Thematic Learning Activity- an activity or art project based on a particular theme.
 - Storytime
- Goodbye Song and a Stamp to dismiss.

Registration

At the time of registration, we require a \$30.00 registration fee. This fee assures you that your spot is not given away. This fee is non-refundable.

Payment for Little Steps will be set up in one of the following 2 options for the year.

1. Full payment in September for the Year (Cash or Cheque or Online)
2. Monthly Online Payment Set up (Payment from Credit Card or ECheck on the first of every month) (ONLINE ONLY)

Fees

\$450 for the full 3 Year Old Program

\$900 for the full 4 Year Old Program

The Affordability Grant provided by the government will pay \$75/month for the 4 year old program leaving parents a fee of \$15.00 per month.

The grant will pay \$45/month for the 3 year old parents will not have to pay at all for the year.

We DO NOT do any fundraising.

****All fees are subject to change****

Supplies

Your child will need a pair of indoor shoes. If your child is unable to tie his/her own shoes please send them with Velcro shoes, but no laces please. Your child will also need a FULL SIZE backpack, a lunch kit and a water bottle. Please label these items.

Please send a full change of clothes as accidents do happen. We ask that you send your child in "play" clothing. Please do not send your child in their "Sunday Best" as there is a good chance they will be getting messy while they learn and play.

"Class Pet"

Throughout the year, each student will have an opportunity to take our "class pet" home. Our "pets" are stuffed animals that the students will take turns bringing home and going on adventures with for a few days. At the end of your time taking care of our "pet", you can sit down with your child and write about the adventures your child had with the pet in the journal that comes with the pet. You can draw pictures or add photos of the things you did. Your child will then be able to share with the class what they did while the pet was in their care.

Please check the calendars provided for your child's turn with our pet.

Snack

You are responsible for providing a healthy snack for your child. Please try and ensure it contains healthy choices from Canada's Food Guide. Please send your child with a water bottle labelled with their name. We ask that you DO NOT send Yogurt Tubes as more often than not it ends up everywhere but in your child's mouth.

Allergies

Little Steps is a **peanut/nut free environment**. PLEASE DO NOT bring snacks containing any kind of peanut/nut product.

If you wish to send a group snack for your child's class, please check with staff regarding severe or extreme allergies.

Class Communication

Monthly newsletters will be distributed explaining important dates and information. These will be handed out both in paper form as well as through our Brightwheel App. Please read it carefully and keep it for reference.

Our program uses the Brightwheel App to send notices out to parents about their child's class. This App is also used to sign your child in and out of the program daily. Information on how to access your child's class through the app will be available near the end of August.

Changes

Please notify us if there are any changes to your personal information (address or phone numbers) or to your emergency contact's information. This information is very important to us and is a licensing requirement.

Library

Little Steps provides a class library. Each school day your child can pick a book. Please read regularly with your child. It is expected to be returned the next school day. If you come across a damaged book, please give it to one of the teachers so that it can be repaired.

Scholastic Book Orders

We send out monthly flyers from Scholastic Books Ltd. giving you the opportunity to order quality books for your child. You are under no obligation to purchase books. When you order books and use our CLASS CODE, the classroom earns new books that help to expand our classroom library. Orders can be made online at scholastic.ca

Class Parties

In Little Steps we have little class parties for Halloween, Christmas, Valentines' Day and Year End. We will notify you ahead of time when these will take place. We ask that on these party days, you send your child with a special snack for them to enjoy.

Discipline

At Little Steps our goal is to be proactive in managing behavior. We have a variety of toys and activities available which help to eliminate boredom that can lead to misbehavior. Activities are changed regularly to keep interest levels high.

If a child makes repeated "sad choices" they may be asked to sit on a chair for a few minutes.

This will give them time to reflect on their choice and what to do next time. If your child spends any time in a "timeout" during class, you will be notified when you come to pick them up.

Transitioning from Home to School

Some children have difficulty leaving their parents on the first few days of school. Please feel welcome to stay but realize that we experience this with many children and most children stop crying soon after you leave. Our goal is for your child to stay without you so we will work with you to help achieve this goal. Please be mindful that some children may not be ready for school if the separation anxiety is too great. Please note that your child needs to be potty trained to attend our program. NO DIAPERS or PULL-UPS. This means they are able to carry out their washroom routine as independently as possible. We understand that accidents happen and we will always be there to help.

Pick Up and Drop Off

We have a separate entrance from the rest of the school which is located on the North West side of the school. We operate a free flowing drop off and pick up system, where parents simply drive up to the door to drop off or pick up with no need to find parking spots. You will use your Brightwheel App on your device to scan our QR Code that lets you sign your child in or out. This system was just new last year and the whole process has been given nothing but rave reviews from parents.

Sick Days and Illness

If your child is sick on the day of their class, please keep them home and call the school, email us, or use the Brightwheel App to let us know.. The school phone number is 780-842-3808.

Our licensing requirement states:

A child who is defined as a Potential Health Risk:

- is vomiting, has a fever, diarrhea or a new unexpected rash or cough;
- requires more attention than can be provided without compromising the care of the other children in the program; or
- displays any other illness or symptom the staff member knows or believes may indicate that a child poses a health risk to other children, caregivers, or staff.

A child can return to the program if the child's parent provides a written notice from a physician indicating that the child does not pose a health risk or if the license holder/provider is satisfied that the child is no longer a health risk to other children, caregivers or staff.

Parents will be expected to make arrangements to remove an ill child from the program immediately.

If your child has a cold or the flu and you kept them home for 24 hours and feel they are healthy you do not need a doctor's note. However, if your child has a rash, chicken pox, pink eye, or anything contagious, we may require a doctor's note to say the child is no longer contagious and can come back to class.