

St. Albert
CREATIVE
Preschool

**2024/2025
Parent Handbook**

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Welcome!

Welcome to a new preschool year at St. Albert Creative Preschool! Whether this is your child's first year with the school, or if your family has been attending the school for years, we look forward to the year ahead. At St. Albert Creative Preschool, we strive to create a nurturing and safe environment where your child will have endless opportunities to learn through play in creative and meaningful ways.

Who We Are

St. Albert Creative Preschool is a non-profit, non-denominational preschool that has been serving the community for over 50 years. We aim to provide a friendly, warm environment for young children aged 3-5 years. We place as much importance on social development as on academic achievement.

Meet Our Teachers

Ms. Brittney

Ms. Brittney is our Program Director and Lead Teacher. She has both a Bachelor of Education and a Masters in Elementary Education. Before joining us, she worked for 8 years teaching kindergarten and grades 1 and 2. Ms. Brittney strongly believes in creating a fun and nurturing atmosphere that encourages children to explore their world through play.

Ms. Sarah

Ms. Sarah has her Level 3 Childcare Certificate and 14 years experience as a Program Supervisor at SIGIS. Ms. Sarah believes that play is the fundamental building block to help children become well-rounded individuals, and that allowing children the freedom of choice in play is the catalyst to creativity.

Our Programs

Our year runs from September to June. We currently offer three programs:

- **Rainbow** – Tuesday/Thursday from 9:15-11:30 am (ages 3-5)
- **Sunshine** – Monday/Wednesday/Friday from 9:15-11:30 am (ages 3.5-5)
- **Pre-Kinder Enrichment** – Monday-Thursday from 12-3 pm (ages 4-5)

Rainbow

We recommend the Rainbow class for children 3-4 years of age who are new to preschool. For many kids, this will be their first experience being away from their parent or guardian. The primary learning objectives in this class are social and emotional learning: learning to share, taking turns, sitting together in communal snack time and giving language to big emotions (frustration, excitement, etc.). Children in the rainbow class will be exposed to the Jolly Phonics program, learning the initial letter group sounds and songs.

Sunshine

We recommend the Sunshine class for kids 4-5 who will be starting kindergarten the following year. The primary learning objectives in this class are learning numbers and letters, how to hold a pencil and write their name, and general kindergarten readiness. Children in the Sunshine class will be taught using the Jolly Phonics program, which teaches an awareness of letter sounds to promote early literacy.

Pre-Kinder

This program is reserved for students who will be 4-5 years of age by December 31 of that preschool year. The Pre-Kinder enrichment program is an extension of the Sunshine class, with a greater focus placed on the Jolly Phonics program, which teaches an awareness of letter sounds to promote early literacy.

A Typical Day in the Classroom

When students arrive in class they will typically begin their day at an activity center (playdoh, colouring, puzzles, etc.). Once the children have settled into class they will have circle time where they will sing songs, learn about the letter of the day, and talk about things such as the day of the week, the month and the weather. After circle time, the class will branch off into center time and free play. The teachers will interact with students at the centers and work with small groups to play various learning games. There will be a scheduled snack break part way through the day. Following snacks, students will return to centers and free play. We end class with a game, story or song depending on the day.

Our teachers believe that kids learn best when they are given ample opportunity to play and explore. In order to provide this, all classes will typically play outside every day. Please ensure your child has appropriate outdoor clothing with them.

Important Dates

September 3 – Rainbow & Pre-K Staggered Start (only 12 kids/class attend)
September 4 – Sunshine & Pre-K Staggered Start (only 12 kids/class attend)
September 5 – Rainbow Staggered Start (only 12 kids/class attend)
September 6 – Sunshine Staggered Start (only 12 kids/class attend)
September 30 – No school (Truth & Reconciliation Day)
October 14 – No school (Thanksgiving)
October 30 – Sunshine Halloween Party*
October 31 – Rainbow/Pre-K Halloween Party*
November 11 – No school (Remembrance Day)
December 19 – Rainbow/Pre-K Christmas Concert**
December 20 – Sunshine Christmas Concert**
December 23 – January 3 – No school (Christmas break)
January 6 – Classes resume
February 17 – No school (Family Day)
March 24-28 – No school (Spring Break)
April 18-21 – No school (Easter)
May 8 – Rainbow/Pre-K Mother’s Day Event*
May 9 – Sunshine Mother’s Day Event*
May 19 – No school (Victoria Day)
June 7/8 – School Photos (*Participation is optional & date is subject to change*)
June 12 - Rainbow/Pre-K Father’s Day Event*
June 13 – Sunshine Father’s Day Event*
June 19 – Rainbow/Pre-K Concert & Graduation**
June 20 – Sunshine Concert & Graduation**
June 23 – Last day of classes (Rainbow & Pre-K)
June 24 – Last day of classes (Sunshine)

*1 parent or family member may attend with the child for the event

**Both parents and grandparents may attend but space is limited

Important Information before your Child Starts School

All school supplies, clothing, shoes and backpacks must be labeled. In the winter, please ensure your child's hats, mittens, snow pants etc. are also labeled).

What your child needs

- Outdoor clothes – your child will play outside almost every class
- A backpack big enough to send snack, newsletter and crafts
- Indoor shoes (Velcro or slip-on only) – no black soles
- A large Ziploc bag with an extra change of clothes, including underwear
- Snack container and water bottle
- All items listed on the class supply list

Snacks

Parents are responsible for sending a small, non-messy snack to school each day. All snacks MUST be nut-free. It is important that your child is able to open the snack independently.

Drop off/Pick up

Parents will drop off and pick up children outside the main church doors. Please do not come inside the building unless you are volunteering that day or have otherwise arranged to come in with the teachers. The teachers would be happy to assist your child with their shoes at the door if it is required.

Communication with Teachers

All communication with the teachers and notifications about classes is done using the free Remind app. **Please download the app and setup your child's class before the first day of school.**

1. Download the Remind app on your phone;
2. Open the app and create an account (or login if you already have one);
3. Tap the + by classes join and enter the appropriate class code:
 - Rainbow: @cpsrain24
 - Sunshine: @cpssun24
 - Pre-Kinder: @cpspre24

If you do not have a smartphone, please follow these instructions:

1. Text the appropriate class code to (204) 800-5954:
 - Rainbow: @ cpsrain24
 - Sunshine: @ cpssun24
 - Pre-Kinder: @ cpsprek24
2. Reply to the text message from the Remind team.

Attendance

If your child is unable to attend preschool for any reason, please notify the teachers through the Remind app.

Special Helper days

Beginning in October, children will be assigned special helper days. You will know it is your child's special helper day when you see their name on the monthly calendar. On a child's special helper day, they are invited to bring a parent or relative, as well as an item from home that they wish to show during Show and Tell. If your child is unwell on their special helper day please contact Ms. Brittney and Ms. Sarah to reschedule. All efforts will be made to facilitate another special helper day.

We recognize that parents may not always have childcare for younger siblings during preschool. Please know that younger siblings are welcome to attend on special helper days. As some activities may not be appropriate for younger kids, parents are responsible for supervising younger siblings at all times.

Volunteering

In addition to volunteering on special helper days, beginning in October there is always one additional volunteer spot per class. Please message Ms. Brittney and Ms. Sarah at any point during the year to attend. In order to ensure all parents are able to use this spot, the teachers will ask that parents sign up only once every 3-4 weeks. The additional volunteer may be asked to assist with the craft, supervise an activity, or work on scrapbooks. Because the additional volunteer may be asked to assist the teachers with activities, we would ask that younger siblings not attend when a parent is signing up for this spot.

Birthdays

On your child's birthday, or the first day of class following your child's birthday, you may choose to bring in a nut-free food item for the students (22 children). This is not required. Students born over the summer will be celebrated on the last day of regular classes. Please reach out to Ms. Brittney should you wish to bring in a treat to celebrate a child with a summer birthday.

Field Trips

During the course of the year, the teachers may arrange field trips. Parents will be given advanced notice of any field trip and asked to sign a consent form. On the day of the field trip, parents will be asked to pick up and drop off their child at the field trip location.

Punctuality

It is important that your child arrives on time for class – not early and not late. The front doors will be locked promptly after the kids are let in at 9:15. If you are late you will need to message the teachers on Remind.

Late Pick-up

Late pick-ups often make for an anxious and/or upset child. If you are delayed in picking up your child, you must notify the Preschool of your anticipated arrival time. After two late pick-ups, you will be notified verbally. If the problem persists, a late charge of \$20 for the first 10 minutes and \$10 for every 10 minutes thereafter will apply. The fee is payable immediately and failure to pay may result in the cancellation of your child's current registration.

Medications

Should your child have any condition that requires medication to be kept at school, please bring the medication on your first day. You will be asked to complete a form detailing the medication and authorizing the preschool to administer medications in an emergency. Please note that all medications **MUST** be in their original packaging with the original label provided by the pharmacy.

Illness Policy

Children who are ill, including displaying minor symptoms of the common cold (ex. runny nose and/or cough, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea), are required to stay home until their symptoms have passed. If your child requires medication in order to alleviate any symptoms, we kindly ask that you keep them home. The preschool is not equipped to care for sick children. If a teacher determines that your child is showing symptoms of an illness, the parent/guardian will be notified immediately and asked to pick up their child.

- *Hand Foot & Mouth Disease (HFMD)*: HFMD is highly contagious, especially amongst preschoolers. If your child has HFMD, we kindly ask that you keep them home for 7 days from the onset of symptoms or until the symptoms, including all sores, have resolved, whichever is longer. If another child in the household has HFMD, we strongly recommend keeping your child home until the household is healthy again.

Staying up to date with school events

A monthly calendar will be sent by email with information about classroom activities, special helper days, and field trips. It is your responsibility to ensure that your email account is set up to receive our emails. Please check your junk folder regularly and add our school email addresses to your contacts to ensure emails are not missed.

Change of Address

Please notify the registrar at info@stalbertcreativepreschool.com if there is a change of address or telephone number for you or your child's emergency contacts during the year.

Withdrawing your Child

To withdraw your child from the preschool, written notice must be given to the Registrar at info@stalbertcreativepreschool.com. If you withdraw your child from preschool after August 1, you will be charged the monthly tuition fee for September.

Once classes have commenced, one month's notice is required to withdraw your child. You will be charged tuition due within the one-month notice period. The preschool does not provide refunds for a partial month of tuition.

Refunds, including refunds for school closures, are at the sole discretion of the Board of Directors and may change from time to time.

Getting Involved

A volunteer parent-run Board of Directors operates the preschool. Parents are encouraged to participate by holding a board position, attending monthly board meetings, or volunteering time for events and fundraisers. New volunteers are always welcome! Please reach out to president@stalbertcreativepreschool.com for more information on how you can help.

Tax Receipts

At the beginning of every month you will be emailed a sales receipt from the preschool. This is your tax receipt. Please save it for your records. **There is a \$20 charge per monthly tax receipt (to a maximum of \$100) to reissue tax receipts in the spring.** Requests to reissue tax receipts will only be processed after payment has been received.

All tax receipt requests must be sent to our external accountant who requires time to process each request. Accordingly, requests submitted to finance@stalbertcreativepreschool.com after April 12 will not be guaranteed a **response** prior to the CRA tax filing deadline. We ask parents to remember that our Finance Director is a volunteer who receives a multitude of tax receipt requests. Please remain respectful in your communications.

Non-Sufficient Funds

All automatic tuition withdrawals that are not processed due to non-sufficient funds will be charged a fee of \$30. Payment must be made within 14 days of being notified by the Finance Director of the NSF return. Failure to pay will result in your child's registration being immediately cancelled.

Severe Weather Cancellation

The preschool reserves the right to close due to severe weather. In the event of a severe weather closure, parents will be notified as soon as possible through the Remind app as well as email. Tuition will not be refunded and there will be no classes in lieu for such a cancellation.

Casinos

The preschool is selected for a two-day casino approximately every 2-3 years. The casino is a critical part of our fundraising initiative and the preschool relies heavily on these funds for our operational budget. The casino is NOT considered one of our regularly scheduled fundraisers. As such, families who have opted out of fundraising are not opted out of casinos. The board may, at its sole discretion, implement any incentive program it deems necessary to fill volunteer spots for the casino. Should a casino become available during your child's school year, we ask that you make every effort to help us fill the volunteer shifts.

Drop-off/Pick-up

The teachers will only release your child after school to an adult pre-approved on your pick-up list (included in your registration form). You may add a pre-approved adult by emailing or messaging the teachers directly. The teachers may ask for photo ID to validate a person's identity before releasing the child. Teachers **MUST** be informed at drop-off if someone new (anyone the teachers have not previously met) will be attending pick-up.

While teachers always do their best to communicate pertinent information at pick-up, student concerns and parent questions cannot be addressed. If you would like to schedule a time to discuss your child, please message the teachers on our communication app to set a time.

Harassment/Etiquette

The preschool has a zero-tolerance harassment policy. Any harassment of the staff or Board volunteers may result in immediate expulsion at the sole discretion of the Board.

Addressing Parent Concerns

All parents acknowledge and recognize that the preschool is run by two teachers and a Board comprised of volunteer parents. If at any time during the course of the school year a parent has any concern, we ask that the concern be raised directly with the teachers or by notifying the Board at president@stalbertcreativepreschool.com. We make every effort to create a loving, supporting and positive environment for your child and if you think there is room for improvement, we are always open to feedback. Please be respectful in your communications and be mindful that our teachers cannot provide an immediate response if they are in class. Our Board provides prompt responses whenever possible, but we are also a group of volunteer parents with external commitments.