

St. Albert
CREATIVE
Preschool

**2023/2024
Parent Handbook**

25230 TWP Rd 542, St. Albert, Alberta T8T 1L8
info@stalbertcreativepreschool.com
www.stalbertcreativepreschool.com

Updated: July 25, 2023

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.

Each month we change our large open space with different themes. We begin and end class time with group activities. Each day there is also a special helper or "leader" who helps with circle time and does show and tell. We also have access to a large country outdoor space where, weather permitting, the children can enjoy playtime or circle time.

Meet Our Teachers

Ms. Cindy

Ms. Cindy is our Program Director and Lead Teacher. She has been with the preschool since 2015. Prior to joining us, Cindy was a stay-at-home mom to her three children. She holds her Level 2 childcare certification and a degree in Psychology from Wilfrid Laurier University. Ms. Cindy strongly believes in creating a fun and nurturing atmosphere that encourages children to explore their world through play.

Ms. Carmen

Ms. Carmen has been with the preschool since 2021. She has extensive experience working with children, including operating a day home, working at a preschool, and volunteering in a school. She holds her Level 2 childcare certification and is currently working to complete her Level 3. Ms. Carmen 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 preschool year runs from September to June. We currently offer three programs (2 hours and 15 minutes in length):

- **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 through Thursday from 12:30-2:45 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

Each class begins with circle time. The children will have an opportunity to greet each other and the teachers before working on their Jolly Phonics. After circle time, the class branches off into center time, free play, as well as a snack. Nearing the end of class, the children gather together again for show and tell. We end class with a game, story or song depending on the day.

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

- A backpack big enough to send snack, newsletter and crafts
- Indoor shoes (Velcro or slip-on only) – no black soles
- An extra change of clothes, including underwear in case of accidents
- A large craft shirt that can get messy
- 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.

Punctuality

It is important that your child arrives on time for class – not early and not late. There is no supervision for children who arrive early, and latecomers disrupt the class.

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.

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.

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.
- *Covid 19*: As per the current AHS recommendations, we strongly recommend that any student who tests positive for Covid-19 or who is experiencing core symptoms (cough, or fever of 38.5 Celsius or higher, or shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, or loss of sense of taste or smell) stay home until symptoms resolve.

Staying up to date with school events

A monthly calendar will be sent by email with information about classroom activities, special helper days, and the phonics letters being taught. 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.

Special Helper days

Each child will be assigned multiple special helper days throughout the year. You can keep track of when your child's day is by referring to our monthly calendar. On a child's special helper day, they are invited to bring something from home that they wish to show during Show and Tell. If your child is unwell on their special helper day please contact Ms. Cindy to reschedule. If your child is ill and unable to attend on their special helper day, please let Ms. Cindy know as soon as possible. All efforts will be made to facilitate another special helper day.

Volunteering

On your child's special helper day a parent or relative may come and volunteer in the class. While we encourage you to leave siblings at home so that you can get the most out of the experience, if you are unable to arrange child care siblings may come with you. You are solely responsible for supervision of any siblings that attend with you. Should you be unwell on the day you were scheduled to volunteer, please reach out to Ms. Cindy to reschedule and a new day volunteer will be provided (a new special helper day may not always be possible).

During the course of the year, please reach out to Ms. Cindy if you have additional availability to volunteer.

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.

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.

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.

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. Cindy should you wish to bring in a treat to celebrate a child with a summer birthday.

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.

School Policies

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 \$25. 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.

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.

Casinos

The preschool is selected for a two-day casino approximately every 2-3 years. Our last casino was June 2022. 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.