

THREE  HILLS
  HILLS
PLAYSCHOOOL


 Parent
Handbook  

Vision Statement

Working with families to provide children with the tools for a successful future in our community.

Mission Statement

The Three Hills Playschool Association (THPA) is a community based, parent-run, not for profit, government licensed playschool. We offer an affordable, play-based program which emphasizes social, physical, intellectual, creative and emotional development.

Belief Statement

The THPA believes that play is a fundamental part of children's learning, growth and development. By providing programs for three to four and a half year olds, we offer a gradual transition from home to kindergarten. Our teachers provide a safe environment where individual differences are appreciated, communication is open, and each child's needs are addressed.

Class Schedule:

Tues/ Thurs mornings 9:00 – 11:30 or Tues/Thurs afternoons 12:30 – 3:00

*class placement will depend on registration numbers.

REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS:

ALL forms must be completed correctly and accompanied with the correct format for payment to ensure that your registration package is accepted and processed. *(Should your package be incomplete and/or proper payment not received, your package will be returned for required corrections and will lose its numbered place of priority.)* **Children MUST be 3 years of age AND fully potty trained prior to the first day of class.**

A Glimpse of a Typical Day:

60 mins Free Play (Sensory/Fine Motor, Blocks/Loose Parts, Dramatic Play, Emerging Literacy, Arts & Crafts, Math & Science), Clean Up

15 mins 1st Group Gathering, Welcome

10 mins Bathroom/Hand washing

15 mins Snack Time

15 mins Quiet Play (Books/Table Toys), Clean Up

20 mins Music and Movement

10 mins 2nd Group Gathering, Goodbye

Expectations of the Playschool

1. Punctuality is expected at the beginning and end of each class to minimize disruption. Parents are asked to wait in the entry/sign in area until the teacher dismisses the children. If you are going to be late or unavailable to pick up your child at the end of class, please make other arrangements as late pickups are not tolerated.

2. Parents are asked to keep their child at home if he/she has a fever, constant cough, diarrhea, is vomiting, or has symptoms of a communicable disease (i.e. lice, strep throat, pink eye, etc.). Parents are also required to notify the school at once if their child contracts a communicable disease so that the school may, in turn, notify the other parents. If your child will be absent, please contact the school and leave a message so that the teachers are aware of their absence.

3. If someone other than yourself will be picking up your child, please be sure that the person(s) picking up your child have been listed under "Permission to Release" in the registration package. In the event of an unforeseen emergency situation, whereby a different person other than those listed, will be picking up your child, we ask that a **parent telephone the school** as soon as possible to apprise us of this situation. The school's policy is such that **we will not allow** someone to leave with a child without prior notification from the parents.

4. For the safety of your child, footwear must be worn at all times in the classroom. To keep the carpets and floors clean we appreciate that "indoor" footwear is worn and kept at the school.

5. While at school, the children should wear play clothes, as they may get dirty during craft/play time with paints, glue, water, etc. We request that you leave a complete change of clothing (shirt, pants, socks and underwear) in your child's backpack. Parents are also required to provide properly labelled outdoor clothing (hat, mittens, boots and snow pants) in the event that the children go outside during the class.

6. All personal items should be visibly labelled with your child's name (i.e. backpack, indoor shoes, outdoor clothing, etc.).

7. Each child is required to bring a small, nutritious snack and a drink. Snack time is limited to fifteen minutes so please only send one or two snack choices for your child.

8. Please do not send toys from home unless it is your child's day to bring a show and share item. No weapon toys or toys of destruction are allowed in the playschool.

9. Parents must provide, in writing, current allergy and/or medical/psychological information to the staff concerning your child (i.e. a death in the family, death of a pet, food and other allergies, etc.).

10. As a parent in our playschool, your input is welcome and necessary. Parents are asked to read all notices and newsletters sent home, emailed, or placed on the parent board in order to keep informed as to the play school activities.

Discipline Policy

1. No physical punishment of any kind will be used at our playschool.

2. Staff will reinforce positive actions by smiles and verbal responses. Our teachers will serve as caring, considerate and good role models.

3. Positive behavior guidance strategies will be practiced to address misbehavior[s] (ie. Physical, verbal, emotional, etc):

- Developmentally appropriate phrases and cues will be used to teach expected behaviors in the classroom.
- The teachers will change the environment to strengthen desirable behaviors.
- The teachers will encourage children to problem solve with others in the classroom.
- The teachers will engage in active listening to clarify the needs and desires of the child.
- The teachers will redirect a child away from violent play and towards peaceful interactions or a new activity.
- The teachers will help the child to choose a cool down spot in the classroom until they feel calm and respectful.
- The teacher assistant will take a walk around the hallway with a child.
- The teachers will give a child a break from the group or activity as a result of aggressive/disruptive behavior. This would take place a short distance from the group with the close supervision of a teacher for three minutes. The teacher will talk through the scenario with the child and offer the child a choice to return and apologize when they are ready.

4. If the behavior does not change after consulting the parents and the use of positive behavior guidance strategies, we will consult professionals to assist the teachers and parents with alternative strategies.

5. All discipline will be reasonable. There will not be physical punishment, verbal or physical degradation or emotional deprivation. There will be no threats or denial of basic necessity. No physical restraint, confinement or isolation will ever be permitted.

Responsibilities of Classroom Volunteers (Younger or older siblings are not permitted in the class if you are volunteering.)

A sign-up calendar is provided outside the classroom on the parent board. Volunteers help the teachers in whatever way they can – the teacher will guide you.

Responsibilities include:

1. Wipe tables and chairs
1. Sweep and vacuum classroom
2. Prepare supplies for future crafts
3. Help with hand washing
4. Tidy toys
5. Discuss planned activities with staff and help out as directed
6. Play at various centres with children
7. Read to children
8. Share your talents and interests
9. Collect artwork and put in mailboxes

Parents and teachers together help your child develop to his or her full potential. We require parents to be willing and active participants in the classroom for various functions. Volunteer requirements will correlate with membership and enrolment and therefore could change as the need arises. ***All volunteers must comply with all policies of the Association, including, but not limited to the Association Discipline Policy and Sexual Abuse and Misconduct Prevention Policy.***

School Closures:

The Three Hills Playschool session dates will be provided to parents at the beginning of each session, and closure dates will be provided in advance. Such closure dates include statutory holidays, Easter break, etc. In the case of inclement weather and school is unable to open, parents will be notified immediately using the email address provided at registration.

Information:

For information about special events, field trip dates, meetings, etc., please check daily in the following places:

- a) Your E-mail – this is the Playschool’s main means of communication with its families. (E-mails will be sent to the e-mail address provided on your registration form).
- b) Facebook Page – The Three Hills Playschool Association has a Facebook page in which we encourage all members to join at www.facebook.com/groups/828307087227304/
- c) Notices - posted in or outside the classroom
- d) Cubbies - Your child has a designated named slot in the classroom.

Please do your best to keep informed about the events occurring at the Playschool. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact your child’s teacher or any executive member. Parents will only be phoned if a last minute change occurs and there is no time to send a notice home.

TAX RECEIPTS:

Our program is *NOT* applicable for tax deduction. The Three Hills Playschool is Government Licensed as an ‘Early Childhood Education’ program, not a “Child Care” program. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the above, please review Tax Form #T778 or contact the Canada Revenue Agency at 1-800-959-8281

NSF POLICY:

There will be a \$40.00 administration charge for each NSF cheque.

WITHDRAWAL POLICY:

At the joint discretion of the Teacher and Board of Directors, a child may be asked to withdraw if the child is considered by the Teacher to be irreconcilably disruptive to the class. All practical avenues must be explored between the teacher and the child’s guardians.

In the event of a required withdrawal, the Board of Directors must give written notice to the child's parents outlining the reasons. No further fees will be charged and, if paid in a lump sum, the balance of the term will be refunded.

When a child is voluntarily withdrawn from the program, 30-day written notice is required. Notice will take effect on the first day of the following calendar month the notice was received. Fees will be returned less one month if the withdrawal occurs within the first 60 days of the semester. After that timeline, teaching positions will be solidified based upon enrolment numbers and no further refund will be given. The Board will undertake to discuss exceptional considerations on a case by case basis.

GRIEVANCE AND APPEAL POLICY

If parents/guardians have a concern or question related to the operation of the Three Hills Playschool Association or its program with respect to their child, they should follow this procedure:

1. Bring the matter to the attention of the appropriate classroom teacher, should this be a classroom related issue.
2. Should the matter not be resolved by the teacher or falls outside of the responsibilities of the teachers and the concern requires further attention, contact the Board at threehillplayschool@gmail.com and they will work to resolve the situation.
3. If necessary, the President will raise the concern at the next THPA meeting for resolution. Any resolution will be provided in writing to the parent / guardian of the child in question.
4. In all cases, the THPA, its Board of Directors, and teachers will respect the parents' and child's right to confidentiality.
5. All decisions / resolutions resulting from this procedure are final.

Sexual Abuse and Misconduct Prevention Policy

Three Hills Playschool Association prohibits and does not tolerate sexual abuse or misconduct in the workplace or during any organization-related activity. The Three Hills Playschool Association provides procedures for employees, volunteers, board members or any other victims of sexual abuse or misconduct to report such acts. Those reasonably suspected or believed to have committed sexual abuse or misconduct will be appropriately disciplined, up to and including termination of employment or membership, as well as criminally prosecuted. No employee, volunteer, board member or other person, regardless of his or her title or position has the authority to commit or allow sexual abuse or misconduct.

Definitions and Examples The following definitions or examples of sexual abuse, misconduct or harassment, may apply to any and/or all of the following persons – employees, volunteers or other third-parties. Sexual abuse or misconduct may include, but is not limited to:

- Child sexual abuse – any sexual activity, involvement or attempt of sexual contact with a person who is a minor (under 18 years old) where consent is not or cannot be given.
- Sexual activity with another who is legally incompetent or otherwise unable to give consent.
 - Physical assaults or violence, such as rape, sexual battery, abuse, molestation or any attempt to commit such acts.
 - Unwanted and intentional physical conduct that is sexual in nature, such as touching, pinching, patting, brushing, massaging someone’s neck or shoulders and/or pulling against another’s body or clothes.
- Material such as pornographic or sexually explicit images, posters, calendars or objects.
 - Unwelcome and inappropriate sexual activities, advances, comments, innuendoes, bullying, jokes, gestures, electronic communications or messages (e.g. email, text, social media, voicemail), exploitation, exposure, leering, stalking or invasion of sexual privacy.
 - A sexually hostile environment characterized as comments or conduct that unreasonably interferes with one’s work performance or ability to do the job or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.
 - Direct or implied threats that submission to sexual advances will be a condition of employment or affiliation with the organization.

Reporting Procedure Immediately report suspected sexual abuse or misconduct to the President of The Three Hills Playschool Association. It is the President’s responsibility, under the Alberta Child Care Licensing Act, to immediately report any suspected sexual abuse or misconduct to a Director of Child and Family Services (i.e. Licensing Officer). Consultation with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Child Protective Services might also be required. It is not required to directly confront the person who is the source of the report, question or complaint before notifying any of the individuals listed. The Three Hills Playschool Association will take every reasonable measure

to ensure that those named in complaint of misconduct, or are too closely associated with those involved in the complaint will not be part of the investigative team.

Safety Planning Prior to completion of the Duty to Report, a plan must be made regarding the safety of the child/children, as well as access to any child/children within the Three Hills Playschool Association Program until the investigation is complete. Should the complaint involve a volunteer or staff member, that individual will be removed and banned from the Three Hills Playschool Association until the investigation is complete and will only be allowed to return upon the approval of the Board of Directors.

Anti-retaliation and False Allegations

The Three Hills Playschool Association prohibits retaliation made against any employee, volunteer, board member or other person who lodges a good faith complaint of sexual abuse or misconduct or who participates in any related investigation. Making knowingly false or malicious accusations of sexual abuse or misconduct can have serious consequences for those who are wrongly accused. The Three Hills Playschool Association prohibits making false or malicious sexual misconduct allegations, as well as deliberately providing false information during an investigation. Anyone who violates this rule is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or membership and criminal prosecution.

Investigation and Follow-up The Three Hills Playschool Association will take all allegations of sexual abuse or misconduct seriously and will promptly, thoroughly and equitably investigate whether misconduct has taken place. The organization may utilize an outside third-party to conduct an investigation of misconduct. The Three Hills Playschool Association will cooperate fully with any investigation conducted by law enforcement or other regulatory/protective services agencies. The Three Hills Playschool Association will make every reasonable effort to keep the matters involved in the allegation as confidential as possible while still allowing for a prompt and thorough investigation.

Reporting to Law Enforcement or Appropriate Child Protective Services The Three Hills Playschool Association is committed to following the provincial and federal legal requirements for reporting allegations or incidents of sexual abuse or misconduct to appropriate law enforcement and child protective services organizations. It is the policy of The Three Hills Playschool Association not to attempt to investigate or assess the validity or credibility of an allegation of sexual or physical abuse as a condition before reporting the allegation to proper law enforcement authorities or protective services organizations.

**Responsibility to report child abuse under the Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act is set out in law. The Act requires every person who has a reason to believe that a child has been, or there is substantial risk that he or she will be abused or neglected by a parent/guardian, or might need intervention, to promptly report the matter to a caseworker.*

Some offences committed against children fall under the Criminal Code of Canada. They include: physical assault, sexual assault and other sexual offences, abandoning a child and failing to provide the necessities of life. Police are responsible for conducting an investigation and deciding whether there are grounds to lay charges.

Charges can also be laid under the Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act and the Protection of Children Involved in Prostitution Act.

How to Report Report all issues regarding suspected risk to a child to the local Royal Canadian Mounted Police at (403) 443- 5539. Report any issues regarding risk to a child by a parent/guardian/caregiver to a caseworker at your Child and Family Services Authority office in addition to the above procedure. If you are unable to reach the local office or it is after business hours, call the Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-387-5437.

*All issues must be reported to the Director of Child and Family Services via the Licensing Officer.

Your report should include: Your name, telephone number and relationship to the child (all of this information remains confidential); any immediate concerns about the child's safety; the location of the child; the child's name; the child's age; information on the situation; any other relevant information concerning the child and/or family.

Employee and Worker Screening and Selection The Three Hills Playschool Association is committed to maintaining a diligent screening program for prospective and existing employees, volunteers and others that may have interaction with those employed by, associating with or serviced by The Three Hills Playschool Association. The organization may utilize a variety of methods of screening and selection, including but not limited to applications, personal interviews, criminal background checks, child protection background checks and personal and professional references.

Supervision of Youth To provide a safe environment for our minors, The Three Hills Playschool Association diligently adheres to the Alberta Child Care Licensing requirements regarding the supervision of children under our care.

Review This policy will be reviewed annually by the Board of Directors and Staffing Team. Access to, review and agreement to the terms will be provided within the Parent Registration Package, as well as the staffing contracts.

Acknowledgement Form: Sexual Abuse and Misconduct Prevention Policy

I, the undersigned, acknowledge that I read the Sexual Abuse and Misconduct Prevention Policy and/or had it explained to me. I understand that it is my responsibility to abide by all rules contained in the policy. I also understand how to report incidents of sexual abuse or misconduct as set forth in the policy, including retaliation against any employee or volunteer exercising his or her rights under the policy.